SEPARATISM AND STATE COHESION IN EASTERN INDONESIA

by

Chris Lundry

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
May 2009
SEPARATISM AND STATE COHESION IN EASTERN INDONESIA

by

Chris Lundry

has been approved

April 2009

Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Sheldon Simon, Chair
James Rush
Michael Mitchell

ACCEPTED BY THE GRADUATE COLLEGE
NOTE: PAGE NUMBERS IN THIS ELECTRONIC VERSION
OF THE DISSERTATION MAY DIFFER FROM THE ORIGINAL.

(Please include a reference to "www.papuaweb.org version"
in citations of this dissertation)
ABSTRACT

Separatism has plagued Indonesia since its independence. This dissertation examines four cases of separatism in Indonesia, including the South Moluccas, West Papua, and East Timor, as well as one case where separatism did not emerge, Sumba. It describes sovereignty in Indonesia since its inception, considering ideological challenges including communist, Islamist, and federalist, and concludes that sovereignty in Indonesia was tenuous prior to the New Order period (1965-1998). Using case study methodology, each case is examined to determine the predominant factors that led to separatism, including the role of elites, poverty, the method of incorporation, religion and culture, and political participation. It then examines Sumba in the context of these variables to determine why a separatist movement did not emerge in that region, despite a juridical basis for separatism. Political participation, social continuity, and the role of the elites prove to be the deciding factors in the emergence of separatism.

This dissertation also examines the factors that led to the defeat of separatists in the South Moluccas, the persistence in West Papua, and the success in East Timor and concludes that the causes of the emergence of separatism are not the same as the causes of the persistence of separatism.

This dissertation makes four significant contributions to the field. The first is through a detailed case-study approach comparing three regions that have undergone serious separatist movements in the state of Indonesia as well as a ‘negative case.’ The second contribution is the differentiation between the causes of the emergence of separatism and the causes of the persistence of separatism. The third contribution this
dissertation makes is toward a better understanding of the relationship between nationalism and separatism. Finally, when taken together, these three elements combine to challenge predominant theories of separatist conflict that emphasize one causal factor over others, including, for example, poverty, ethnicity or religion. It also raises doubts about the applicability of theories of anti-state violence in states that are beginning the consolidation process, or as they incorporate territory after the consolidation process has been long under way, as in the cases of West Papua and East Timor.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is the result of many years of work, and as a result the list of people who deserve acknowledgement is long. I must begin, however, by acknowledging a man who had a tremendous impact on my life, both personally and academically, without whom I would not have begun studying Indonesia and East Timor, and subsequently would not be writing these words. Daniel S. Lev at the University of Washington was my professor, mentor, and friend, but certainly it was his friendship that mattered most. Dan was a rigorous and tenacious scholar. He provided a clear example of an academic immersed in his calling, and was a model for me in his engagement with both American and Indonesian academics. He agreed to serve on my dissertation committee and would have made ample contributions, but he passed away in February 2006. I miss Dan tremendously; I hope this work would make him proud, despite what I am sure are its numerous shortcomings.

At Arizona State University, I was pleased to find a home in the Program for Southeast Asian Studies (PSEAS), prior to its demise in 2006. Foremost among these friends is James Rush, a historian who came to play the same roles as Dan Lev – professor, mentor and friend. Jim entrusted me with teaching PSEAS courses before I had taken my comprehensive exams, and has supported me in myriad other ways. Professor Sheldon Simon has similarly provided me with support, encouragement, and guidance, both in my home department of Political Science and within the context of Southeast Asia. Professor Michael Mitchell, as the third member of my committee, continually downplayed his role during the writing and research process of this dissertation, but I believe he contributed significantly, especially with regard to my study of the role of
elites. I am pleased to have been able to work with all three, and am honored they were willing to oversee this project.

Within my home department, Professor Patrick Kenney, as Department Chair, was someone who supported me throughout this process. I would be remiss if I were not to mention those behind the scenes, whose help proved invaluable: Pattie Rothstein, Thu Nguyen, Jeriann McIlvoy, and Sheryl Durlak. From the PSEAS, there were several directors who helped me in numerous ways, including Karen Adams, James Eder, and Ruth Yabes. They and other affiliated faculty including Christopher Duncan, Thomas Hudak, Hjorleifur Jonsson, Thuy-Kim Pham Le, Merlyna Lim, Pamela McElwee, Juliane Schober, Prakorn Siriprakob, Ted Solis, Nora Taylor, and Mark Woodward, provided a stimulating environment, advice and encouragement, and friendship. I owe special recognition to Peter Suwarno, my Indonesian language professor. Beyond his patience as I tackled the language (and despite my continued mistakes), Peter has been a good friend and a lively partner for discussions of Indonesian politics.

My Indonesian friends and colleagues are numerous and deserving of much credit as well. Theofransus Litaay, Achmad Gunaryo, Stefanus, Dani and Siliwoeloe Djoeromana, Martin Ndoen, Ferry Nusahara, Ina Hunga Restianti, and the faculty associated with the Pusat Studi Kawasan Timur Indonesia at Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana in Salatiga have all aided in this project and made my most recent stay in Indonesia a pleasure. I also want to thank my sources, some of whom went to some lengths to provide me information at a significant risk. Although this dissertation is not meant to be a recipe for peace in Indonesia and its various zones in conflict, I hope that
peace will not be long in coming as Indonesia progresses toward consolidating its nascent democracy.

Research and language training in Indonesia was supported by a Blakemore Freeman Fellowship and a Fulbright Fellowship. The staffs at both organizations were tremendously helpful, but I would especially like to thank Cornelia Paliama at AMINEF in Jakarta for her assistance. While writing, I was supported by the Departments of History, Global Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies at Arizona State University, as well as a Graduate College Dissertation Completion Fellowship.

My friends and family have also provided me love and support during this time. I would like to thank my brothers and sister who all help kept me motivated, as well as my father Jerry and mother Coral. Most of all I would like to thank my wife, Meg. She gave up what she was doing to live with me in Indonesia for a year-and-a-half while I conducted my research, and supported and helped me there. She has also been tremendously patient and understanding through the entire writing process, offering encouragement, advice and love. I look forward to the next step of our life together, and everything else that may follow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Model</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case Literature</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why Separatism?</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>SOVEREIGNTY AND STATE CONSOLIDATION IN EARLY INDONESIA: RESISTANCE AND REBELLION</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Indonesian Sovereignty in Practice</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Late Colonial Period and the Birth of Modern Nationalism</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Soekarno Era: Revolution, Independence and Early Threats to Consolidation</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madiun</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Consolidation</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Darul Islam</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRRI/Permesta</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soekarno’s Last Years</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G30S and the Imposition of the New Order</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Post-Suharto Era</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>TITLE</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>DOOR DE EEUWEN (T)ROUW? THE DEFEAT OF THE REPUBLIC</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OF THE SOUTH MOLUCCAS</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brief History</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Indonesian Revolution</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Aftermath of the RMS</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elite and Party Representation, 1951-1965</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economy, Resources and Dependence, 1951-1965</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion: Separatism Defeated</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>WEST PAPUA 1930 - 1969: UNATTAINED ASPIRATIONS</strong></td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Background</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Eurasian Homeland?</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World War II</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From Malino to the Round Table</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiations, 1950-1961</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From Netherlandsche Nieuw Guinea to Irian Barat to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irian Jaya to Papua Barat</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Missing Piece of the Puzzle</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elite and Party Representation, 1945 – Present: “Why Are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There No Irianese National Heroes”</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economy, Resources and Dependence</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>EAST TIMOR: BLOODY SEIZURE, BLOODY RELEASE</strong></td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early History..............................................................................................236

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From the Carnation Revolution to the Indonesian Invasion</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Invasion</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manifestations of East Timorese Nationalism</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite and Party Representation</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Continuity</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy, Resources, and Dependence</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue: The International Tide Turns: The Referendum, the UN Transition, and Independence</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 EARLY SUMBANESE HISTORY..................................................................301

| Why Sumba? | 305 |
| Sumba as a Case | 308 |
| The Endenese and Early Dutch Contact | 310 |
| Dutch Consolidation | 320 |
| The Transition to Indonesian Rule | 329 |
| Discussion | 343 |

7 POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTINUITY IN SUMBA.................................346

| Background | 349 |
| From the Old Order to the Institutionalization of Golkar | 350 |
| Bupati | 356 |
| Local Politics | 363 |
CHAPTER

8 CONCLUSION: THE GENESIS AND PERSISTENCE OF SEPARATISM IN EASTERN INDONESIA

ANTI-STATE but Not Separatist

UNDERSTANDING Separatism

Elites

Parties

Incorporation

Religion and Culture

Social and Political Continuity

Nationalism

Sumba, the “Negative Case”

Separatism: Emergence Versus Persistence

Ambon

West Papua

East Timor
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Separatist movements have plagued Southeast Asia since the consolidation of new sovereign nation-states began following World War II. Despite the somewhat arbitrary drawing of borders in Southeast Asia at the hands of the European colonists – often dissecting or combining ethnic, religious or linguistic groups – prior resistance in Southeast Asia was generally aimed at ending Western colonial control and either reasserting traditional rule, as in the Java War of 1825-1830, or ousting the Europeans and forging a modern nation-state, as in the communist revolution in Banten, West Java, in 1926.¹

Following decolonization the arbitrary borders remained and emerging indigenous leaders faced the task of consolidating their respective states. The state had to incorporate minority groups that existed within these borders.² But the majority ethnic and religious

¹ This does not mean that there were never rebellions aimed at local, indigenous leadership. This indigenous leadership generally acted as an agent for the European state, and the injustice carried out was in the name of the colonial power. The possible exception to this is Thailand, which was never formally colonized by a European power, although it felt the colonists’ power through the ceding of territory and the opening of its borders to trade with the Europeans. In the case of the Banten revolution, the line between old rulers and the forging of a modern nation-state was somewhat blurred, and the communist revolutionaries blended their appeal to both tradition and modernity. See: Harry J. Benda and Ruth McVey, *The Communist Uprisings of 1926-1927 In Indonesia: Key Documents*. Translation Series (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1960); Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1963); Michael C. Williams, *Communism, Religion and Revolt in Banten* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1990); Michael C. Williams, *Sickle and Crescent: The Communist Revolt of 1926 in Banten*, Monograph Series No. 61 (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1982).

² The incorporation of minorities into the body politic of European colonies was never a priority. In fact, one finds just the opposite in many cases: ethnicities were often pitted against each other in a divide and conquer strategy. In the Dutch East Indies,
groups were the constituency that commanded the most attention, and were generally those in positions of leadership. Some minority groups within the borders of the new states bristled at the lack of attention or at their comparatively small roles; others were drawn to rebellion by pre-existing conceptions of an alternative nationalist identity. In such places, separatist rebellions flared. Still others, such as East Timor and West Papua, were incorporated long after independence and viewed by the larger state as the completion of European decolonization.³

Separatism in Indonesia is a response to the state’s inability to engender an all-inclusive nationalism, as well as evidence of the success of certain minority groups in retaining or reconstructing identities as separate from the hegemonic state. It is also an expression of minority dissatisfaction involving linguistic, cultural and religious differentiation, economic inequality, and the emergence of an elite among the minority group that asserts itself in seeking more power and autonomy.⁴ Correspondingly, separatism represents a failure on the part of the national elites to fulfill the aspirations of example, the Moluccans, many of whom converted to Christianity, were drafted to fight elsewhere in the Indies, such as Java and Aceh.

³ Ruth McVey writes: “Perhaps, then, the question to be posed is not so much why there is armed separatism in Southeast Asia as why there is not more of it. In other words, with such shallow roots, with boundaries fixed by colonial rivalries as much as by cultural or national barriers, flying in the face of ancient folkways and immediate individual interests – what glues the Southeast Asian state together?” Ruth McVey, “Separatism and the Paradoxes of the Nation-State in Perspective,” in Armed Separatism in Southeast Asia, ed. Lim Joo-Jock and S. Vani, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1984), 3. James C. Scott has noted that passive adaptation and self-help are often the responses to less severe subjugation and repression. James C. Scott, The Moral Economy of the Peasant (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); James C. Scott, Weapons of the Weak (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

such minorities, especially in terms of development or autonomy, or simply refusal to acknowledge such aspirations. It is, in the terms of Ted Robert Gurr’s “relative deprivation thesis,” a perceived difference in what “is” versus what “ought to be.”

Separatism is also a direct attack on the sovereignty of the state, a challenge to the Weberian notion that the state is the sole legitimate wielder of force. Furthermore, according to Gurr it is “likely to interfere with and, if severe, destroy normal political processes.” Separatist movements divert resources from the core state in order to battle the separatists; wars are expensive. Indonesia’s armed forces, reflecting the seriousness of the problem of separatism, are geared toward internal security as opposed to threats from the outside; the archipelago of some 17,000 islands has a relatively small and weak navy in relation to its land-based forces. Separatism is also a transboundary problem, affecting states’ neighbors in terms of refugees, rebels who base their operations outside of the home state, and rebels who may attempt to link their causes to larger global organizations.

Much of the debate concerning separatism hinges on identity. Gurr notes the “transitory nature of group identity” and rejects identity based on primordialism. He

---


argues, however, that emergent separatism is not based purely on material interests. Gurr differentiates “national peoples” from “minority peoples,” arguing that the former want sovereignty or autonomy, and include ethnonationalists and indigenous peoples, and the latter want more influence or control of politics, and can include “ethnoclasses, militant sects, and communal contenders.” These distinctions can blur and groups may move from one classification to the other.

According to Gurr’s 1993 global survey *Minorities at Risk*, there are 233 “politicized communal groups” that represent “minorities at risk.” A minority at risk is a group that “collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment vis-à-vis other groups in a state… (and) was the focus of political mobilization and action in defense or promotion of its self-defined interests at some time between 1945 and 1989.” Gurr includes East Timorese and West Papuans (as well as ethnic Chinese in Indonesia), but does not include Moluccans (who meet his criteria for “minorities at risk” and claim to have juridical rights to sovereignty).


10 Ibid., 15.

Gurr’s work on separatism and rebellion is not, however, the only way that scholars have examined separatism. Katharine Boyle and Pierre Englebert’s recent (2006) work provides an overview of scholarship on separatism and categorizes approaches to its study.\(^\text{13}\) Competing approaches include economic, cultural, and political factors, as well as the age, size, and geographical features of the country.

As Boyle and Englebert demonstrate, theorists of separatism have emphasized both poverty and wealth in comparison to the core state as rationales for the emergence of separatism: poorer regions have lower costs associated with rebellion and may feel that the state is responsible for their poverty; wealthier regions may feel the state is making too many demands on them.\(^\text{14}\) Gurr’s analysis disregards absolute measures of poverty and offers a more nuanced approach, arguing that the separatist region’s inhabitants

\(^\text{12}\) Gurr also notes the failure of modernization theory’s tenet that as states modernize, people would lose their distinct ethnic identities for a new national identity. This has not happened, in both the developed and the developing world. See: Ted Robert Gurr, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 78.


perceive a discrepancy in what they have versus what they think they should have. James C. Scott offers a similarly nuanced approach that rejects absolute terms.\textsuperscript{15}

Boyle and Englebert also describe cultural approaches to secessionism, including those based on linguistic, ethnic and religious motivations. Cultural determinants of separatism include cultural heterogeneity, group size, a dominant ethnic group as a rival, the geographic concentration of the minority group, and the presence of a diaspora group. An important political determinant of separatism the nature of the political system in question; is it a democracy, is it in transition, is it weak or collapsing? Cold War effects, support from neighboring states, and the prior existence of the separatist region as an independent or autonomous region are other factors, as are a country’s age, geography, and demographics.\textsuperscript{16}

Although it clearly differentiates theories of secessionism, Boyle and Englebert’s work is peppered with anecdotal accounts that support its conclusions, but it does not employ case-study methodology to explore how the variables interact. As with all large-n, quantitative studies, it offers parsimony at the cost of nuance. This dissertation uses

\textsuperscript{15} Scott, \textit{The Moral Economy}. One must differentiate, however, between political rebellion aimed at ousting the standing leadership and political rebellion aimed at secession. Scott does, however, add a caveat that it is more than just repressive taxation that leads to rebellion: “Growing exploitation of the peasantry may well be a necessary cause of rebellion, but it is far from a sufficient cause… There is good reason, in fact, for holding that rebellion is one of the least likely consequences of exploitation. If exploitation alone were a necessary and sufficient condition of rebellion, much of Southeast Asian and the Third World would surely be in a semi-permanent state of civil war” (Ibid., 193). An interesting similarity between Scott’s and Gurr’s work, however, is Scott’s assertion that the “moral economy” of the peasant allowed for increasing taxation in times of prosperity as legitimate, but these claims “were never legitimate when they infringed on what was judged to be the minimal culturally defined subsistence level” (Ibid., 10).

\textsuperscript{16} Boyle and Englebert, 7-16.
case-study methodology in order to build a nuanced picture of separatism in Indonesia that is theoretically grounded. By examining several variables and their interactions, rather than choosing a single predominant variable, it presents a holistic picture of separatism in Indonesia, complete with each case’s unique attributes.

Predominant theories of separatism assume that separatism emerges from within a state that has undergone some degree of consolidation as a reaction to its policies toward the separatist region. This dissertation, however, examines cases that differ from this pattern, examining first the ideological conceptions competing for primacy in the early stages of Indonesian consolidation and then the emergence of separatism in regions as they are being integrated into the new state; this precludes any conceptualization of how the state has treated residents of these regions in the past, since the creation of the state and the emergence of separatism are coterminous. The case studies go on to examine factors leading to persistence of separatism, as in West Papua and East Timor, or its decline, as in the South Moluccas. And since, as this dissertation argues, nationalism is not primordial and but constructed (and can thus fail), events that occur following the emergence of a nationalist movement – either in the core state or the separatist one – have a significant bearing on whether the separatist movement persists or declines. It is in this context that Sumba is instructive. Separatism did not emerge at its incorporation into Indonesia, nor did Indonesia’s treatment of Sumba provoke separatism, despite social conditions that would predict it.

17 Tedd Gurr’s “relative deprivation” thesis is instructive in this regard. It would be hard to demonstrate that Ambonese, West Papuan, or East Timorese separatists feel relative deprivation at the hands of Jakarta prior to their regions’ incorporation into Indonesia.
The Model

Using Mill’s Method of Agreement and the cases in which there is separatism, this dissertation examines key variables to determine if the similar outcome on the dependent variable (separatism) is due to similar values on the independent variables. These independent variables include the role of elites, party representation, the circumstances of incorporation, religious or cultural differences, social continuity, and whether inhabitants in the region participated in the early stages of Indonesian nationalism. After comparing these factors, if there are significant differences between the cases regarding these independent variables but with a similar outcome of separatism, it may cast doubt as to the primacy of one or more variables and whether the variables are necessary or sufficient to explain separatism. Although the results of the research are diagrammed in tables in the concluding chapter of the dissertation, a narrative appraisal in the form of case studies provides a much more nuanced discussion and allows for the particular details of each case to be explained.

The case-study approach also allows for an examination of the persistence of separatism in each region by using time series analysis to examine change on the independent variables. Time series analysis explains variation in the independent variables over time, identifying increases or decreases in separatist sentiment and expression. Among the three observed cases, there is significant variance: separatism in The South Moluccas waned quickly after its emergence; separatism has persisted in West Papua but without success; and separatism in East Timor resulted in separation from Indonesia.

---

Indonesia and eventual independence. Although East Timor’s different history is often cited as the primary factor for its successful separation from Indonesia (it was a Portuguese colony, it was the most recently incorporated region in Indonesia), history does not explain how East Timor became independent, although it might help contribute to the answer of why it became independent. Historical circumstances in East Timor, such as a different colonial experience and the death of up to one-third of its population at the hands of the Indonesians, certainly contributed to separatist sentiment in East Timor. Yet without human agency including the formation of an alternative nationalism prior to Indonesia’s invasion, international support, and a new domestic political climate in Indonesia in 1998-99 there is no reason to believe that East Timor would have successfully separated from Indonesia. In fact, the opposite is true. Many scholars and statesmen argued that the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia was the fulfillment of its destiny and irreversible.\footnote{See, for example: Donald Weatherbee, “The Indonesianization of East Timor,” \textit{Contemporary Southeast Asia}, 3, No. 1 (1981), 5.} It was considered a \textit{fait accompli}, and although the United Nations never formally recognized its incorporation, East Timor was considered a de facto province of Indonesia by all of the major powers.\footnote{UN Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan boasted about his ability to stymie United Nations action on East Timor. See: Daniel Patrick Moynihan, \textit{A Dangerous Place} (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), 247.}

\textbf{Methodology}

Theda Skocpol’s seminal work \textit{States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China} provides the methodological template.\footnote{Skocpol’s}
analysis of successful revolution is not meant to be a direct substitute for successful separation in this dissertation. Rather, her methodology provides the best framework for a rigorous examination of separatism in Indonesia.

Skocpol explains her methodology as Mill’s Method of Agreement and Method of Difference. This methodology is parsimonious in part due to the nature of its causal appraisal: the strategy of analysis is nominal, hence there is no concern for measuring variance on the values of independent variables; they are either present or absent. When Skocpol explains the main causal factors present in successful cases of revolution (conditions for state breakdown and conditions for peasant revolt), she eliminates potential causal factors that are either not present (urban worker revolts in the case of China) or are present among unsuccessful cases of revolution (relative deprivation). Variance on the dependent variable is irrelevant.

Yet Skocpol’s analysis does not stop at the nominal level of appraisal. Her variables, as operationalized, are too broad and require further explanation. She breaks down these two nominal variables into constituent subvariables. By disaggregating her

---


22 Ibid., 36.


24 The variable ‘conditions for state breakdown’ is disaggregated by Skocpol into three ordinal subvariables: (1) international pressure, which promotes crises for regime actors, (2) nonautonomous state, which prevents government leaders from implementing modernizing reforms, and (3) agrarian backwardness, which hinders national responses to political crises. Likewise, Skocpol disaggregates ‘conditions for peasant revolt’ into two ordinal variables: (1) peasant autonomy and solidarity, which facilitate spontaneous
nominal independent variables into constituent parts examined on an ordinal level and increasing the complexity of the analysis, Skocpol is able to strengthen her explanatory power by stating not only whether a variable is present but also the *degree* to which the “subvariable” is present. This dissertation does not disaggregate independent variables into their constituent parts, but instead disaggregates their differing impact in each case study.

Finally, Skocpol employs a third strategy for causal analysis: narrative appraisal.\(^{25}\) This third strategy of analysis allows for a “historically detailed and nuanced understanding” as Skocpol reveals the complex interactions that create the conditions for the degree of the subvariables measured.\(^{26}\) Narrative appraisal examines in detail the cases from which Skocpol has made her theory.

Skocpol’s small number of cases allows for this kind of structured, focused comparison. Similarly, the small number of cases in this dissertation (four) allows for the same detail in describing complex interactive effects and the reduction to nominal variables that are either present or absent. The methodology ensures that the case studies are driven by both theory and are not simply descriptive accounts of events.

The case studies driving the dissertation will provide the strongest test of theoretical approaches to separatism through in-depth research. Large-n quantitative research designs can be valuable in theory building, but due to their high level of collective action by peasants, and (2) landlord vulnerability, which allows for class transformation in the countryside. Mahoney, 1161.

\(^{25}\) Narrative appraisal is analogous to “process tracing,” a term more frequently employed in International Relations.

\(^{26}\) Mahoney, 1165-67.
abstraction they often overlook detail for the sake of parsimony. These theories and their attendant hypotheses are often rooted in observation to some degree but are also written as broad theory. Case-study research is the appropriate method for testing these approaches.27

The importance of theoretically and methodologically grounded case-study research has been well documented.28 King, Keohane and Verba note “one of the often overlooked advantages of the in-depth case-study method is that the development of good causal hypotheses is complementary to good description rather than competitive with it.”29 They also note the danger of purely descriptive work by “historically-oriented or interpretive social scientists,” cautioning that the explanatory value of such work is questionable.30 Successful case studies employ interpretation based on historical data but do so with a theoretical backbone and methodological rigor.31 Charles C. Ragin notes the

27 “The fourth attribute of theory that facilitates its assessment concerns the types and numbers of cases or settings in which the proposed relationships can be examined. The preference is for theory that can be subject to test both in case studies and in large-sample comparative studies using statistical methods. Case studies are useful for elucidating the fine structure of revolutionary events and for providing a sense of understanding of how general variables act and interact. They can also be used to test theoretical statements expressed in dichotomous terms: one can define “accelerators of dysfunction” and “revolution” independently and in sufficiently rigorous fashion that a single case-study may be sufficient to falsify the proposition that accelerators of dysfunction are a necessary precondition of revolution.” Gurr, Why Men Rebel, 20.


29 King, Kehoane, and Verba, 45 (emphasis in original).

30 Ibid.

31 Ragin, 35.
value of a synthetic approach, utilizing both variable-driven and case-study methodologies that can yield valid generalizations as well as the particular circumstances of each case.\footnote{Ibid., 82-84.}

Data for the dissertation came from a variety of sources. For the case study material, secondary sources predominate. There are two main reasons for this. First, prior studies have focused on the single case and have been written from a variety of perspectives (including anthropological, historical, sociological, and political perspectives). They have been written with a level of detail impossible for large-n studies or even for comparative case studies; they thus provide rich descriptions and analyses. This dissertation distills from these detailed studies the principle relevant variables in order to make cross-case comparisons. Second, two of the regions under study, the South Moluccas and West Papau, remain closed to foreign researchers. It is impossible to receive a permit to conduct research there; those who do risk arrest and deportation.\footnote{Despite these restrictions, two brief trips were made to these regions to make some observations and conduct a limited number of interviews.}

The East Timor case is largely dependent on secondary sources, although for a different reason. Although East Timor is much more open about research conducted within its borders, the author’s fellowships stipulated research only in Indonesia, allowing for only a brief visit to East Timor in January and February 2006.\footnote{Prior to this visit to East Timor, however, the author made several trips to East Timor between 1997 and 2002 under a variety of auspices, including informal research, work with aid and solidarity organizations, and as a United Nations-accredited observer for the 1999 referendum.} Similar to West Papua and the South Moluccas, however, there are many secondary sources about East Timor from...
which to work, including some written prior to and during the early years of Indonesian occupation.

The second major source of data for this dissertation is primary data, including observation, interviews (where possible) and archival research conducted at the National Archives in Jakarta as well as at regional government offices throughout Sumba and in Kupang, West Timor. Because Sumba has been studied almost exclusively from an anthropological perspective and because the Indonesian government and the Indonesian Academy of Sciences granted the author permission to conduct research there, this dissertation examines in greater depth the “negative case” of Sumba.

**Case Literature**

This dissertation begins with an examination of the early stages of state consolidation in Indonesia, from its declaration of independence through the imposition of “Guided Democracy” under Soekarno to the ascension of Suharto to the presidency.\(^{35}\) For those who study Indonesia, there are several volumes that remain seminal works on this early period. George McT. Kahin’s *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1952) is a first-person account of the Indonesian revolution compiled while Kahin was in Indonesia in 1948 and 1949. Despite raising the ire of the Dutch, Kahin was able to travel to Republican-held areas to interview Indonesian nationalist leaders, and this access continued even following these

---

\(^{35}\) Following Suharto’s rise, the Indonesian state became firmly anti-communist and the ascension of the military, the eradication of communism, and the emasculation of political Islam ushered in a new era of stability for Indonesia. This stability, at the cost of human rights and democracy, encouraged foreign investment and economic growth, although its attendant corruption, collusion and nepotism spurred its downfall. Despite this newfound stability, there remained some organized resistance to the state, most notably from Aceh, East Timor and West Papua.
leaders’ arrests by the Dutch. Kahin provides an historical accounting of the formation of nationalism in Indonesia and follows the conceptualization of the Indonesian state to its realization. Similarly, Benedict R. O’G. Anderson’s *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972) examines the revolutionary period, emphasizing the differing streams of political thought that emerged at the time (and went on to influence later developments), such as political Islam and communism. He also examines the role of the Japanese in fostering nationalism, the role of the young generation of Indonesians who went on to lead the revolution, the establishment of early political parties in Indonesia, and the importance of the military. This early work, and later research in the Philippines after being blacklisted by the Suharto regime, led Anderson to write his seminal work on nationalism, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983), which relied heavily on his knowledge of the history and politics of Indonesia.

W. F. Wertheim’s *Indonesian Society in Transition: a Study of Social Change* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd, 1964) also covers the revolutionary period, although from a viewpoint that examines some of the historical antecedents to the revolution. The volume *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), edited by Audrey Kahin, escapes the Java-centered approach of others and examines the revolution from a regional perspective, both in Dutch-occupied and Republic-controlled areas. Its chapters explore the relationship between the center and the regions, including the emergence of separatism in the South Moluccas. Similarly, Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung’s *Dari Negara Indonesia Timur ke Republik Indonesia Serikat* (*From the State of Eastern Indonesia to the Unitary Republic of Indonesia*)
(Jogjakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1985) provides a first-person account of the political shifts occurring in the Dutch-controlled eastern regions of Indonesia during the revolution by the former Prime Minister of the State of Eastern Indonesia.

Following independence, Indonesian politics delved into a period of chaos as different factions vied for influence in Jakarta. This was also a period of Indonesia’s first experiment with a parliamentary democracy, which allowed the free formation of parties that represented a broad spectrum of interests and that eventually distilled to three major axes of power: the military, the communists, and political Islam (as the chapter on the South Moluccas shows, political Christianity played a role disproportionate to its small size as well). This political era, open yet chaotic, is examined by Herbert Feith, whose *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962) emphasizes the tumultuous nature of politics in Jakarta in the early Soekarno period, including the numerous cabinets between 1949 and 1957. The difficulty in governing in this period is highlighted by his differentiation in the outlooks of Indonesian politicians, either as “administrators” intent on forming sound policy, or as “solidarity makers” intent on increasing Indonesian unity at a time when the Indonesian state was far from consolidated. Daniel S. Lev’s *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959* (Ithaca, New York: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University: 1966) begins where Feith’s work ends and describes the events that led to the imposition of “Guided Democracy” in Indonesia, a system that was democratic in name only.

The turmoil of the 1940s and 1950s included rebellions that were not, as this dissertation argues, aimed at separating regions from the Indonesian state, but at
reorienting the state ideologically toward communism or Islam or federalism. Although each was supported ideologically, all of them addressed issues that went beyond ideology, such as economic concerns and the limits of Jakarta’s power. The communist Madiun uprising, the Darul Islam rebellion, and the regionalist PRRI/Permesta rebellion of the 1950s are all covered in the literature cited above to some degree, as they occurred in the same time frame.

Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison’s *Feet to the Fire: CIA Covert Operations in Indonesia, 1957-1958* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999) is a more journalistic account of the same events, but nonetheless provides valuable insight into the period. Justus M. van der Kroef wrote several dispatches published in the *Far Eastern Survey*; these too provide details of the PRRI/Permesta rebellions as they occurred.

Although both the Madiun and Darul Islam rebels were never completely rehabilitated, there are several Indonesian language sources on the PRRI/Permesta rebellions that approach the rebellion sympathetically, emphasizing the anti-communist sentiment of the rebel groups in the face of a rising communist tide and published during the Suharto era. These include Alex Kawilarang’s autobiography, *Untuk Sang Merah Putih* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1988) and R. Z. Leirissa’s *PRRI, Permesta: Strategi Membangun Indonesia Tanpa Komunis* (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1991), the former written by a rebel leader. Following a discussion of early Indonesian politics and rebellion, this dissertation examines three cases of separatism and one of successful integration, in the order of their integration.

The first case of separatism is the South Moluccas. Although the region attracted attention recently, following its plunge into Muslim and Christian violence in 1999, this episode is only treated cursorily. Rather, the dissertation focuses on the period leading up to the outbreak of the declaration of the Republic of the South Moluccas (RMS) on 25 April 1950 and the political environment after its defeat within one year. Of primary importance is Richard H. Chauvel’s *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists: The Ambonese Islands from Colonialism to Revolt, 1880-1950* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1990). Chauvel’s thorough research dispels some of the myths surrounding the RMS rebellion,
describing the near numerical parity of the Christian and Muslim population (but the disproportionate influence of the former at the expense of the latter), the support for Indonesia among the Moluccan Christian community, and the limited support for the RMS from some segments of the Muslim community. Rather, events in the region were much more complicated, and there were some significant Christian Ambonese figures who were key in garnering support for the region’s inclusion in the Indonesian state. In the context of other failed rebellions, such as the ethnic Chinese in Penang or the Arakanese in Burma, Clive J. Christie’s *A Modern History of Southeast Asia: Decolonization, Nationalism, and Separatism* (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1996) covers the RMS struggle in the context of identities formed during the colonial period, including the relationship between some Christian Ambonese, especially those in the colonial army, and the Dutch. Christie also restates the juridical claims of the RMS leadership, based on the Linggadjati Agreement in November 1946. The role of the Ambonese in the Dutch colonial army is also explored by Gerke Teitler in his “The Mixed Company: Fighting Power and Ethnic Relations in the Dutch Colonial Army, 1890-1920” (*South East Asia Research*, Vol 10, No. 3).

Yet as this dissertation shows, the South Moluccas was successfully integrated into the Indonesian state following the demise of the RMS, due in part to the social continuity present in the South Moluccas following its incorporation, but also due to some antecedent conditions. These antecedent conditions are examined in Richard Chauvel’s “Republik Maluku Selatan and Social Change in Ambonese Society During the Late Colonial Period” (*Cakalele*, Vol 1, Nos 1/2 [1990]), Richard Z. Leirissa’s *Maluku Dalam Perjuangan Nasional Indonesia (Maluku in the Indonesian National*
Struggle) (Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 1975), and Johannes Leimena’s The Ambon Question: Facts and Appeal (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan, Republik Indonesia, 1950), the latter two written by Ambonese. Leimena’s role is particularly instructive, as he was included in nearly every one of Soekarno’s cabinets, founded the Christian party Parkindo, and represented the South Moluccas in Indonesian political life for several decades.

Perhaps due to the timing and circumstances of its incorporation, as well as the decline in separatist sentiment, much of the scholarship on the Republic of South Moluccas is objective (excluding, of course, that written by Ambonese separatists in Holland as well as some Dutch-authored work immediately following the fall of the RMS that reflects the sting of Indonesia’s successful independence movement). Most of the literature concerning West Papua, however, ranges from mildly normative to vehemently polemical in opposition to the region’s integration with Indonesia (except, of course, that which is written by most Indonesians, with a few exceptions). This position reflects both the seriously flawed nature of West Papua’s integration through the “Act of Free Choice” in 1969 (which even many supporters of Indonesian sovereignty in the region admit) and the continuing conditions in West Papua.

Robert C. Bone, Jr.’s The Dynamics of the Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) Problem (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Monograph Series, 1958) is among the more objective accounts of the early years of the debate over West Papua. Written as tensions between Indonesia and the Dutch were increasing but long before the situation was resolved, Bone writes clearly and factually about the situation in West Papua, noting the implementations of Dutch plans to develop the region, the emergence of both a pro-Dutch
and a pro-Indonesian elite, and describing the Indonesian position. Paul W. van der Veur’s “Political Awakening in West New Guinea” (*Pacific Affairs*, Vol 36, No. 1 [March 1963]) similarly examines emergent nationalism in the region in the context of growing hostilities, although by the time this article was published, West Papua had been *de facto* integrated with Indonesia.

Following the incorporation, Arend Lijphart published *The Trauma of Decolonization: The Dutch and West New Guinea* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). Despite increasing skepticism over the treatment of the West Papuan population in the early years of Indonesian control, the “trauma” of the book’s title refers to the feelings of the Dutch. Lijphart clearly felt as though the incorporation of West Papua into Indonesia was the correct result, and he argues that it was Dutch psychology that caused the hang-wringing and criticism that resulted despite the international community’s role in the handoff. Armed West Papuan resistance to Indonesia had not yet emerged when Lijphart published this work, which may have facilitated his denunciation of Dutch supporters of an independent or Dutch West Papua.

Following the 1969 “Act of Free Choice” and the continued marginalization of West Papuans, academic work turned increasingly critical of Jakarta. Much of the work was written from a human rights perspective, including Kees Lagerberg’s *West Irian and Jakarta Imperialism* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979), Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong’s *West Papua: The Obliteration of a People* (London: Tapol, The Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, 1984 (1983), and Robin Osborne’s *Indonesia’s Secret War: The Guerilla Struggle in Irian Jaya* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1985). Jakarta’s policies toward West Papua had created an environment of tremendous human rights abuses and
economic exploitation, and these works were written as appeals. Despite their normative perspectives, they were written in a scholarly manner and provide information gleaned from on-the-ground research conducted clandestinely; at that time, and to this day, most of the information that comes out of West Papua is either gathered illicitly or is approved by Jakarta, and heavily biased. The fall of Suharto in 1998 and the subsequent political changes in Indonesia have opened up conduits of information somewhat, but information is still heavily censored.

Work on West Papua has also taken a political and juridical perspective over the “Act of Free Choice” and West Papuan integration. Two key volumes in this stream include C. L. M. Penders’s *The West New Guinea Debacle; Dutch Decolonisation and Indonesia, 1945-1962* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002) and John Saltford’s *The United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua, 1962-1969: The Anatomy of Betrayal* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003). Similar to the prior work that emphasized human rights, these books are also normative but emphasize the international political situation in the period following the Indonesian revolution and in between the *de facto* takeover in 1962 and the *de jure* takeover in 1969. Both conclude that Jakarta’s claims on the territory are tenuous based on the facts surrounding the integration.

There are similarities in tone in the literature concerning Indonesia’s role in the takeover of East Timor, for the same reasons: disputes over the method of the region’s incorporation, and concerns over the fate of the East Timorese under Indonesia. Perhaps the earliest work on East Timor’s politics in the context of Portuguese decolonization is James Dunn’s *The Timor Story* (Canberra: Parliament of Australia, Legislative Research Service, 1976), written as a report for the Australian Parliament. Dunn served as the
Australian Consul to Portuguese Timor in 1962-64 and was in East Timor in 1974-75 as a representative of the Australian Foreign Affairs Department, witnessing firsthand the chaos and uncertainty of the period. He portrays the East Timorese leadership as capable but divided, and vulnerable to the Indonesian machinations that had begun prior to the Indonesian invasion. He is also critical of Western states’ positions on East Timor at the time, as they withheld their support for East Timor. This support for the Indonesian position is reflected in Indonesian documents of the time but also in Western accounts, including, for example, Donald Weatherbee’s “The Indonesianization of East Timor” (*Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Volume 3, No. 1, 1981), which argued that the incorporation of East Timor was a *fait accompli* and should be viewed as the end of the long process of decolonization in the region.

The dismal situation in the early years of Indonesia’s occupation was already well known, however. Jill Jolliffe’s *East Timor: Nationalism and Colonialism* (St. Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1978) is an account of the emergence of nationalism in East Timor and of Fretilin as the predominant political party in East Timor, as well as an account of Indonesian subterfuge. It also catalogues the early abuses of the Indonesian military. In the subsequent years, literature on East Timor (that was not sponsored by Jakarta) was critical of the conditions in East Timor with regard to human rights, as well as with regard to the absence of any kind of international process to incorporate East Timor. These include Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong’s *The War Against East Timor* (London: Zed Books, 1984), John G. Taylor’s *Indonesia’s Forgotten War* (London: Zed Books, 1991), and Dunn’s *Timor: A People Betrayed* (Milton, Australia: The Jacaranda Press, 1983).
East Timorese accounts of the Indonesian occupation were published as well, including José Ramos Horta’s *Funu: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor* (Trenton: The Red Sea Press, 1987) and Constancio Pinto’s *East Timor’s Unfinished Struggle: Inside the Timorese Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1997). Both are first-person accounts, the former was written by Fretilin’s United Nations Representative who was outside of East Timor when the Indonesians invaded, the latter written by a student activist who managed to escape after he became a target of the Indonesian intelligence services in East Timor and who subsequently graduated from Brown University. Both are anti-Indonesian polemics, and both authors have subsequently entered politics in East Timor (Ramos Horta is currently East Timor’s president, Pinto is currently East Timor’s UN Representative). Another account of life in East Timor was published in 1994 by João Mario Sousa Saldanha (*The Political Economy of East Timor Development* [Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1994]), an East Timorese who received his doctorate in economics from the University of California, San Diego, but who worked as an Indonesian government economist. His account, published first in Indonesia, outlines challenges facing Indonesia in the development of East Timor. It is mildly critical and is written with the goal of improving the situation in East Timor. Saldanha is currently the Minister for the Economy in East Timor. A rare critical account of the Indonesian occupation by an Indonesian scholar is George J. Aditjondro’s *In the Shadow of Mount Ramelau* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Indonesian Documentation and Information Centre, 1994). Aditjondro links human rights abuses to environmental degradation in East Timor and is very critical of Indonesia; not surprisingly, Aditjondro became a *persona non grata* in Indonesia following the release of the book and fled to Australia.
The significance of the role of the Catholic Church is explored in many sources on East Timor, but two biographies, Rowena Lennox’s *The Fighting Spirit of East Timor: The Life of Martinho da Costa Lopes* (New York: Zed Books, 2000) and Arnold S. Kohen’s *From the Place of the Dead: The Epic Struggles of Bishop Belo of East Timor* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999) examine the parts played by the Apostolic Administrators of East Timor following the Indonesian invasion. These two men were behind the church’s role as the only significant above-ground institution that voiced the grievances of the East Timorese both to Indonesia and the world, which contributed to the conversion of nearly the entire population of East Timor to Catholicism.

Following East Timor’s referendum in 1999, in which the majority of the population chose independence, literature on East Timor began to look backward and contextualize the state’s newfound independence. Helen Hill’s *Stirrings of Nationalism in East Timor, Fretilin 1974-79: The Origins, Ideologies and Strategies of a Nationalist Movement* (Sydney: Contemporary Oxford, 2002) examines the emergence of Fretilin as the predominant force in East Timor’s politics during the pre-invasion period, focusing on the policies and people behind the movement’s strength as well as the compromises and pragmatism that allowed it to dominate. *Chega! The Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, Timor-Leste* (The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, Timor-Leste. Dili, East Timor, 2005. CD-ROM) is an official report that details the abuses of the Indonesian occupation as well as the referendum period. It is the product of several years’ worth of research and was not released until 2006.

The academic literature that concerns Sumba is minimal, and consists mainly of ethnographies written by anthropologists. Jacqueline Vel’s *Uma Politics: An*
Ethnography of Democratization in West Sumba, Indonesia, 1986-2006 (Leiden: Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde Press, 2008), which includes some of her other work published in journals, concerns politics in Western Sumba, but is primarily written from an anthropological viewpoint. She describes the recent changes in West Sumba in the context of democratization and decentralization in Indonesia, but scholarship directly concerning politics in Sumba prior to this period is non-existent. The two chapters on Sumba provide an accounting of the anthropological literature on Sumba.

Why Separatism?

Separatism as a dissertation topic is important for several reasons. Separatist movements are a clear threat to the sovereignty and security of the state in which they occur, but they also pose a threat to neighboring states and regional stability. Separatist movements are evidence of failure in the creation of nationalism and state building in plural societies. They are also manifestations of the failure of states to create egalitarian societies in terms of the economy, political representation, and culture. For all of the cases in this study, separatism also has a religious aspect; the Moluccas, West Papua, Sumba, and East Timor have large Christian populations, and Indonesia is predominantly Muslim. Natural resources and the profits accrued from their exploitation are factors in

---


37 Indonesia is still considered to be in a state building stage. See: William T. Tow, Asia-Pacific Strategic Relations: Seeking Convergent Security (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 139.
the cases as well, perhaps with the exception of Sumba, as is access to development funds.

The topic of separatism also reflects the fluidity and impermanence of the concept of sovereignty. Sovereignty is an elusive concept in the field of political science. It is traditionally explained as the ability of a state to do what it likes within its own borders, accounting for international factors. Yet recent scholarship has called into question such an oversimplified view of sovereignty. In scholarship with Weberian roots sovereignty has been cast in economic terms. Others have raised more questions than answers about the nature of sovereignty. How did state sovereignty evolve following the peace of Westphalia? Where do NGOs fit? What about questions of race or gender? What role does sovereignty play in the case of transborder refugees? How does the state express its sovereignty over those who would undermine it? Is the United Nations a threat to sovereignty? Other theorists have questioned the seemingly inherent territoriality of the


Cynthia Weber argues that sovereignty, generally antithetical to intervention, can be “simulated,” whereby intervention in another state becomes an aspect of the intervening state’s expression of its own sovereignty.

A greater understanding of the nature and interaction of separatism, nationalism and sovereignty may help to promote peace in areas of conflict, either by showing governments how and why they may be fueling separatism, or by showing groups attempting to claim their right of self-determination how best they might achieve that end. Although this dissertation is concerned only with cases under Indonesian rule, the findings here may be applicable to other cases. Further comparative case-study research may shed light on other areas experiencing similar separatist conflict.


CHAPTER 2: SOVEREIGNTY AND STATE CONSOLIDATION

IN EARLY INDONESIA: RESISTANCE AND REBELLION

Among even mildly interested observers of Indonesian politics there is an awareness of Indonesia’s struggles with state cohesion and separatism, in now independent East Timor, for example, and in recently pacified Aceh and the simmering West Papua. Others with a deeper interest will think of the Republic of South Moluccas movement, centered in Ambon and dating to the 1950s, or more obscure regional stirrings such as those in Riau, the Minahasa region of Sulawesi (Celebes), or West Timor. This chapter will discuss an even more nuanced impression of anti-state movements in Indonesia: those whose goal was not to separate from Indonesia, but rather to reshape the nature of the Indonesian state.

The appeal of fundamentally changing the nature of the Indonesian state is not a phenomenon of Indonesia’s turbulent past. On 22 May 2006, a police raid netted three leaders of the Tanggerang-based Forum Komunikasi Masyarakat Sunda Nusantara (the Sunda Nusantara Community Communication Forum or FKMSN). Claiming that “Sunda Nusantara” encompasses all of Indonesia and is based on a former kingdom that ruled what is now Indonesia, Syahron, one of those arrested, stated: “We don’t want to establish a state within a state. We want to revive a state that was buried. Therefore, the FKMSN does not acknowledge the Republic of Indonesia, nor the Pancasila.”

---

43 Multa Fidrus and Theresia Sufa “Group Plotting to Restore West Java Kingdom” Jakarta Post, 24 May 2006, 4, emphasis added. Sunda is the region of West Java, not including Jakarta and its nearby environs. Sundanese are closely related to the Central and East Javanese, but they have a distinct language and ethnic identity, cultural traditions and expressions, etc. Sundanese are the second largest ethnic group in Indonesia, making up around 15 percent of the total population. “Nusantara” is a
used the term “From Sabang to Merauke” to describe the region encompassed, expropriating the term used by the Indonesian government since the time of the revolution.

The “movement” was founded in Bogor in 2001 by Achmad Sujai, its chairman. By 2006 there were chapters in Bandung, Garut, Cirebon, Sukabumi, Lebak, Karawang, Cianjur, Bekasi, and Jakarta. Syarhon claimed that in Tanggerang alone there were 700 followers. When the police raided their base, they seized a flag, documents, a traditional dagger (kujang) and stamps and stickers for distribution and promotion. Ari Novi Purnama, the head of the Jayanti (Tanggerang) district administration, said the group had been under surveillance since January 2006. “Their movement is very dangerous and could cause the nation to fall apart. Their presence is a threat,” he stated.44

Achmad Sujai was questioned by the police, who were considering charging him with treason, along with the original three arrested (Syahron, Suhaedi and Badri, Javanese term (from “Nusa” meaning island and “Antero” meaning “other, or as a whole”) meaning “the islands” or “archipelago.” The use of the term in the name of the group indicates that the FKMSN’s claim is not simply over the Sundanese region, but over all of Indonesia, based on the idea of a former Sundanese kingdom ruling over the region, which is historically false. During the Indonesian Revolution, the Dutch set up a Pasundan federal state encompassing the Sundanese region. Captain Raymond Paul Westerling, a former commander of the colonial army’s special troops, amassed troops and supported the Darul Islam movement, and attempted to have his troops named the official army of the Pasundan State. The Dutch balked, Westerling assaulted Bandung but was repelled, and he fled. As a result, the republicans asserted control over Pasundan, and the affair is considered a blow against Indonesian federalism. C. L. M. Penders, The West New Guinea Debacle; Dutch Decolonisation and Indonesia, 1945-1962 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 185-194. In March 1956, Sundanese formed the Front Pemuda Sunda (Sunda Youth front) to decry “Javanese Imperialism.” Its leaders were arrested on subversion charges, but Sundanese politics became increasingly militant. Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962), 492

44 Ibid.
described as “farmers who live in the poor area of Pabuaran”). “We are not planning a coup d’état, that’s all police need to know. We just want to make people aware of the real history of the state,” stated Sujai.45

Although the threat posed to the state by the FKMSN was negligible, it nonetheless illustrates the contested nature of sovereignty in Indonesia, even in Java, as well as the exaggerated perception of the threat. In Java, where the state is the most established bureaucratically, there still exist pockets of separatist dissent; allegiance to the state is not a given. Furthermore, despite the lack of a real threat from this particular group, its existence is said to threaten the very existence of Indonesia, reflecting the unease with which the government views dissent but also the fact that Indonesia has been beset by separatist threats since its inception. Despite the fact that the FKSMN had few followers and was armed only with a few traditional daggers, it was portrayed as a grave threat.46

The political assertion of ethnic identity has risen in Java and elsewhere in Indonesia following Suharto’s abdication, bringing political openness and more autonomy in local politics. In Indonesia’s capital city, Jakarta, for example, the ethnic Betawi have been asserting their rights and identity as the “original” inhabitants of Jakarta, despite some uncertainty of what constitutes the Betawi identity. Siti Nurbaya Akbar has compared Betawi identity to Papuan and Acehnese identity but asserts that the

45 “Group May Be Charged with Treason,” Jakarta Post, 27 May 2006, p 5.

46 The reaction of the district head can also be interpreted as reflecting the habit of governments to overreact to perceived internal threats in order to “crack down” on dissident elements. Myriad historical examples exist, but perhaps few meet the ferocity with which the New Order used this strategy. The author would like to acknowledge James Rush for bringing this to the writer’s attention, a glaring oversight.
question of Betawi identity is different in that the problems they face are social and
cultural, not legal and political.\textsuperscript{47} Associated with the assertion of a Betawi identity has
been the formation of groups with Islamist leanings, such as the \textit{Forum Betawi Rembug}
(Betawi Brotherhood Forum, FBR) since an element of Betawi identity is religious. The
FBR, along with the \textit{Front Pembela Islam} (The Islamic Defender’s Front, FPI), gained
notoriety in 2006 in the debate over the proposed anti-pornography and “porno-action”
bill. Both groups were accused of intimidating free speech advocates who opposed the
bill in demonstrations, and the leader of the FBR, Fadloli El Muhir, was targeted for a
slander lawsuit by the former first lady, Sinta Nuriyah Wahid, after he called women who
took part in the protest “evil, wretched and immoral.”\textsuperscript{48} The FBR and FPI have been
accused of other forms of intimidation and intolerance as well, including blatantly
criminal acts that have gone unpunished, as well as anarchism.

These groups, or perhaps more accurately the actions of these groups, would have
been intolerable under the New Order, unless they were serving an instrumental role in
the state, such as the organization \textit{Pemuda Pancasila} (Pancasila Youth).\textsuperscript{49} Rather, instead
of acting as unofficial arms of the state, the FBR’s (and the FPI’s) rhetoric explicitly

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{47} “Betawi People Demand Legal Recognition, Compensation” \textit{Jakarta Post}, 5
June 2006, p 4. This assertion ignores the economic aspects of the Papuan and Acehnese
struggles.


\textsuperscript{49} The FBR emerged in July 2001, and the FPI emerged in August 1998. \textit{Pemuda
Pancasila} was an instrument of the state but was also known for criminal behavior. Its
relationship to the state allowed the latter a degree of deniability in responsibility for the
groups actions. See Loren Ryter, “Pemuda Pancasila: Last Loyalist Free Men of
Suharto’s Order?” \textit{Indonesia}, 66 (October 1998), 45-73. For a wider view of quasi-
legitimate youth gangs in Indonesia under the New Order, see: Loren Ryter, “Youth,
Gangs, and the State in Indonesia” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2002).
\end{flushleft}
states that they are filling a gap left open by the state.\textsuperscript{50} In this regard, they can be viewed as a mirror image of separatist groups in other regions: those separatists are spurred by the effectiveness of the state, at least in terms of its capacity to commit violence in the name of national unity, whereas the FBR and FPI are spurred by what they view as the ineffectiveness of the (new, democratic, reformed) state. Specifically they criticize its inability to control distasteful elements of the nation, such as alcohol consumption, “pornography” and “porno-action” (\textit{pornoaksi} including the traditional dress and behavior of certain Indonesian groups), and religious pluralism, elements tolerated or even promoted by the New Order. In the space opened up by the demise of the New Order, there has emerged room for groups to claim that they are making up for the lack of ability or will of the state.

Despite the FKMSN’s small membership and its crime being ideological in nature, it is seen as a much more serious threat than either the FBR or FPI, who routinely flaunt the law with seeming impunity. This reflects the fundamental insecurity of the Indonesian state, and the incomplete nature of Indonesian sovereignty. This insecurity did not emerge after the fall of the New Order, however, but as this chapter shows it has deep roots in Indonesia’s political history.

\textbf{Indonesian Sovereignty in Practice}

The practice of sovereignty in Indonesia is variously asserted as contested, strong, weak, questionable, and unquestionable, depending on the location and context in question. This section explores Indonesian sovereignty in the context of national

consolidation, from the point of view that sovereignty in Indonesia is not as definite as is asserted by the central government and is tenuous at best in various locales, including those used as cases in this study.

This dissertation considers the start of Indonesian history, that is the conception of Indonesia as a modern state, to be the beginning of the 20th century, with the formation of early nationalist groups, including Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Dagang Islam (later Sarekat Islam). Prior to this period, what is now Indonesia was the Dutch East Indies, somewhat consolidated over 300 years of wars, treaties and negotiation, formalized through custom and local agreements and later through “short contracts” at the beginning of the 20th century. The sovereignty of the Dutch East Indies government, however, was never fully consolidated, especially in peripheral regions where perhaps the majority of the population had never seen a Dutchman. Furthermore, the sovereignty of the Dutch East Indies was consistently challenged by various parties within the Indies through the dawn of World War II and the Japanese invasion.

Early attempts at resisting Dutch imperialism came in the form of localized rebellion, generally aimed at restoring the status quo prior to Dutch colonization. Perhaps the most famous was the Java War of 1825-1830, led by the charismatic Prince Diponegoro. Although he is now revered as a national (read: Indonesian) hero, with streets, buildings, statues and even a university named for him, as Benedict Anderson points out, Diponegoro was fighting not for the sovereignty of the entire Indies, to be united under “Bhineka Tunggal Ika” (Unity in Diversity), but rather to re-impose the
royal family’s sovereignty, to conquer Java.\textsuperscript{51} It was not a war of liberation, as it is remembered now, but rather a power struggle over domination and spoils.

The Aceh War is perhaps the second most cited example, and the bloodiest colonial war for the Dutch. Yet at the end, although the Dutch controlled the capital and major cities of Aceh, they could never fully assert sovereignty throughout the territory. It would have been foolhardy if not suicidal, for example, for an unarmed Dutchman to walk into the interior of Aceh alone, right up until the Japanese invasion. Aceh is not as often cited in appeals to Indonesian nationalism perhaps because the Acehnese had for centuries operated as a powerful and independent kingdom, rising in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century to defeat the Portuguese armada at Malacca and seize Johor, later in decline signing a treaty with the British in the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, and then ascending again in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{52} The Dutch never fully controlled Aceh despite the imposition of corvee labor and taxation,\textsuperscript{53} and it is safe to say that Indonesian sovereignty over Aceh has never been completely consolidated. Furthermore, Aceh’s history points to a fierce independent identity that has stymied Indonesian attempts to placate or pacify the region, with periods of unsteady


truce punctuated by open conflict (see below). Resistance to the Dutch does not guarantee a place in the Indonesian nationalist mythology; rather, that place depends on the circumstances and interpretations that follow.54

Prior to the beginnings of consolidation under the Dutch, what became Indonesia was a collection of kingdoms, mostly small and often in conflict. Occasionally a powerful kingdom arose, encompassing its surrounding kingdoms and demanding tribute from others. At times the geographic reach of these kingdoms was enormous, for example during the Sri Vijaya or Majapahit periods, or during the kingdom of Aceh’s period of domination over northern Sumatra and the Malacca Strait trade route, although the extent of depth of the reach of these various kingdoms is questionable, especially in peripheral regions such as Sumba and Papua.55 As Clive Christie notes, “None of the pre-colonial

54 Pattimura (Thomas Matulesia, alt. Matulessy) of Ambon is an interesting and instructive example. Among Indonesian nationalists in Ambon he was used as a symbol of “patriotic” “Indonesian” resistance to the Dutch. See, for example: John A. Pattikayhatu, et al., Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Imperialisme dan Kolonialisme di Daerah Maluku (The History of Resistance to Imperialism and Colonialism in Maluku) (Jakarta: Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional, 1983 [1981]), 76, 88. But following the declaration of the Republik Maloekoe Selatan (Republic of South Moluccas) Pattimura was used by the Moluccans to represent a (Moluccan) nationalism distinct from and opposed to Indonesian nationalism. Richard Chauvel, Nationalists, Soldiers, Separatists: The Ambonese Islands from Colonialism to Revolt, 1880-1950 (Leiden, KITLV Press, 1990), 369; Ben Van Kaam, The South Moluccas: Background to the Train Hijackings (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1980), 5-25. In 1963, following the cessation of RMS violence, President Soekarno named Pattimura a “great Indonesian patriot.” Soekarno, “Pidato PJM Presiden Sukarno Pada Pemberian Nama Universitas Negeri di Ambon,” 30 April 1963, nst. 398/63. Of course, similar to the Diponegoro revolt, Pattimura’s revolt had local and not “national” goals. Christie, 111. Today Pattimura remains a potent symbol for both sides. In Ambon, the airport, a university, and streets are named for him, and there is a statue dedicated to him that overlooks Ambon harbor. As with other “Indonesian” heroes, streets are named for him throughout Indonesia.
states had exercised authority over anything more than a fraction of the region…

Moreover, although there had been resistance to the consolidation of Dutch power throughout the Indies, these revolts… can only retrospectively be described as manifestations of Indonesian nationalism. These were, in fact, regional resistance movements defending the rights of local states and the indigenous religion."\(^{56}\) And similar to the manufactured memory of Diponegoro as an Indonesian hero, the memories of Sri Vijaya and Majapahit have also become “national” (Indonesian) markers that help define its territorial borders, occasionally with regard to Papua but especially with regard to East Timor.\(^{57}\)

Viewed with this long term approach, it is clear that early forms of sovereignty in the Indonesian region had historically been marked by periods of occasional but incomplete consolidation, waxing and waning geographically, but also in terms of ability

---


\(^{56}\) Christie.

\(^{57}\) Kahin notes the claim to West Papua based on its supposed inclusion in both Srivajaya and Majapahit in 1950. George McT. Kahin, “Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics and Nationalism,” Secretariat Paper No. 6 (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1950), 35. A tract published by the Indonesian Department of State in 2005 attested to the “definite fact” that Indonesian nationhood and sovereignty are traced to Sri Vijaya and Majapahit despite the fact that the very concept of Indonesia would not surface until hundreds of years later. “Gagasan Pengembangan Budaya Politik Indonesia” in *Modul Pemantapan Budaya Politik* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik, Departmen Dalam Negeri, 2005), 2. Perhaps this false notion of the origins of Indonesian sovereignty contributes to the problems associated with the consolidation of Indonesian sovereignty to this day. Cf. Anderson. *Imagined Communities*, 120. Harsher criticism of this notion comes from C. L. Penders, “For the assertions that the ancient and essentially trading emporiums of Srivijaya and Mojopahit should be seen as the precursors of the new Indonesia are not backed by any solid historical evidence; hence, they should be dismissed as the products of the fertile minds and warped imaginations of these romantic-nativistic advocates. Penders, 152.
to broadcast or project power over those subsumed under the nominal territory. Arguing that Sumba was part of the Majapahit empire, for example, is akin to arguing that it was fully integrated into the Dutch East Indies. Occasional tribute may have been paid by these regions, but a relationship of complete, uncontested sovereignty did not exist. Rather it was the creation of a “progressive” identity, as opposed to “regressive” ideas of identity, that allowed for the birth of Indonesian nationalism.

The Late Colonial Period and the Birth of Modern Nationalism

George Kahin’s seminal work *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* shows the nature of the evolution of nationalism in the Indies. The formation of *Boedi Oetomo* and *Sarekat Dagang Islam* (later *Sarekat Islam*, SI), among other groups, play prominent roles in his analysis of the birth of Indonesian nationalism, and it is from these groups that we begin to see the emergence of a pan-Indonesian identity, or at least the appeal to recognize it. It began in the center of the Indies (and what would become the center of

---


60 George McT. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1952), 65-98. Anderson points to the nature of this
Indonesia), Java, and resonated first in Sumatra and Bali, and soon Makassar and Manado, and elsewhere in the Indies.

With the emergence of a pan-Indonesian identity, or at least the idea of a pan-Indonesian identity, spurred paradoxically by the introduction of education for indigenes by the Dutch and spread first among the elites then filtering downward, came rebellion aimed at replacing Dutch imperialism not with a return to a feudal past but with a modern nation-state. The first manifestation of serious rebellion following the formation of Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam was the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) rebellion of 1926-27, centered in Banten, West Java. The PKI emerged from socialist unions such as the Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereniging (The Indies Social Democratic Association; ISDV), created and initially led by a Dutch socialist, Hendricus Josephus Fransiscus Marie Sneevliet, in 1914. The ISDV was originally formed to represent Dutch labor in the Indies, but quickly moved to include indigenous groups as well through association with the Sarekat Islam. Although the rebellion was a failure it was driven by a modern and modernist ideology that posed a serious threat to the (incomplete, contested) sovereignty of the Dutch in the Indies. Furthermore, the Banten revolt set an example for the developing nationalist movement: “The Sarekat Islam and even more so the PKI introduced to Banten the tools of modern politics, such as newspapers, public meetings, strikes, demonstrations, and petitions… To some extent, if only briefly, this led to a better emerging nationalism, as a phenomenon among the young and educated. Anderson. Imagined Communities, 119-122.

articulation of local grievances." Not surprisingly following the revolt the PKI was banned and persecuted until the Japanese invasion, and its members (those who were not imprisoned) disbanded to found other political parties, most notably the *Partai Nasionalis Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist Party, PNI) and *Partai Repoeblik Indonesia* (Indonesian Republic Party, Pari), the latter formed in Bangkok by Tan Malaka, the former head of the PKI. The PKI and its affiliate organizations remained underground through the late Dutch colonial period, but it retained respect until the Madiun uprising.

Following the PKI revolt and the formation of nationalist parties, overt resistance to the Dutch moved underground as the Dutch further consolidated their rule through, for example, modernizing the police force. Yet there were still plenty of overt opportunities to join organizations to express Indonesian identity, however subdued. The Dutch had created the *Volksraad* (People’s Council) in 1918, a representational body consisting of 38 members, 15 of whom were indigenes, that was essentially toothless but that provided a forum for Indonesian elites to interact publicly and discuss other matters privately. In 1925, a new constitution was introduced which limited the power of the Council of the

---

62 Williams, *Communism, Religion and Revolt*, 314.


Indies, and gave the Volksraad the ability to introduce legislation and oversight of the budget and internal legislation. Real power, however, eluded the Volksraad, and it was viewed as a “gesture toward popular involvement” (although members played significant roles in the continuing political awakening that occurred over the next two decades).66 Beyond this explicitly political organization was the emergence of unions and organizations of the Indies’ newly educated elite, such as doctors and lawyers associations.67

What overt expressions of nationalism the Dutch could find or witness were quickly quelled, yet the Dutch could not simultaneously encourage indigenous education while stamping out emergent nationalism; the two went hand in hand.68 The Japanese invasion proved that all it took was a spark to set the fires of nationalism ablaze in Indonesia.

To begin with, the Japanese invasion proved that the myth of Dutch invincibility or superiority was false. Although Japan had started to rise in the late 19th century with

66 Rickleffs, 161; cf. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 38, fn 6. Kahin argues that in some respects the Volksraad may have “retarded the movement,” dividing the nationalists between those who felt that they could gain through cooperation with the Dutch, and those who thought it was best to refuse this cooperation.

67 Representing a break with the past (tradition) and embracing the future (modernity) these organizations were created by the (almost exclusively) young, educated men and given (Dutch) names such as Young Java, Young Amboina, and the League of Young Muslims (Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972) [especially chapter 1]; Anderson, Imagined Communities, 119; Anderson, “Indonesian Nationalism Today,” 3.

68 Despite the rising support for Indonesian nationalism, higher education in the Indies remained outside the grasp of the vast majority of natives. In 1940, out of a population of over 70 million natives only 637 were in college and only 37 graduated. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 32.
the Meiji restoration, the victory of Japan in the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War cemented Japan’s place as the rising force in Asia. As a result of rising Japanese status, Japanese citizens in the Indies were granted European status.69 Elites in Indonesia began watching Japan and learning from the example it set.

Furthermore, the Japanese rolled into the Indies easily and quickly, killing, imprisoning or exiling Dutch citizens, and freeing Indonesian nationalist leaders imprisoned by the Dutch, including Soekarno, Mohammed Hatta, and Sutan Sjahrir. Yet another important legacy of the Japanese was training Indonesians, both in military and government affairs. Stretched thin, the Japanese had no hopes of directly ruling the Indies and, similar to the Dutch, ruled through proxy, most often co-opting elites and eliminating those who refused to cooperate. The creation of the Soekarel Tentara Pembela Tanah Air (Volunteer Defenders of the Homeland or PETA) was another important step. The group was a Japanese-trained but Indonesian-officered military organization created to assist the Japanese to ward off potential attack.70

The Japanese invasion heartened the nationalists, at least initially, but also created divisions among some of the groups and individuals whose stances toward the Japanese differed. The Japanese, for their part, realized that some sort of accommodation with the nationalist movement would be necessary were they to accomplish their goals in Indonesia. The nationalists took a two-pronged approach to working with the Japanese, maintaining an above-ground movement that worked with Japanese (Soekarno and Hatta)


70 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 109.
and an underground mindful of the goals of independence (Sjahrir). Soekarno and Hatta were accused of collaboration from all sides at one point or another, but it did little to quell their popularity among the Indonesian people, who understood their greater goal. Soekarno would often insert vague nationalist references in his speeches that would not likely be caught by the Japanese but would be understood by the population, such as condemning imperialism, understood by the people to include Japanese imperialism. According to Soekarno, 75 percent of his speeches during this period were pure nationalism. The Japanese began to realize that some of the nationalist organizations were becoming harmful to or divergent from their imperial goals, and began to take steps to increase monitoring or even disbanding groups, but the strategy was only partly successful.71

As the war came to an end, with Japan defeated, the Indonesian nationalists asserted their right to a free and independent Indonesia. Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta were kidnapped and compelled to write a three-sentence declaration of independence, evidence of the uncertainty and disunity among nationalists, and the war for Indonesian independence began. This struggle defined Indonesian identity for the next 50 years, and continues to shape Indonesian politics and culture to this day.

The Soekarno Era: Revolution, Independence and Early Threats to Consolidation

Madiun

After the declaration of independence and the initiation of hostility between the Republicans and the Dutch (who followed Allied forces sent to maintain order by several months), the first armed resistance from within the newly declared Republic came in the

71 Ibid., 104-115.
form of the brief Madiun rebellion. In July 1947, after months of fruitless negotiation following the signing of the Linggadjati Agreement in November the previous year, the Dutch Prime Minister Louis Beel ordered an all out attack on Republican positions. The Dutch seized much Republican territory, and were considered to be operating with a free hand as talks in the United Nations began to divide on ideological grounds (East versus West). Following the signing of the Renville Agreement and the enacting of a truce in January 1948, schisms among political parties within the Indonesian nationalist side began to widen in reaction to perceived support or lack of support by various parties in the United Nations, and over disagreements with signing the Agreement. The perceptions that the United States was supporting Holland and that the Soekarno-Hatta administration was capitulating to the Dutch pushed many toward the PKI and its affiliate organizations. In a broad attempt to rationalize the military, the Republican government was also bringing pressure to bear on the Pesindo (Pemuda Socialis Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Youth) in East Java to disarm, forcing its hand, and in September 1948 a poorly planned revolt unfolded.\footnote{Ibid., 290. The attempt to rationalize Republican troops came in the aftermath of the Renville Agreement, which reduced the size of Republican held territory and produced a flood of refugees, soldiers and guerillas into Republican held territory in central and eastern Java, creating substantial chaos in some regions, a lack of jobs, food and housing, and stoking resentment and competition between Sundanese and Javanese. The Renville Agreement also “gave the Republic’s right and centrist groups (The Masyumi and PNI) the opportunity to oust the left-wing coalition (the Sayap Kiri) which had governed Indonesia since 1946… the Sayap Kiri became increasingly isolated and its opposition increasingly radical.” Anne Swift, The Road to Madiun: The Indonesian Communist Uprising of 1948 (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1989), 1-3.}

On 18 September a “coup” was declared at Madiun, East Java, by the local leader of Pesindo, Sumarsono, on behalf of the PKI. Sumarsono received local support from
pro-PKI members of the TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian National Military), and Madiun and its nearby towns were successfully seized. The following day Soekarno made a speech essentially asking the Indonesian people to choose between him and Musso, the leader of the PKI who had returned from exile in Moscow the previous month. Musso, in a fiery retort, replied an hour and a half later, exhorting the PKI to rise up in rebellion and proposing himself as a potential replacement for Soekarno and Hatta.\(^{73}\) In other areas the Republicans rounded up PKI members who were mostly unaware of the events in Madiun, proof of the spontaneous nature of the Madiun revolt. Although the bulk of Republican troops were amassed against the Dutch at the Van Mook line (a front unilaterally declared by the Dutch that supposedly reflected their positions at the time of the 5 August cease fire agreement), the communists had poor training and discipline, and the will of the people was clearly in support of Soekarno. Within days the public pronouncements of the Pesindo/PKI on the radio began backpedaling from all out rebellion with the goal of overthrowing the Republican leadership to simply supporting changes through the Republican government. By late October the rebellion was quashed.

Two interesting paradoxes concerning the communist rebellion emerged: the majority of the peasants were relatively well-off in Republican controlled areas, compared to those under Dutch rule; and the middle class had suffered disproportionately compared to the peasantry. Thus two essential ingredients for communist overthrow of the bourgeoisie were missing. Kahin notes that ethnic Chinese, often victimized by some nationalists who wanted to exclude them, fared fairly well during the communist

\(^{73}\) By proposing himself as an alternate to Soekarno and Hatta, Musso effectively alienated himself from much potential support. The duo was seen as the leaders of the revolution and the declarers of independence, and retained support throughout Indonesia.
uprising, perhaps a conscious attempt by the PKI to foment friendly Sino-PKI relations.\textsuperscript{74} Furthermore, as the Dutch violated the Renville Agreement on 18 December 1948, moving to capture the Republican leadership and the city of Jogjakarta, the Republicans freed almost all of the prisoners seized during the Madiun affair (approximately 35,000) and re-armed them to fight the Dutch (on December 19 eleven of the PKI leaders responsible for Madiun were executed). The PKI was not formally banned after Madiun, and for its role following the Second Police Action by the Dutch it was “rehabilitated.”\textsuperscript{75}

Thus the “greatest internal challenge mounted” during the Revolution against the (recently declared and itself far from consolidated) Republic came from the heartland of the Indies/Indonesia: Java.\textsuperscript{76} And again the rebellion was directed by a poorly organized communist party with uncertain goals and limited popular support. At the time it was enough to prevent Dutch arguments that Indonesia’s independence would cause it to fall to communism.\textsuperscript{77} The PKI was not, however, to fade out of the Indonesian political scene. Rather, it would slowly begin rebuilding momentum through the 1950s, eventually becoming a serious contender for power in Indonesia, until its utter and bloody demise in the events of 1965-1967.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 39, 209-305.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Swift, 90.
\end{itemize}
Early Consolidation

George Kahin notes that the period immediately following the Madiun affair saw the consolidation of the major political parties, and the clarification, cohesion and articulation of their positions and ideology, including Masjumi, Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia, Partai Murba, Partai Sosialis Indonesia, Partai Nasional Indonesia, Persatuan Indonesia Raja, and Darul Islam. Although Darul Islam would eventually revolt against the central government, it was not initially openly hostile toward the Republican leadership following the latter’s concessions of territory to the Dutch as long as the former’s autonomy was respected, and it gained popularity in those regions by capitalizing on feelings of abandonment regarding the Republic and by rejecting modernist interpretations of Islam. Darul Islam was theocratic in nature and resisted control by the Dutch, and within months had turned openly hostile toward the Republic.

---

78 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 39, 305-31.

79 Although somewhat counterintuitive to Western ears familiar with the notion of modernizing Christianity, the modernist movement aims at a stricter or “purer” interpretation of Islam, removing the preexisting animistic, Buddhist and Hindu elements that define traditional Indonesian interpretations of Islam. The two streams have been defined as abangan and santri. See Clifford Geertz, The Religion of Java (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); cf. Mark Woodward, Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989).

80 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 326-31. Remarkably, Jacques Bertrand writes that “By 1950, the Indonesian Republic had reached a measure of stability that marked the end of the first critical juncture… there were no immediate threats to the state.” He discounts the Darul Islam rebellion, ignores simmering problems in the regions, and downplays discontent among military elites that led to, for example, the 17 October Affair of 1952, a near coup d’état. These are discussed below. Jacques Bertrand, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 33.
Within a few years, the *Darul Islam* movement had turned toward open rebellion against the Republic, and was supported, along with Permesta, by the United States (see below).

As opinion turned against the Dutch, most critically that of the United States which threatened to withhold reconstruction funding and began to openly support Indonesian sovereignty, the Dutch finally capitulated. From August 23 to November 2, 1949, delegations from Holland, the Republic, and the *Bijeenkomst voor Federale Overleg* (the Federal Consultative Assembly or BFO, the Dutch-sponsored Indonesian representative committee) met in the Hague and with the assistance of the UN hammered out an agreement that stipulated the transfer of sovereignty no later than December 30, 1949.

The majority of the Dutch were no doubt disappointed, but the treaty did favor the Dutch in some regards. The most tangible way was a concession regarding the assigning of debt, a contentious issue that had to be settled before the Dutch would agree to transfer sovereignty. The Indonesians capitulated on this issue after protracted negotiations, fearing a loss of American support, and gained independence owing Holland $1.3 billion.81 The other issue was that of West Papua, which was shelved to be settled later. The final piece of the puzzle for Indonesia’s assumption of sovereignty was what Kahin calls the “unitarian movement,” which for the first seven months of 1950 overshadowed all other developments in Indonesia.82

---

81 This figure amounted to 70 percent of the debt of the colonial administration, and as calculated by Indonesians 42 percent had been incurred by the Dutch prosecuting the revolution. Kahin and Kahin,34.

82 Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 417-446.
Following the cessation of hostilities between the Dutch and the Indonesians and with the status of Papua undecided, Soekarno and the Republicans began the job of consolidating Indonesia, bringing all of the former Dutch East Indies into the fold. This was a tremendous task and, as I will argue later in this dissertation, remains a process that has never been completely realized in some of the farther flung regions of Indonesia. The task of consolidation was made more difficult due to Soekarno’s inability to understand economic problems, especially those outside of Java. In addition, Soekarno’s unwillingness to support a federal system of government granting more autonomy to the regions outside of Java (despite the disagreement of his vice president, Mohammed Hatta) and the reliance on Javanese bureaucrats throughout the archipelago exacerbated anti-Java sentiment. Soekarno felt that granting the regions more autonomy would spur separatism and that relying on a predominantly Javanese bureaucracy was a matter of practicality.83

The unitarian movement essentially changed the nature of the Indonesian government, concurrent with a change in the Constitution. Kahin states that some saw the movement as unnecessarily hasty and disorderly, but argues that it was perfectly natural and “healthy.”84 The federal system was a product of the Dutch system and perceived by its unitarian opponents as a mechanism for Dutch control. Members of the Koninklijk Nederlands Indische Leger (KNIL), the East Indies Army culled mostly from the

83 Kahin and Kahin, 42. In Ambon following the fall of the RMS, however, the maintenance of (predominantly Christian) Ambonese elites in positions of power contributed to the opposite effect, that is, the deflation of separatist tendencies. See next chapter.

84 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 450.
Moluccas, the Minahasa region and Timor, were opposed to the unitarianism, fearing that they would lose their better pay and threatened by the possibility of a “Mohammedian Javanese hegemony.”

On 23 January 1950, members of KNIL, including some Europeans and led by Captain Raymond Paul Westerling, assaulted Bandung but were convinced to leave by Major General Engels. They made their way to Jakarta with a coup d’état in mind, but were quickly suppressed by Republican troops. The involvement of Dutch officers did serious harm to the Dutch-Indonesian relationship, but it was later discovered that Sultan Hamid II of West Borneo, a federalist and member of the cabinet, had directed the assault.

Problems arose in South Celebes and Ambon as well, and led to the declaration of independence for the South Moluccas (this conflict is dealt with more thoroughly in the following chapter). Much of the problem revolved around the role of the KNIL and the worries articulated above, and led to further problems in the Dutch-Indonesian relationship. Following a conference held on 3 – 5 May 1950, the constituent states of East Indonesia, represented by its president, Tjokorde Gde Rake Soekawati, and several members of Prime Minister Diapari’s cabinet, voted to unify with the Republic under a unitary system, despite some opposition to the plan but under pressure from Jakarta.

Sumatra soon followed, and the announcement of the formation of the Unitary

---

85 Ibid., 453-54.
86 Ibid., 454-55.
87 Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, Dari Negara Indonesia Timur ke Republik Indonesia Serikat (From the State of Eastern Indonesia to the Unitary Republic of Indonesia) (Jogjakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1985), 752-54. Jakarta brought pressure to bear on the leadership of the State of Eastern Indonesia because of the “Andi Azis Affair.” Azis, along with some 300 KNIL soldiers, captured troops loyal to the
State of Indonesia took place on 19 May 1950. Representatives of the Republican government led by Soekarno and the United States of Indonesia (Including the State of Eastern Indonesia) drafted and signed a provisional constitution on 15 August 1950, seen as shaking off the vestiges of Dutch rule. Soekarno formed a cabinet and the government divided Indonesia into provinces.

Consolidation of the unitary movement marked the end of the Indonesian revolution, according to Kahin. The biggest resultant change was in the attitude of the people, especially the youth, and showed a new confidence in their ability to tackle their new problems. Furthermore, vast political change, besides the obvious achievement of sovereignty, resulted. People were politicized, down to the village level, and politics were democratized and rationalized. Finally, there was a social transformation, also to the village level. The depletion of young men opened up land once overpopulated and added to women’s responsibility. Many officials who were seen as collaborators and opportunists were replaced. The practice of *gotong-rojong* (a Javanese term meaning “cooperative self-help”) was developed by the Sultan of Jogjakarta during the revolution and spread to other areas. Systems for agrarian credit and the establishment of cooperatives spread as well. The bargaining position of labor was bettered, and most parties, with the notable exception of the communists, became committed to a mixed economy: cooperative, socialist and capitalist, with a primary emphasis on the cooperative aspect. Despite these changes, Kahin notes, the peasants remained without a direct link to the central government on 5 April 1950. This led to the downfall of the Diapari cabinet, and Diapari’s absence from the negotiations during the 3-5 May conference.

---

88 Ibid., 765-771.
central government and still relied on people in positions of power to solve their problems.\textsuperscript{89} Kahin’s analysis, published in 1952, reflected his optimism for the immediate post-revolution period. Events subsequent to his work would cast a shadow on this optimism.

W. F. Wertheim pointed to five significant problems facing the fledgling state: political unity; Cold War alignment; the concept of democracy in an Indonesian context; an inefficient bureaucracy; and a pervasive distrust of foreigners and foreign influences.\textsuperscript{90} His analysis views cultural, economic and religious factors that contribute to national unity (or disunity) and in a moment of prescience (the volume was written in 1956, revised in 1959) notes that “the near future of Indonesia is likely to be written in terms of revolution and counter revolution than in terms of peaceful evolution.”\textsuperscript{91} Herbert Feith differentiates between the two types of people involved in nation/government building in Indonesia: “administrators” and “solidarity makers.”\textsuperscript{92} The former had the task of policy-making, the latter of creating cohesion.

\textsuperscript{89} Kahin, \textit{Nationalism and Revolution}, 471-78.


\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 340.

Three major divisions within Indonesia had to be resolved: political organization (here Feith differentiates between wet rice cultivators, maritime traders, and inland practitioners of swidden agriculture as presenting distinct political challenges due to their differentiated cultures); Islam and the differences in its influence throughout the archipelago; and the residual effects of Dutch rule. The administrators and solidarity builders were faced with the task of creating one nation from these disparate groups and creating one unifying culture from the new nation’s diversity. Feith notes the variance among parties in their interpretations of democracy.

As Feith’s analysis points out, the first four cabinets, under Hatta (1949 – 1950), Natsir (September 1950 – March 1951), Sukiman (April 1951 to February 1952) and Wilopo (April 1952 to June 1953) were similar in that they were all “administrator” cabinets. They were oriented toward policy and solving practical problems rather than articulating ideology, and worked toward normalization, security and establishing a “strong, efficient and unified government.” Yet Feith notes a decline in executive power during this period. As elite politics assumed a fluid character the influence of “administrators” declined and was replaced by that of the “solidarity makers.” All four cabinets tried to legitimize themselves by fomenting a feeling of nationality, especially through media and propaganda. Appeals to nationalist “symbols” of unity in diversity such as the panca sila, common history and geography, and the tasks facing the fledgling

---

93 Although one could sensibly broaden the scope to include religion generally, as minority religious groups were also clamoring for recognition and against the imposition of shari’a or Islamic law, something that some groups, such as Darul Islam, favored. A Christian political party, Parkindo, had emerged by this time, and religion was seen as a factor in the rebellion of the mostly Christian Southern Moluccas.

94 Feith, The Decline, 30-45.
nation, and broadcast via various ministries including health, religion and agriculture as well as through schools, films, radio, wayang puppet shows and speeches by political leaders including Soekarno and Hatta, were generally well received by the population.95

The fragility of these early cabinets is apparent by their short lives. Two important developments from the Wilopo Cabinet included the secession of the Nahdlatul Ulama from Masjumi and the diversion of the PKI into support for the PNI and Soekarno.96 Needless to say, the latter division was not looked upon favorably by the military, and demobilization added to military apprehension. Anti-politician sentiment in the army increased and culminated in the 17 October 1952 demonstration. Feith surmised that the army, specifically Nasution and his camp, was planning a coup d’état, but did not carry it out. The events of 17 October influenced party alignments, bringing the PNI and Masjumi together against the PSI, and the communist party closer to the PNI. The question of holding elections, which had been avoided in the face of more pressing concerns, now became pertinent, and a bill was passed outlining election procedure.97

**Darul Islam**

95 Feith, *The Decline*, 303-316. The *panca sila* is the five pillars of Indonesian society. It includes belief in one god, humanitarianism, nationalism, consultative democracy, and social justice.

96 Masjumi was a political party with roots as a mass based umbrella Muslim organization during the Japanese occupation. Both Mohammediya, the modernist organization, and Nahdlatul Ulama, the traditionalist organization, were part of Masjumi. The leadership of NU were considered by Feith to be “solidarity makers” and not possessive of modern leadership skills, and they felt marginalized. The NU went on to form its own political party. Feith, *The Decline*, 233-37.

97 Feith, *The Decline*, 233-85. Some of the leaders of the 17 October affair, characterized by Feith as “the storm in the army,” were later deeply involved with the PRRI/Permesta rebellions described below, although by that time Nasution stood in opposition to them.
It was during the uncertainty of 1953 that the second serious armed conflict aimed at changing the nature of the Indonesian state intensified; it pitted the central government against rebels in Aceh, West Java, Central Java, Sulawesi, and South Kalimantan. The *Darul Islam* (Islamic State) Rebellion, as it was known, had roots that went back five years in West Java but in 1953 the rebellion took on a more ominous nature.98

In February 1948, in Dutch controlled West Java, Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo, the *imam* (head) of the movement, and the armed forces of Hizbullah and Sabilillah (essentially religious militias) decided to establish an Islamic government in West Java, and founded an Islamic army. Later that year, *Darul Islam* forces skirmished with both the Dutch and Republican troops, thereby establishing their rejection of Republican authority.99 On 7 August 1949, Kartosoewirjo proclaimed the Islamic State of Indonesia, which included all of the territory claimed by the Republican government.100 Although the Republican side declared the *Darul Islam* an illegal organization, because of the larger struggle against the Dutch pragmatism won out. A parliamentary investigation led by Moehammad Natsir differentiated the “renegade groups conducting

---

98 *Darul Islam*, when referring to the movement in Indonesia to found an Islamic state, is translated thus. It is, however, an “Indonesianization” of the Arabic Dar al-Islam, literally meaning the “house of Islam,” or figuratively the “world” or “territory” of Islam.”


100 There is some debate over just when the Islamic state was proclaimed, including speculation that it was proclaimed before the Japanese surrender. See: C. van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), chapter 1.
terror in the countryside and the true Darul Islam with its conception of an Islamic State.”

As Howard Federspiel has written:

Natsir’s recommendation reflected the viewpoint of many Muslim groups within the Republic, in that they did not support Kartosoewirjo and disapproved of his approach to the problem (sic) of an Islamic state, but were reluctant to either condemn him or have the government take decisive action against his movement because of its purported Muslim goals. Many Muslims… believed that persuasion could ultimately bring Kartosoewirjo in the republican fold. The isolated region and the need for republican forces elsewhere to counter the Dutch military made it infeasible to do anything about the Darul Islam for the remainder of the era.101

After independence, however, the movement flared again. By 1953 all five areas affected by Darul Islam were in open rebellion against the central government. This rebellion would last several years and be rekindled during the PRRI/Permesta conflict later in the decade (see below). Fealy has explained that the rebellious regions varied in their specific grievances against the government; the issues included “opposition to rationalising and demobilising sections of the Republican military, the assertion of greater economic and political autonomy, and local resistance to changing land tenure patterns.” He continues: “That is not to say that the DI rebellion was not genuinely Islamic, but rather that in many cases the initial grievances arose from provincial defence and politico-economic issues but later assumed a more strongly Islamic character.”102

Perhaps the clearest example of this was the outbreak of rebellion in Aceh in 1953, led by Daud Beurueh. The foremost reason behind the Acehnese revolt was the


102 Fealy, 17-18. The treatment of the military following independence led to other disturbances as well, including the 22 December coup d’état led by Colonel Simbolon in Medan, North Sumatra, an effort that was “hurriedly and inadequately prepared” and that ended after a month. Kahin and Kahin, 59-62.
refusal of the central government to give Aceh provincial status, something lobbied for by the Acehnese leadership who supported the revolution; the Acehnese bristled under the leadership of the predominantly Christian Bataks of North Sumatra. That being said, religion and the secular nature of the developing Indonesian state were also concerns, and these were enough for Daud to proclaim allegiance to Darul Islam under Kartosoewirjo, despite the “almost non-existent” communication between the two groups, and the traditionalist leanings of Daud’s group (as opposed to Kartosoewirjo’s modernist approach). The rebellion came to a negotiated end in 1961, with the establishment of the province of Aceh and the granting of a general amnesty. In Central Sulawesi and South Kalimantan, regional movements (Momoc Ansjarullah and Kesatuan Rakjat Jang Tertindas, respectively) dating to the end of the revolution and in opposition to the establishment of Indonesia, also aligned themselves with Kartosoewirjo and Darul Islam but were much less serious, and ended in negotiated surrender and amnesty by the early 1960s. The even less significant Central Java element of Darul Islam was defeated militarily by the mid-1950s.

The Darul Islam rebellion(s) had come at a time when the consolidation of the state of Indonesia was still underway. The rebellious regions were jostling for autonomy and recognition in the face of a new state. Their elites felt they were expressing the will of the people in opposing the central government in Jakarta. Their complaints took on a religious nature, especially considering the debate over what became known as the

---

103 Federspiel, 236; Kahin and Kahin, 44.

104 Federspiel, 236.
Jakarta Charter and its omission from the Constitution in 1945, an event that many devout Muslims remembered with dismay.\footnote{The Jakarta Charter was a reaction to Soekarno’s Pancasila speech that outlined the five principles underlying the Indonesian state. Soekarno did not explicitly include Islam or Islamic law in fear of alienating those of other faiths, and with the acceptance that most adherents of Islam in Indonesia did not support Islamic law. Proponents of the Jakarta Chapter wanted a phrase to be included that made a specific reference to the Muslims following Islamic law. Van Dijk argues that the exclusion of the Jakarta Chapter “may have contributed to the outbreak of the later Darul Islam revolts. It is doubtful, however… (that it) was a decisive factor.” Van Dijk, 58-59.}

The longevity of the \textit{Darul Islam} rebellion was also caused by the willingness of the population to join and support it. This support was based on two primary factors, argues C. Van Dijk: “The resentment at the growing influence of the Republican Army” and “growing Republican control of the provinces.”\footnote{Ibid., 340.} The former included complaints over the rationalization process that occurred following the revolution, including the disbanding of guerilla bands. This disbanding caused resentment, as the decommissioned fighters were pushed aside in favor of outsiders when local leadership positions were chosen. The latter complaint was based on a perceived intrusiveness of the Republican Government into local affairs, in a context of wariness about encroaching Javanese influence.\footnote{Ibid., 340-357.}

People in the regions outside Java, where the main export centres were located, had the feeling that they were paying for the development of the impoverished Java, without getting much in return, and that their interests were being seriously injured by the Central Government’s economic and monetary policies… All in all there was a strong impression outside Java that the Central Government was seeking to centralize the economy to serve the interests of certain segments of
Javanese society, which the outer regions already suspected of dominating the Administration… This coincided (after the first half of 1951) with a sharp decline in income and purchasing power. Also at the same time the economic life and productivity were threatened by Darul Islam activities, which resulted in a drop in production and trade. This, in turn, strengthened the feelings of economic deprivation, which constituted a root cause of the rebellion itself.\(^{108}\)

As the Darul Islam rebellion simmered in decline, the next major revolt that aimed at drastically reshaping the state in Indonesia came during the PRRI/Permesta rebellions. The two rebellions are often linked and referred to as one because of the cooperation between the leadership of the groups, although their end goals were divergent.

The context in Jakarta was still one of instability and change, with Soekarno’s cabinets coming and going. The first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet (July 1953 to July 1955) increased attention on the West Irian issue and broadened relations with China. The army’s role increased, and Aceh began openly to agitate for more autonomy after having been subsumed under the larger province of North Sumatra. Under Burhanuddin Harahap’s cabinet (August 1955 to March 1956) relations with Holland soured as Indonesia pulled out of the Dutch-Indonesia Union and moved toward nationalization. Following the Burhanuddin Harahap cabinet was the second Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet. Feith notes a relative lack of criticism from the parties at this stage. Rather than symbolizing their support for the cabinet, however, this showed their loss of significance as “channels of political articulation.” In June 1956 People turned to mob actions, the

\(^{108}\) Ibid., 357-59 (emphasis added). See also: Kahin and Kahin, 36.
first series of which was anti-Chinese.\textsuperscript{109} Ethnic and regional movements increased as well, and criticism was leveled at Jakarta for the inequitable distribution of wealth. Smuggling became an answer to Jakarta’s unfair policies, and Jakarta was often ill-prepared to deal with the infractions, such as in Minahasa in early- and mid-1956. This in turn eroded Jakarta’s legitimacy.\textsuperscript{110}

**PRRI/Permesta**

It was in this context of instability at the center that the PRRI/Permesta \textit{(Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam, Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia/Charter of the Common Struggle)} broke out. These two revolutionary movements, the former centered in Sumatra, the latter in Sulawesi, are lumped together because of the cooperation between the groups. Literature that deals directly with these rebellions is remarkably thin; there are several accounts of the overall political situation of the time, but few that focus on the revolts themselves.\textsuperscript{111} James Mossman’s journalistic narrative refers to the rebellions as

\textsuperscript{109} Feith, \textit{The Decline}, 480-87. Feith notes the importance of an anti-Chinese speech given by Assaat, a former minister in the Natsir cabinet, which defied the “prevailing restraints on racialist feelings, these restraints quickly lost their power.”

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 494-500.

“the politest (sic), most ambiguous civil war in modern history.” Polite or not, the rebellions fostered the consolidation of executive power at the cost of the political parties (except for the PKI) and were a major step toward the state’s confrontation with communism in 1965.

The PRRI rebellion began as several military officers, following the elections of 1955, announced the invalidity of the central government in the face of several factors. Many in the military were worried about the encroaching communist influence in Jakarta, including Soekarno’s plans for including communists in his cabinet as a result of their electoral gains. Jakarta’s economic policies, such as the nationalization of Dutch several “on the ground” articles in the Far Eastern Survey as the rebellion was breaking out, for example “Disunited Indonesia,” Far Eastern Survey, XXVII, No. 4 (April 1958), 49-63; and “Disunited Indonesia II,” Far Eastern Survey, XXVII, No. 5 (May 1958), 73-80. There are several Indonesian language sources on the rebellion as well, and many approach the rebellion sympathetically, emphasizing the anti-communist sentiment of the rebel groups in the face of a rising communist tide (for example, Alex Kawilarang’s autobiography, Untuk Sang Merah Putih [Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1988] and R. Z. Leirissa, PRRI, Permeata: Strategi Membangun Indonesia Tanpa Komunis [Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1991]). This emphasis is perhaps what allowed for publication of these works in Indonesia during the vehemently anti-communist New Order; it is hard to imagine the government allowing work sympathetic to rebellion to be published during the New Order tenure. An English language account of the rebellions was published by Colonel Rudy Pirngadie, Jakarta’s military spokesman, Rebels Without a Cause (The Permeata Affair) (Jakarta: New Nusantara Publishing Coy, ca. 1961) as the rebellions drew to a close, although the tract is obviously meant for foreign consumption, is polemical in nature and in some places inaccurate. It conflates, for example, the RMS rebellion, which had fizzled out years prior, with the Permeata rebellion (p 19) and oversimplifies the desires of military and civilian leaders involved in the rebellion. A thorough, reflective account has yet to be written.

112 Mossman, 9.

113 Many local civilian leaders were in agreement with the rebels’ goals, including decentralization and economic control. Mossman, 54.

114 Kahin and Kahin, 50-51.
assets, disproportionately hurt the regions.\textsuperscript{115} Mohammed Hatta, Soekarno’s Vice President and a native of Sumatra, resigned, leaving the outer regions feeling as though they had lost an advocate in Jakarta and increasing feelings that Dutch colonialism was being replaced by “Javanese colonialism.”\textsuperscript{116} Finally, after he was selected the army’s chief of staff, Nasution continued to rationalize the army – further alienating some soldiers, including the chief rivals for his new position – and began a shuffle of these same military commanders, transferring them away from lucrative assignments in which they had become entrenched.\textsuperscript{117} Colonel Alex E. Kawilarang, the commander of West Java’s Siliwangi division, was posted to Washington, and Colonel J. F. Warouw, the head of East Indonesia, to Peking, both as military attachés. Colonel Maludin Simbolon was to be transferred from North Sumatra to Jakarta and replaced by Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, who was the deputy chief of staff in Jakarta. Kawilarang and Warouw accepted their transfers, but both Simbolon and Lubis rejected theirs, and they joined in opposition to Nasution along with other disgruntled officers.\textsuperscript{118} Concurrent with the criticisms of Indonesian parliamentary democracy was a debate over potential alternatives to the system. Demonstrations, mostly anti-Western, rocked Jakarta. Soekarno chimed in on the debate with increasing criticism of the parties, implying an alternative plan.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{115} Van der Kroef, “Disunited Indonesia,” 49-63.

\textsuperscript{116} Mossman, 54.

\textsuperscript{117} Kahin and Kahin, 51-52; 54-57.

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 52; Feith, The Decline, 500-7.

\textsuperscript{119} Feith, The Decline, 516-520.
On 15 November 1956 Lubis launched a poorly planned and poorly executed coup d’état. A few days later Nasution tried to arrest him in Bandung, but managed to net only a few other officers. In so doing, Nasution alienated more of the army’s top leadership. Lubis was later implicated in an assassination attempt on Soekarno at a children’s school in Jakarta that killed and injured dozens, and he built up the Gerakan Anti-Komunis (Anti-Communist Movement), a paramilitary group implicated in other violence. Lubis’s support among the military prevented his arrest, but he subsequently went underground and later emerged in West Sumatra under the protection of Colonel Ahmad Husein.

Despite Lubis’ and Simbolon’s opposition to Jakarta, the first attempted break with Jakarta came on December 20, 1956 in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. Colonel Husein and some of the veterans from his Banteng Division drew up the Banteng Charter, demanding changes from Jakarta, including greater autonomy and immediate changes in the national leadership, both civilian and military. Husein seized power from Roeslan Moeljohardjo, the Governor of Central Sumatra, and installed himself in his place.

This act led to a series of defections. On 22 December Simbolon pronounced himself acting governor of North Sumatra and declared a state of war. In Sulawesi, Kahar Muzakkar, who had led soldiers from Sulawesi in Java during the revolution only to become disillusioned with military demobilization and to join Darul Islam, had controlled much of South Sulawesi. Following Warouw’s transfer, his replacement,

---

120 Kahin and Kahin, 52.

121 Ibid., 113-14.

122 Ibid., 59.
Lieutenant Colonel H. N. “Ventje” Sumual, like Warouw a Christian Minahasan, continued to support more autonomy for the regions. On 2 March 1957, with support from Lieutenant Colonel Saleh Lahade, a Muslim who read the Piagam Perdjuangan Semesta Alam (Permesta –Charter of Inclusive Struggle), Sumual instituted martial law, demanded more autonomy, and advocated for the return of Hatta to the vice presidency. South Sumatra followed on March 9, led by Lieutenant Colonel Barlian, although his attempts to have the Javanese governor replaced with a local leader were unsuccessful. South Sumatra was “Indonesia’s most important single region in economic terms.” In 1956 it provided 63.5 percent of Indonesia’s oil exports and 36 percent of its total exports. The other regions involved in the rebellion also saw their economic interests impeded by the central government. According to Barbara Harvey, “It was basically the fact that the bulk of Indonesia’s export producers – and thus revenue earners

123 Ibid., 63-65. From Harvey: “Regional level objectives included the granting of autonomy to the province; more attention to regional development; a more equitable allocation of revenue and foreign exchange; authorization of the barter trade; and… the development of East Indonesia as a territorial defense area, the granting of a mandate – and financial and material support – for the settlement of internal security problems. On the national level the charter called for the elimination of centralism, ‘the basic cause of bureaucratism, corruption and stagnation in regional development,’ and the restoration of ‘dynamism, initiative, and responsibility’ through decentralization… In conclusion, the Permesta Charter stated that the intention of its signatories was not to separate themselves from the Republic of Indonesia, but to strive to improve the welfare of the people of Indonesia and to complete the unfinished national revolution.” Harvey, 48 (emphasis added). The barter trade was A regional black market trade often conducted by or with the blessings of the regional military leaders and civilian government in order to avoid taxes and fees. Monies from this trade were sometimes used to fund the military or pad government officials’ accounts.

124 Kahin and Kahin, 61.
Soekarno’s position at this time appeared strong. He had distanced himself from the unpopular Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet, a popular target of criticism; he was openly against the parties; he was trusted by leaders of regional rebellions and sympathized with many of their goals; and he seemed to have broader ideological solutions than most of the regionalists had. The parties were demoralized and fragmented, with the exception of the PKI, and were not trusted by much of society. On 21 February President Soekarno unveiled his konsepsi. Speaking to a crowd filled with PKI supporters, he railed against western democracy and articulated his alternative, “Guided Democracy.” “Guided Democracy” had some broad appeal, especially as Ali’s cabinet teetered on dissolution. A week later the parties returned their verdict: a few supported Soekarno’s plan, but many were against it. A few days later, military leaders in Makassar declared war, issuing new demands on Jakarta. On 14 March, Ali dissolved his cabinet. The night before he assented to Nasution’s pressure and signed a declaration of martial law, undermining the power of political parties and giving the military the free reign that would take it through the New Order period.

The emergence of rebellions spurred concern in Washington. Worried about increasing PKI influence several years prior, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles

---

125 Harvey, 6. The term “Outer Islands” refers specifically to all of Indonesia outside of Java and Madura.

126 Feith, The Decline, 538.

127 Ibid., 548-49.
had preferred the break up of Indonesia rather than to see it fall to communists, his ideas colored by economic as well as ideological concerns. Yet the goals of the PRRI and Permesta rebellions were not to secede from Indonesia. Rather, the leaders demanded change to the current system and an alternative government. What they declared was not a separate state but essentially a state within a state.

From December 1956 to March 1957 protracted negotiations occurred between Jakarta and the rebellious regions of Sumatra. Conflict between the outer regions and Java (Jakarta) increased following the formation of Soekarno’s new cabinet and National Consultative Council. The rebellious leaders of the peripheral regions submitted six demands, including a return to the Soekarno-Hatta dwitunggal (duumvirate), regional autonomy, and the outlawing of “internationally oriented communism.” Their demands were subsequently tamed but not met by Jakarta, and on February 17, 1957, the rebellion began.

Seeking to assert its authority unequivocally and to avert American intervention, Soekarno’s government reacted swiftly. By May 1958 the military had routed the rebels, displacing them from the major cities they had controlled and forcing those still willing to fight into low-level protracted guerilla war. The Permesta rebellion took longer to crush, and it owed its longevity to American assistance in the form of air support with American, Filipino and Taiwanese pilots and crews. The shooting down in late May of

128 Harvey, 74-75.

129 Ibid., 152.

130 Lev, The Transition, 36.

131 Ibid., 40.
the American pilot A. L. Pope, after a bombing run in Ambon in which hundreds of civilians perished after Pope bombed a church, marked a turning point. The United States could no longer deny involvement in the conflict; its assertions that Pope and others were mercenaries rang hollow after the Indonesians disclosed that they had found his military orders. The United States rethought its strategy and began to support the central government (although it continued low level support for the Permesta rebels at the same time). Similar to the situation in Sumatra, in Sulawesi the rebels fled from the cities and maintained a low-level insurgency. Soekarno’s granting of amnesty to the rebels brought most of them out of hiding. By 1961 the rebellions were considered finished.

The defeat of the regionalists had increased the power of the military. Nasution, himself a Sumatran, avoided staining his reputation in Sumatra through his conciliatory acts toward the Sumatran rebels following their decisive defeat. The PKI’s position was initially strengthened during the revolt, but weakened soon thereafter as Washington wooed Jakarta and the military pursued an anti-communist policy (which alienated some outside of the PKI as well).\textsuperscript{132} Soekarno, looking for leverage against the army, turned to the PKI.

Guided Democracy, a threat to the parties, did nothing to bring them together but rather exacerbated their differences. The major inter-party conflict was based on the rapid ascension of the PKI. Party politics in Indonesia was based on class and religious lines. The PKI’s support widened with the politicization of the peasantry, whereas the other parties stagnated or declined. The PKI, however, did not instigate clashes between itself and the other parties. Regional elections in 1957 and 1958 showed an increase in support

\textsuperscript{132} Feith, \textit{The Decline}, 589-601.
for the PKI at the cost of the PNI, Masjumi, and NU. The rise in the PKI’s popularity had several consequences: as outer island suspicions increased, a center-regions settlement seemed further from reach; it stiffened the resolve of some army leaders to eradicate the party system altogether; it also may have led Soekarno to have second thoughts about the strength of the PKI vis-à-vis his own.\textsuperscript{133}

Lev’s thorough examination of the relationship between the rebellion and the political system shows that the rebellion enriched Soekarno’s position by eliminating or weakening his opponents. The army also benefited, cementing its role as protector of the nation. Finally, the party system was restructured, and the parties were forced to contend with the emerging power of Soekarno and the military.\textsuperscript{134} Parties that opposed the government were left out on a limb at the rebels’ defeat. Masjumi’s political influence was diminished significantly, crippling political Islam and causing a shift in the balance of power within the political system. It also discredited the anti-communist movement and the United States because of its support of the PRRI.

Faced with the fact that functional groups (golongan karya, Golkar) were going to be represented, parties attempted to reduce the role they would play.\textsuperscript{135}\textsuperscript{136} After the cabinet session that ended 18 February 1959, a compromise was proposed. It included a

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Lev, \textit{The Transition}, 96.
\item Ibid., 134-34.
\item “Functional groups” were created by Soekarno as a counterbalance to the parties, many of which had become openly hostile. Functional groups were made up of representatives of various groups in Indonesian society, including, for example, the military, labor, the peasantry, businessmen, religious leaders, intellectuals, and others. Golkar became the ruling party under the New Order. Ibid., 227, 236.
\item Ibid., 236.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
return to the 1945 Constitution (in order to end the Islam question), and it was agreed that constitutional procedures would be followed and that the Djakarta Charter would be acknowledged.\textsuperscript{137} The army rallied around the “return to 1945” fervor, but it created a Java-Outer Islands split and exacerbated the \textit{Shari’a}-secular government split. The vote over the return to the 1945 Constitution never met the two-thirds majority it needed in the Constituent Assembly, creating a delicate situation: accept defeat or use extra-constitutional means. Yet for Soekarno and the military, there was no turning back. The army tightened its martial law, and people expected a coup (the rightist parties welcoming one as it would surely mean a swing to the right and away from PKI advantage).\textsuperscript{138}

Analyses of the PRRI/Permesta rebellion(s) show that the rebels’ plans had backfired. According to Harvey:

The rebellion had begun partly as a protest against Soekarno’s vision of a ‘guided democracy,’ but the effect of the rebellion was to strengthen precisely those trends its leaders had hoped to forestall. Central authority was enhanced at the expense of local autonomy; radical nationalism supplanted pragmatic moderation; the influence of Soekarno and the PKI were augmented at the expense of Hatta and the Masjumi.\textsuperscript{139}

The reverse outcome of the PRRI/Permesta rebellions was felt not only among those who planned them, but by the United States as well. At the time of Harvey’s analysis of Permesta, researched in 1970 and 1971 and published in 1977, it was known that the Central Intelligence Agency played a role by supporting the rebels, made most

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 247-248

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., 268-272.

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., 150.
starkly apparent by the shooting down and capture of the American pilot Pope in Ambon in 1957, but the extent of that role was unknown. A later analysis, undertaken by Audrey and George McT. Kahin, more fully fleshed out the role of the CIA through a variety of sources, including data made public through Freedom of Information Act requests. The Kahins’ analysis clearly shows that the Eisenhower administration, led by John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles and its chief Indonesian policymakers, ignored the analysis and advice of several American diplomats and Indonesia experts in favor of following a prescribed plan of support for the rebels, even when indications showed that this would be counterproductive.

The US goal was to eliminate communism, weaken the army on Java, and remove Soekarno or drastically reduce his influence. The break up of Indonesia into smaller units, some vehemently anti-communist such as the PRRI/Permesta regions, and others (principally Java) communist, was thought preferable to a completely communist Indonesia. Yet in the end, America’s support for the rebels bolstered the PKI; helped to prop up Soekarno for several more years; served to eliminate most of the smaller parties and weakened Masjumi, the Islamic party that was most vehemently anti-communist. Most of the leadership of the rebellions, fighting to counter the PKI threat, was

---

140 Kahin and Kahin, 17.

141 “As (John Foster) Dulles put it to Hugh S. Cumming, Jr., on the eve of his departure in 1953 to take up the position of ambassador in Indonesia: ‘The territorial integrity of China became a shibboleth. We finally got a territorially integrated China – for whose benefit? The Communists.’ Unwilling to make this mistake again, in their determination to prevent areas of Southeast Asia falling under Communist control, Eisenhower and Dulles were willing to see countries temporarily break up into ‘racial and geographic units,’ which could provide bases for moving against Communist power in other parts of their territory.” Ibid., 10.
discredited, while the PKI’s rhetoric of nationalism and the jailing of PKI members in the regions under rebellion during the crisis only endeared them more to the Indonesian population at large. The Soekarno regime, in most Indonesians’ eyes, had stood up to the United States and the United States had backed down. Kahin’s analysis points to the importance of Washington’s support for the rebels during the crisis; he argues that as soon as that support began to decline the wind had been taken out of the rebels’ sails.

Soekarno’s “Guided Democracy” was bolstered as a result, continuing a centralization trend, although politics became increasingly heated, especially the traditional political rivalry between the communists, the military, and political Islam. Nasution remained in power with Soekarno; the two complemented each other despite tension, competition, and conflict between them.\footnote{Feith, The Decline, 591.} One issue that worked strongly to unite the army and Soekarno was the West Irian issue, and in December 1961 Soekarno created the Supreme Command for the Liberation of West Irian.\footnote{The 15 August 1962 agreement to transfer West Irian first to United Nations control and then to Indonesian control nine months later further increased the army’s prestige, as did the victories over the regional rebellions. Crouch, 47, 51.} Through its support of the West Irian cause, the PKI’s reputation was also enhanced. The other issue that enhanced the reputation of the PKI was its support for Konfrontasi with Malaysia. PKI leaders called for the arming of civilians as a “fifth service” of the military, which the military vehemently opposed. Despite an unwillingness to publicly oppose Konfrontasi, Major General Suharto, as second in command of Kolaga (Komando Mandala Siaga, the force prosecuting Konfrontasi), stymied the effort by understaffing and underequipping the soldiers at the Malaysian borders. Suharto and others also contacted the British and
Malaysians through back channels to inform them of the army’s opposition to the conflict.\textsuperscript{144}

\textbf{Soekarno’s Last Years}

Kahin notes that the period from mid-1958 to 1961 represented a break with the past for Indonesian politics. As Guided Democracy became consolidated, the importance of parties declined, civil liberties were threatened, legitimacy was no longer tied to rules but rather on the “antithesis of rules, the Revolution.”\textsuperscript{145} Soekarno’s symbiotic relationship with the PKI deepened; the PKI needed Soekarno’s political protection in the face of growing military hostility; and Soekarno’s position was bolstered by support from the PKI.\textsuperscript{146}

Following the “liberation” of West Irian, Soekarno focused on “Confrontation” with Malaysia. Harold Crouch asserts that the anti-Malaysia campaign may have been a ploy to keep the army occupied and to have a stabilizing effect on society.\textsuperscript{147} It also served the army’s purpose and was viewed as a means to ensuring a central role for the military in politics.\textsuperscript{148} Confrontation similarly bolstered the PKI, as the party supported


\textsuperscript{145} Feith, \textit{The Decline}, 594.

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 592.

\textsuperscript{147} Crouch, 58.

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 59.
the policy from the start; this made it difficult for the military to move against it. As the PKI increasingly became a target, Soekarno positioned himself closer to the PKI.149

The Soekarno era (1945-66) was the most tumultuous period in Indonesia’s history. A government that was beset with several simultaneous tasks, including nation and state building and developing an economy, was also subjected to internal rebellion and external subversion. What were the key factors in these internal rebellions?

All three have in common the rationalization of the military, in particular the reduction in numbers of local soldiers, disbanding local militias, and professionalization that threatened lucrative positions. Attempts to rationalize the military resonated outward from Jakarta, and thus were viewed as threatening to regional interests, even during the communist-led Madiun uprising. The rationalization process created unemployment as well as food and housing crises. The Madiun rebellion was perceived as competition for influence in the military between Sundanese (from West Java) and Javanese (from East Java), but Darul Islam and PRRI/Permesta were viewed as conflicts between the regions (predominantly Sumatra and Sulawesi) and the Javanese.150

Although the Darul Islam revolt had a religious element to it, including opposition to the exclusion of the Jakarta Charter, religion was not a primary motivator.151 Both the Darul Islam and PRRI/Permesta revolts were concerned with the broad issue of autonomy, and more specifically with economic spoils gained through the “barter trade.”

---

149 Ibid., 62-68.

150 Mossman notes that it was the Sulawesi- and Aceh-based Darul Islam leaders who agreed to unite with the PRRI/Permesta rebels, but the West Java branch demurred. Mossman, 227.

151 Van Dijk, 58-9.
During both revolts, regional leaders felt threatened by Jakarta’s economic policies, which had proven to be more harmful in the regions than in the center.

Both Darul Islam and PRRI/Permesta were also spurred by feelings of a reduced role in politics, the former on behalf of Islam, and the latter on behalf of local elites. Those from the regions lamented the loss of Hatta, seen as speaking out for the regions’ interests (and not just his native Sumatra). Both the Darul Islam and PRRI/Permesta were spurred by the rising influence of the PKI as well. As the PKI grew in stature, and as its rhetoric and actions became increasingly militant in the face of the army’s threatening posture, events were bound to come to a head.

Where the literature on the PRRI/Permesta rebellions is most thin, however, is the immediate results of the end of the rebellion. Sporadic guerrilla fighting occurred after the cessation of major hostilities in the regions. But with politics polarizing between the three major competing axes of power (Islam, communism, and the military), Soekarno, his position bolstered by repelling a foreign-backed rebellion and his power consolidated through Guided Democracy, drew attention away from internal politics through the campaign to “liberate” West Irian and to “confront” Malaysia. Not wanting to stress further his relationship with the military, Soekarno agreed to a general amnesty (Keppres 322/TH.1961) for the PRRI and Permesta rebels. Similar to the Madiun rebellion of 1948, some of the rebel leaders as well as foot soldiers were “rehabilitated,” with the exception of those whose military commands had been stripped, such as Simbolon and Lubis. 152

152 Some of the leaders and foot soldiers were imprisoned in Java, however, without trial. These rebels were released in 1966 during the consolidation of the New Order, due at least in part to their vehement anti-communism. Following the collapse of the New Order, some Indonesian history textbooks began referring to PRRI and Permesta...
Simbolon, Husein, Lubis, Sumual, Pantouw and others were jailed in 1963, after a period of house arrest.\textsuperscript{153} The New Order that followed Soekarno was notorious for revising history. After Suharto seized power, the rebels were quickly released from prison; other rebel leaders who had been in exile returned without prosecution.\textsuperscript{154} Lubis, for example, was recently cited in the popular news weekly \textit{Tempo} as the leader of the anti-corruption campaign during the Soekarno era, but there is no mention of his role as the leader of a rebellion.\textsuperscript{155} Kawilarang, who retired in 1961 as a colonel in the TNI, wrote that after the attempted coup d’\textit{état} of 1 October 1965, he could “breathe easier and the future looked bright.” When asked by a reporter in 1966 if he had already been rehabilitated, Kawilarang replied, “Who has to rehabilitate whom?”\textsuperscript{156} Members of Permesta openly held a reunion in February of 1984. What allowed the members of these rebellions as “gerakan” (“movement”) rather than “pemberontakan” (“rebellion”). Amelia Liwe, email communication with author, 8 January 2008. Liwe is a doctoral student in the Department of History, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and is researching the PRRI/Permesta rebellion.


\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 167-168.


vindication was the subsequent turn of events that began on the morning of 1 October 1965, and the rise of Suharto.\textsuperscript{157}

Following the imposition of Guided Democracy, Indonesia was wracked by political and economic chaos in the declining years of the Soekarno presidency. Two major issues emerged during this period that Soekarno exploited to remove attention from the chaotic domestic situation: the “return” of West Irian to Indonesian sovereignty, and the policy of \textit{Konfrontasi} with Malaysia during its decolonization.\textsuperscript{158} Both of these issues were used to rally the public, the former somewhat effectively, and the latter less so following a botched military campaign against Malaysia.

In the years leading up to the events of September and October 1965, the political situation grew more tense. The PKI had begun paramilitary training for peasants and its numbers were swelling. This in turn caused nervousness among the anti-communist military, which grew belligerent toward the PKI, which in turn pushed the PKI toward more confrontation. Anti-communist elements in the Indonesian military were in communication with elements of the United States’ intelligence community, and were

\textsuperscript{157} Suharto had served with important rebel figures, including Kawilarang and Sumual, during the revolution and in the years after.

\textsuperscript{158} Soekarno’s speeches during this period are particularly instructive. In them his discourse is very clear about how the issue of West Irian is to be framed. Rather than giving West Irian to be a part of Indonesia, or even returning West Irian to Indonesia, Soekarno very clearly articulated that it was simply returning West Irian to the sovereignty of Indonesia, for, as he put it, it was and always will be a part of Indonesia. He portrayed the Dutch in West Irian as occupying Indonesian territory, and the removal of the Dutch was seen as the final act before the consolidation of Indonesian territory. The issue of West Irian is dealt with more thoroughly in its own chapter. Note that none of Soekarno’s speeches mentioned East Timor as a “missing piece” of Indonesia, as in his rhetoric about West Irian. It would be almost one and a half decades later when this linguistic \textit{coup de grace} was delivered, after the 7 December invasion under Suharto.
emboldened following the events of the *Gerakan Tiga Puluh September* (the Thirtieth of September Movement, or G30S).\(^{159}\)

**G30S and the Imposition of the New Order**

On the morning of October 1, 1965, six generals and a lieutenant were kidnapped by members of Soekarno’s Presidential Guard and assassinated, their corpses hidden at Lubang Buaya (“crocodile hole”).\(^{160}\) The details and motivations of the events are covered elsewhere and highly disputed, but the result of the army’s reaction is not.\(^{161}\) Led by Major General Suharto, who was chief of Kostrad, the Army Strategic and Reserves Command (and who aroused suspicion by having escaped as a target for assassination by the rebels), and Nasution (who was a target but who had escaped), the military took charge. On 11 March 1966 Suharto’s powers were formalized by Soekarno, who had been outmaneuvered, and within a year Soekarno was officially ousted and banished.

Following the G30S, Suharto began a grab for power in the context of the eradication of the PKI. Suharto’s first task was to eliminate the PKI, which he did with

\(^{159}\) Roosa, 193-197.

\(^{160}\) Although the action began on the morning of October 1\(^{\text{st}}\), the movement was called the 30\(^{\text{th}}\) of September Movement (G30S).

\(^{161}\) The most recent account is historian John Roosa’s *Pretext for Mass Murder*. Roosa’s text analyzes the four major competing hypotheses of the G30S: The Indonesian military’s version, which held that the PKI as an institution was responsible; Benedict Anderson and Ruth MCVey’s account, which posited the movement as a internal army putsch; Harold Crouch’s analysis, which argued that military officers led the G30S but were supported by the PKI; and W. F. Wertheim’s hypothesis that the movement was organized by Suharto himself. See: Benedict Anderson and Ruth McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1971); Crouch; W. F. Wertheim, “Suharto and the Untung Coup – The Missing Link,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia, 1*, no. 1 (1970), 50-57; and W. F. Wertheim, “Whose Plot? – New Light on the 1965 Events,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia, 9*, no. 2 (1979), 197-215.
support from the West. The period 1965-1967 saw the death of hundreds of thousands of
Indonesians: members of the PKI or their affiliated groups, leftists, and ethnic Chinese.\textsuperscript{162}

The violence was also a pretext for settling local or private scores between, for example,
landowners and peasants.\textsuperscript{163}

The problems associated with the three main competing axes of power – the
military, the communists, and the Muslims – were solved within a relatively short time as
Suharto quickly consolidated his power with the backing of the Indonesian military,
which would dominate politics for the next 32 years. The PKI was outlawed and its
members killed or imprisoned, and Islamist political activity was channeled into what
would become the sole legitimate channel for Muslim political aspirations, the PPP
\textit{(Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, the United Development Party)}. The two largest
Muslim associations, the \textit{Nahdlatul Ulama} and \textit{Muhammadiyah}, were quickly
depoliticized. Within a decade of the G30S, Suharto consolidated all remaining political

\textsuperscript{162} The official total was around 78,000, but estimates run as high as one million.

\textsuperscript{163} The multiple natures of this violence are described by Hermawan Sulistyo in
his doctoral dissertation, albeit limited to two towns in East Java, but with wider
implications. Hermawan Sulistyo, “The Forgotten Years: The Missing History of
University, 1997). For the aftermath of this violence, see, for example: Asvi Warman
Adam, “1965: The Year that Never Ended.” In \textit{Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific
Bouvier, Glenn Smith, and Roger Tol (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2005) 26-40;
John Roosa, Ayu Ratih and Hilmar Farid, eds, \textit{Tahun Yang Tidak Pernah Berakhir:}
\textit{Memahami Pengalaman Korban 1965: Esei-esei Sejarah lisan} (Jakarta: Elsam, 2003);
Robert Cribb, “Unresolved Problems in the Indonesian Killings of 1965-66” \textit{Asian
Survey} 42 (2002), 550-563; Robert Cribb, ed., \textit{The Indonesian Killings of 1965-1966:
Studies from Java and Bali} (Clayton, Australia: Monash University Press, 1990). Roosa
is critical of accounts that place too much emphasis on spontaneity or revenge outside of
army instructions to eradicate communists, however. Roosa, \textit{passim}. 
parties into three: the PPP; Golongan Karya (Functional Groups, or Golkar), which was the party of the government and remained dominant throughout the New Order; and the PDI (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, the Indonesian Democratic Party), a token opposition that included former Christian political parties.

The question of Indonesia’s global alignment was answered quickly. Suharto aligned with the United States and the West, cutting off ties with the Soviet Union and China, rejoining the United Nations, and opening up the Indonesian economy to foreign investment, reversing Soekarno’s policies. In order to attract this foreign investment, Suharto desired a climate of stability enforced through heavy handed military means, and created a team of economists known as the “Berkeley Mafia” to formulate policy.

The question of West Irian was answered quickly as well. In 1969 the Indonesian government conducted an “Act of Free Choice,” a sham plebiscite overseen by the United Nations that resulted in unanimous support for integration with Indonesia. (This is treated in depth in the section on West Papua.) Seizing the opportunity presented following the April 1974 coup in Lisbon and taking advantage of Western support, Suharto approved the invasion of Portuguese East Timor in 1975, expanding Indonesia’s territory beyond

164 One of the first multinational corporations to take advantage of this opening was Freeport McMoran, the mining conglomerate based out of Louisiana. It is thought that Freeport virtually wrote its own contract, taking advantage of Suharto’s inexperience and haste in desiring foreign money to start flowing. Suharto did not fail, however, to ensure that his portion of the spoils was neglected. Australia West Papua Society, West Papua Information Kit with Focus (sic) on Freeport (Sydney: Australia West Papua Society, 1998), 10-14.

165 Suharto’s team was made up of economists from the University of Indonesia, all trained in the West, and several of them from the University of California, Berkeley. Anne Booth, “Development: Achievement and Weakness,” in Indonesia Beyond Suharto: Polity, Economy, Society, Transition, ed. Donald K. Emmerson (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 111.
Dutch colonial borders and consolidating his control over the archipelago (East Timor is covered in more depth in the fifth chapter).

Concurrent with eliminating the perceived communist threat in Indonesia, Suharto prioritized stability and foreign investment (the latter enabled by the former). The military became synonymous with the government, and the other axes competing for power were emasculated. Separatist insurgencies in West Irian and East Timor continued, and conflict in tempestuous Aceh broke out as well. Attempts to suppress them through brutal means became standard. Although there was dissatisfaction with Suharto and his policies throughout the country, its expression was tempered by two factors: 1) Suharto’s heavy hand toward and intolerance for dissent; and 2) through the economic development that began to flow to the regions as a result of foreign investment and the rise in petroleum prices in the early 1970s. The moves toward consolidating presidential authority that began under Soekarno’s Guided Democracy were completed by his successor. Restrictions on speech and the press were ratcheted up. The same rhetoric regarding threats from within continued under Suharto, although rather than reflect uncertainty or unease, under Suharto they became a justification for harsh measures aimed at quelling dissent.

The heavy handedness of the New Order is exemplified in the “mysterious killings” or “mysterious shootings” (pembunuhan misterius or penembakan misterius, abbreviated “petrus”) of the early 1980s. Networks of thugs and gangsters known collectively as preman (literally, “free men”) enriched themselves and simultaneously did some of the state’s dirty work since the late Dutch colonial period. This tradition continued and was codified during the New Order. Those who fell out of favor with the
New Order, or perhaps those whose usefulness had come to an end, met grim fates and became examples. In major cities in Indonesia, corpses of thugs and gangsters, often identified as such by their distinctive tattoos, were left out in the open as a sign of the power of the state. Suharto rationalized these killings in the context of maintaining order:

The peace had been disturbed. The general feeling was that the incidents had been preceded by intense fear, which had gripped the public… Of course we had to take drastic action and give these people treatment commensurate with their conduct. But how drastic? Well, we had to use force. But did this mean that we just shot them, bang, bang, and were finished with it? No! Those who resisted, yes they were shot… Some of the bodies were just left (in public places) where they had been shot. This was meant as shock therapy so that people would realize that loathsome acts would meet with strong action that was taken to stamp out all the inhuman criminal offenses.

The New Order had learned from the past, and in the drive to create stability from instability, Suharto realized that he had to co-opt some of the lawless elements of society. If the state is to be the monopoly wielder of legitimate violence (in a Weberian) sense, then the simplest thing to do is legitimize illegitimate forms of violence where possible, and crush others that could not be legitimized. In this task Suharto was fairly successful. If part of sovereignty can be understood as this control over the use of violence, then certainly throughout much of Indonesia, and especially Java, a further step toward consolidating the Indonesian state was undertaken during the New Order. As the Benedict Anderson-edited volume *Violence and the State in Suharto’s Indonesia* shows,

---


the consolidation of the monopoly use of force occurred in various ways, including enlarging the scope of the police force to include the training of private security guards and turning former criminals and criminal enterprises into legitimized arms of the state. This process, argues Joshua Parker, also enlarged the control and surveillance aspects of the state, and was reinforced by the *petrus* killings in the early 1980s.\(^{168}\) Jun Honna’s essay in the same volume shows the role of the military as an internal security apparatus, which simultaneously asserted its necessity for national stability and the lack of stability in the nation that necessitated its political and social role.\(^{169}\) Loren Ryter’s chapter on *Pemuda Pancasila* shows that although the state attempted to use its “official gangsters” to foment violence or help “shape” popular opinion through strong-arm tactics, it never completely controlled them.\(^{170}\) Despite the emphasis on stability and security in the New Order, the old habits of extralegal violence continued unabated (if somewhat channeled toward legitimacy) showing that if the monopoly of violence is part of the sovereignty of the state, it was still lacking complete consolidation in the New Order.

In this context, the state often came to be seen as one of two caricatures, depending on one’s location. In regions where investment and/or development increased the welfare of the average citizen, the state was seen as a benign patriarch. In Sumba, for example, the advent and deepening of the New Order is perceived to have brought an end

\(^{168}\) Barker, 20-53.


to the turmoil and instability of the Soekarno era, and is overwhelmingly associated with positive attributes such as development, education, and health care, despite the slowness and low levels of development it brought, especially in comparison to other regions.

For the regions in which there was conflict, however, the advent of the New Order represented a ratcheting up of violence by the state, although paradoxically it simultaneously brought about levels of development that outstripped more pacific regions such as Sumba. In the most troubled regions (Aceh, West Irian, East Timor) stability and investment were inextricably linked, with the relationship exacerbated by the abundant natural resources found in these regions. In other regions not beset by anti-state violence but that had abundant resources, such as Riau or Kalimantan, resentment simmered under the surface but was kept in check through New Order tactics. When the New Order collapsed in 1998, however, these sentiments boiled to the surface, and demands for renegotiating the core-periphery relationship were met with promises of autonomy. The nature of the state in Indonesia had changed.

Post-Suharto Era

Following the abdication of Suharto, there was much optimism in society for ending the Korupsi, Kolusi and Nepotisme associated with the New Order, as well as for ushering in a new period of democratic reform. Domestic demonstrators and pressure from abroad had pushed Suharto from power and despite the crippled economy there was much cautious optimism and debate about the future in the newly free press. Yet this new opening was also marked by spasms of violence, first against the ethnic Chinese in
Jakarta and elsewhere, then against Christians first in Java, and later in remote areas. In Kupang, for example, violence broke out in reaction to the church burnings in Java, and Protestant and Catholic mobs, traditionally antagonistic, came together to attack Muslims, Muslim shops and homes, and Mosques. In response, Muslims on the defensive stopped exhibiting outward signs of their faith (such as the wearing of jilbab [headscarf] and kopiah [Muslim men’s brimless hat]) and in some cases exhibited crosses on the outside of their homes, warung, or kiosks, and even advertised pork as a menu item at restaurants. The violence was stopped quickly and decisively with the support of the Protestant and Catholic churches, but religious violence broke out within days in Ambon and the Central Moluccas. This violence would last for months, engulfing the region and resulting in the formation of jihadist groups in Java being sent to the region. Over time, religious violence spread to other areas as well, including Poso in Sulawesi.

East Timor, through a United Nations referendum in August 1999, broke free of Indonesian sovereignty, albeit at a very heavy price. Aceh and West Papua both saw the emergence of greater political opening under President Abdurachman Wahid (1999-

---

171 The former was encouraged by the state, the latter perhaps not encouraged but tolerated. The majority of Christians are ethnic Chinese and the majority of Chinese are Christians, however, so targeting one generally is targeting the other. See: James T. Seigel, “Thoughts on the Violence of May 13 and 14, 1998, in Jakarta,” in Violence and the State in Suharto’s Indonesia, ed. Benedict Anderson (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2001), 90-123.

172 Rumors of the Timor Raya (Greater Timor) movement, which favors the merger of East and West Timor as an independent state, increasing its activities following the referendum in East Timor were rampant, although the actual threat posed is dismissible.

173 Fritz Djubida, interview with author, 9 November 2006, Kupang, West Timor. Djubida is a former Vice-Bupati of Kupang.
2001), and then a return to the close-fisted policies of Suharto under President Megawati Soekarnoputri (2001-2004). (The South Moluccas, East Timor and West Papua are considered in greater detail in subsequent chapters this dissertation.)

With groups such as Laskar Jihad arming, training and sending followers to areas of conflict to support indigenous Muslim combatants, and the initial inability of the state to stop them (in fact there is evidence that they were encouraged and supported by some elements of the military who may have supported their religiously motivated goals, or with the desire to foment unrest and thereby cement the necessity for the military’s “stability” role) again shows that the state was still lacking in the monopoly wielding of violence.174 It was not until terrorists struck the resort island of Bali, a Hindu enclave, in October 2002 that Laskar Jihad was finally pressured to disband, but not before sending some of its cadres to West Papua (as well as notorious East Timorese militia leader and “patriot” Eurico Gutteres, the only East Timorese to have his conviction upheld following the 1999 violence and the recipient of the Red and White Award). Laskar Jihad had dissolved, but its membership continues to be active in other groups, such as the paramilitary Islamic Defenders Front or the Betawi Brotherhood Forum.

Violence also erupted in the Central Sulawesi region of Poso, once more in the form of religious communities pitted against one another and with rumors of segments of the police and military supporting one side or the other. And following the first terrorist attack in Bali, others have followed, including in Jakarta at the Marriot Hotel, the Australian Embassy, and the US Embassy, and again in Bali. Despite attempts to capture

---

those responsible, the leadership remains at large. This shows two things: that the Indonesian state continues to be unable to monopolize the use of violence within the state, and that it lacks either the resources or the will (or perhaps both) to quell the terrorist threat.

A pamphlet entitled “Modul Pemantapan Budaya Politik” (Political Culture Consolidation Module) published by the General Directorate of National and Political Unity, Departmen Dalam Negeri (Department of Domestic Affairs) in July 2005 decries the practice of politics since the inception of the Indonesian state as elite driven, at the cost of disillusionment of society: “Namun karena lemahnya kedaulatan, rakyat dihadapkan dengan kedaulatan pemimpin” (“Yet because of the weakness of sovereignty, society is faced with the sovereignty of leaders”).175 The tract continues to fault Demokrasi Pancasila (Pancasila Democracy) as being corporatist in nature and “negating society’s sovereignty and political participation in a meaningful way” and reducing society’s role to “nothing more than spectators in the process of production, allocation and distribution of the property of the state.”176 The tract faults political leadership, the military, owners of conglomerates, and globalization for the depoliticization of society, the breakdown of the rule of law, and the weakness of the state. The solution is a mixture of local culture, national culture and modernization.177

175 Modul Pemantapan Budaya Politik, 6.

176 Ibid., 8-9. “Pembentukan organisasi yang selama ini dianggap sebagai model “Demokrasi Pancasila” menjadi bukti kuat negasi kedaulatan rakyat dan partisipasi politik dalam arti yang sesungguhnya... berperan tidak lebih dari penonton (spectators) dari process produksi, alokasi dan distribusi miliki negara.”

177 Ibid., 11.
This acknowledgement of the serious institutionalized faults in the Indonesian system by a government agency would have been unheard of in the New Order, proving another shift in the nature of the Indonesian state.

**Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has examined and contextualized rebellions aimed at changing the nature of the Indonesian state from the time of the revolution to the New Order. A few conclusions can be drawn from this examination. First, rebellion against the state did not have as a goal the separation of specific regions from the state of Indonesia (with the Darul Islam in Aceh perhaps an exception). Rather, these rebellions had as their primary goal a shift in the nature of the Indonesian state itself. These goals included the establishment of communism (Madiun), an Islamic state (Darul Islam), and a federal republic with autonomous regions (PRRI/Permesta).

Second, the primary motivations for these rebellions were both the imposition of central government authority on the regions, for example in the form of the rationalization of the military, and feelings of economic exploitation or deprivation at the hands of the central government, as exemplified by the PRRI and Permesta rebels’ use of the “barter trade.”

The imposition of the New Order, however, ended rebellion with these goals. Ideologically, the Indonesian state became firmly anti-communist, secular, and unitary. Economically, the sector with the greatest ability to oppose the state, the military, was provided for under the New Order and its attendant corruption and collusion. Furthermore, the level of overall development in Indonesia increased under the New

---

178 Christie, 125.
Order, with a ratcheting up of the economy made possible through newfound stability that attracted investment and through the oil boom of the early 1970s.

The separatist leanings of the residents of Ambon and its surrounding region declined in the Soekarno and Suharto eras, but insurgences in West Papua, and (after its incorporation) East Timor, as well as Aceh, were prominent features of the political landscape in New Order Indonesia. The next chapter discusses the cases of The South Moluccas, West Papua, and East Timor in order to parse out the important variables pushing these regions to separatism.
A visitor to the city of Ambon in June and July 2006 would have seen a city in the throes of World Cup fever, like most regions in Indonesia. There were, however, a few marked differences in Ambon. Although the sectarian violence that erupted in 1999 had been over for several years, there were still dozens of burned out buildings dotting the city, and foreign visitors arriving at the airport (after the government lifted a travel ban) continued to be treated with suspicion and sometimes questioned by the secret police, as the author was. There was still an undercurrent of tension, although by 2006 most Ambonese had resumed their daily routines, and thousands of people still languished in refugee camps, complaining that the government did not care about them, but certain that those displaced by the recent earthquake near Jogjakarta, because they were Javanese, would be looked after immediately. The police and military presence was heavy.

---

179 The Moluccas, also called Maluku, is an island grouping in eastern Indonesia. The separatists refer to themselves as the Republic of the South Moluccas, with the capital centered in Ambon (also the current Indonesian provincial capital), which includes the major islands of Ambon, Ceram and Buru, but not some of the northern islands, such as Halmahera, which is part of the Indonesian province of the Moluccas. The separatists are also referred to as the Ambonese. “Door De Eeuwen Trouw” (“Loyal through the Ages”) was the Dutch phrase used often to describe the Ambonese. Many accounts relate the building of a monument after the Japanese occupation with those words inscribed, as well as a subsequent defacing to make the inscription read “Door de Eeuwen Rouw” (“Mourning through the Ages”). Van Kaam, 44.

180 Hans Murapatti, interview by author, 30 June 2006, Ambon. Murapatti is the Director of the Koalisi Pengungsi Maluku (Moluccan Refugee Coalition). He estimated that there were still 6,000 heads of families languishing in camps, or around 20,000 people total. Because the funding for the refugees is at the provincial level and not the kabupaten level, it is not transparent, and very little was trickling down to the refugees, who were suffering severe health problems associated with a lack of clean water. “We do not think the government will help Moluccans. There is a history of not helping.” His
Lining the streets were flags and painted murals made by supporters of various teams competing in the World Cup. Ambon’s residents embraced Brazil, France, Germany, and others, but there was one group that caused consternation among security forces: supporters of the Dutch. Those who flew Dutch flags were treated with suspicion, and the police removed Dutch flags that had lined a street in the city.\(^{181}\) Given Indonesia’s colonial history most people supported other teams, but there were plenty of people supporting the Dutch team in other regions that were not met with the same kind of suspicion as those in Ambon. On the other hand, there is no denying that many Ambonese do have a unique connection to Holland given Ambon’s history, dating to the early colonial period. In 1946 Dutch flags had been a divisive political symbol between the two groups of Ambonese that contested the fate of the South Moluccas, Indonesian nationalists and Ambonese loyal to the Dutch.\(^{182}\)

---

\(^{181}\) Sitipessy; Wilma Ranamissa, interview by author, 29 June 2006, Ambon. Wilma Ranamissa is an organizer for the AMANS Plus Ministry (Protestant); a pseudonym is used to protect her identity;

\(^{182}\) Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 246. Wilma Ranamissa notes that people in Ambon are still buried with the RMS flag draping their coffin. Wilma Ranamissa. Displaying or owning the RMS flag remains a serious offense in Indonesia. On 12 March 2008, Daniel Malawauw and Hermanus Daseran were sentenced to 17 years in prison for manufacturing 59 RMS flags, charged with plotting against the state. “Indonesians Jailed 17 Years for Making Flags,” Radio Netherlands Worldwide, accessed 14 March 2008, available from: http://www.radionetherlands.nl/-news/international/5681529/Indonesians-jailed-17-years-for-making-flags. Flag raising remains a serious crime in West Papua as well, where flying the *bintang kejora* (morning star) flag leads to arrest and charges of subversion. See subsequent chapter.
In Indonesia, the Republic of the Southern Moluccas (Republik Maluku Selatan, RMS) declared its sovereignty shortly after the revolution of 1945-49, and based its claim on the 1946 Linggadjati Agreement. This agreement, signed by the Dutch and Indonesian Republicans, called for the formation of a federal system to unify “states” formed by the Dutch within Indonesia during the Revolution (including the Southern Moluccas as part of the State of Eastern Indonesia [Negara Indonesia Timur, NIT]) during the Revolution, and allowed local regions to determine their own fate (inclusion or separation) through acts of self-determination. Following the ceasefire and Indonesian independence in 1949, and the return home of predominantly Christian “Ambonese” troops who fought in the Dutch East Indies Army (KNIL) and its Special Forces (KST), regional elites became wary as it appeared that the Indonesian Republican government might forgo a federal system. Indeed on 10 April 1950 leaders from both the NIT and the Republican side

183 Christie, 116. An extremely detailed account of the transformation of the state of Eastern Indonesia into Indonesia was provided by Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, the former Prime Minister of the Negara Indonesia Timur (State of Eastern Indonesia). Ide Anak. Perhaps reflected Dutch practicality or post-war paper scarcity, a letter on the creation of the NIT was printed on stationary marked “Ministrie van Kolonien” but “Kolonien” was crossed out and replaced with “Overzeese Gebeiebsdelen” – “overseas territory.” “Kabinet Letter Q 37/No. 169, 16 June 1947. RA 1346” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1947).

184 The terms “Ambon” and “Ambonese” have several layers of meaning. Ambon is the capital city of the province of Maluku. The city is on the island also named Ambon. The Ambonese can mean residents of the city, residents of the island, members of the Ambonese ethnic group who also live on some of the nearby islands including Haruku, Saporua, Nusa Laut, and areas in Ceram and Buru, and, more generally, the term Ambonese was used by the Dutch colonial military to denote Christian soldiers from the eastern Indies, including, for example, those from Menado in northern Sulawesi (Celebes) or West Timor. Gerke Teitler, “The Mixed Company: Fighting Power and Ethnic Relations in the Dutch Colonial Army, 1890-1920,” South East Asia Research, 10, No. 3, 363; Chauvel, Nationalists, 1; van Kaam, 31; Keebet von Benda-Beckman, “Law, Violence and Peacemaking on the Island of Ambon” in Social Security Between Past and
agreed to a democratic process leading to the dissolution of the NIT, which was formalized on 16 August 1950.

On 25 April 1950, Ambonese separatists declared the Republic of the South Moluccas. The Indonesian government was quick to quell this threat, and by the end of 1950 much of the Ambonese leadership had fled the region for exile in Holland, some via West Papua. Others fled to the Moluccan island of Ceram (alt. Seram) where a guerrilla war continued into the 1960s, although by that time the movement had lost its momentum. Many of the Christian Ambonese in KNIL and KST who could not make it back to the Moluccas at the end of the Indonesian revolution were shipped to Holland in 1951, where they have continued to make their claim for a separate South Moluccan state. The Moluccas erupted in sectarian violence following the 1997-98 East Asian economic crisis and the political chaos in Indonesia that resulted, and the specter of Ambonese separatism loomed in some explanations of the violence.

Future: Ambonese Networks of Care and Support, ed. Franz von Benda-Beckman and Keebet von Benda-Beckman, (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007), 281. The colonial army was known by its acronym KNIL – Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger, and the Special Forces were known as KST – Korps Speciale Troupen.

Christie, 116.

The violence in the Moluccas following 1999 was mostly between Muslims and Christians, but was also related to Indonesia’s attempts to subdue the Moluccan population. The policy of transmigration has brought Javanese and Madurese Muslims to the region, diluting the Christian population, and causing resentment. High profile Indonesians, such as Djadja Suparman, the Head of KOSTRAD (Komando Strategis Cadangan Angkatan Darat, Army Strategic Reserve Command), funded Laskar Jihad, a group of Islamicist paramilitaries who traveled from Java to fight Christians in the Moluccas. Friend, 480-484; Kingsbury, Power Politics, 91-2, 180, 234-35; Robert Hefner, “Islam and Asian Security” in Strategic Asia 2002-03: Asian Aftershocks, ed. Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg (Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2002), 378. Laskar Jihad and other groups attempted to sway public opinion to
Brief History

Maluku (or the Moluccas) was one of the first commercially valuable regions to European spice traders desiring its cloves, nutmeg and mace, although the early trade was centered around the established sultanates of Tidore and Ternate in Halmahera in the northern Moluccas. The Portuguese established a fort in Ambon Town in the early 16th century, and clove cultivation began in the southern regions of the Moluccas. The Portuguese began religious conversion as well among the southern animists, although that stopped for two years after the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC), together with the Hitunese, pushed the Portuguese out of the region in 1605. Chauvel notes that this began the relationship of “loyalist” Ambonese with the Dutch but that VOC activities “resulted in the extinction of independent political and economic life in the Ambonese islands.” Dutch religious training began again in 1607 at the request of the Ambonese. Chauvel, citing Knaap, notes six major demographic changes in the early VOC period: 1) social dislocation and political emasculation due to Dutch resettlement plans; 2) Christianization, which established relationships between their side by portraying their Christian enemies as separatists and members of the RMS and FKM. Although there were certainly members or sympathizers of both groups present among Christians, the violence was by no means separatist in nature. Kirsten E. Schulze, “Laskar Jihad and the Conflict in Ambon,” The Brown Journal of World Affairs, IX, Issue 1 (Spring 2002), 64; For an example of Indonesian Muslim work that supposedly “uncovers” the Christian/separatist RMS threat, see: Rustam Kastor, Fakta, Data, dan Analisa Konspirasi Politik RMS dan Kristen Menghancurkan Ummat Islam di Ambon-Maluku: Mengungkap Konflik Berdarah Antar Ummat Beragama dan Suara Hati Warga Muslim yang Teraniaya (Jogjakarta: Wihdah Press, 2000).

187 Chauvel, Nationalists, 19. Much of this section, and this chapter as a whole, relies on the work of Richard Chauvel for his historical analysis of the RMS. His work is regarded as the most authoritative on the subject, and he incorporates many Dutch primary sources. His work is evenhanded and he avoids the polemical nature of much early work on the RMS which generally supported one side or the other in the conflict.
Christian Ambonese and the Dutch and alienated Muslim Ambonese; 3) the establishment of corvee labor; 4) a rapid decline in the population due to warfare between the VOC and the Ambonese; 5) the establishment of a monopoly on clove production and the promotion of Ambonese elites from middlemen to supervisors; and 6) the creation of a town/countryside dichotomy. Chauvel notes that this discontinuity was tempered by an element of continuity: “the economy remained principally subsistence based. Food production and consumption together with the pattern of inter-island trade were little changed… The first half century (sic) of VOC hegemony in the Ambonese (sic) established the economic and political relations in colonial society which were to prevail unchanged until the late 19th century.” Meanwhile, Muslim Ambonese were cut off from the rest of the Indies due to the imposition of the clove monopoly.

Popular perceptions of the Ambon region, especially after the sectarian violence beginning in 1999, describe a large Christian majority recently diluted by years of transmigration in the Soekarno and Suharto eras. This perception is not true; according to a Dutch census, in 1930 ethnic Ambonese Muslims made up nearly one-third of the

---

188 Ibid., 19-21. Concerning the alienation of the Muslim population, see: Richard Chauvel, “Ambon’s Other Half: Preliminary Observations on Ambonese Moslem Society and History,” Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs, 14, No 1 (1980), 44. Chauvel also refers to the Christianized Ambonese as constituting a “middle class” that established new relations between the negeri society and the Dutch. Richard Chauvel, “Republik Maluku Selatan and Social Change in Ambonese Society During the Late Colonial Period,” Cakalele, 1, Nos 1/2 (1990), 14. I.O. Nanulaitta, writing in 1959, shows the decline in population as a direct result of Dutch cruelty. I. O. Nanulaitta, Timbulnja Militerisme Ambon Sebagai Suatu Persoalan Politik Sosial-Ekonomis (Djakarta: Bhratara, 1966), 56.

189 This perception is emphasized in the work of organizations that continue to advocate for Moluccan sovereignty, for example Ambon Berdarah On-Line (http://www.geocities.com/alifuru67/1999/vision.htm).
population (32.7 percent), and if other ethnicities in the region were accounted for, Muslims made up 44 percent of the population. Rather than through sheer numerical dominance of the Muslim population, the Christian Ambonese dominated the region socially through their privileged connections to the Dutch. Christian Ambonese were desired as administrators and soldiers in the KNIL; along with Menadonese and Timorese Christians, they were considered more trustworthy and motivated and were regarded as “martial” or “warlike races.” Ambonese benefited from preferential treatment, including better pay, and, as a result of their close association with the Dutch and their adoption of Christianity, many of them adopted a feeling of superiority that was shrewdly encouraged by the Dutch. The special treatment and superior mien of the Ambonese caused resentment and fear among other Indonesians.

Although the Javanese dominated the KNIL numerically, due to the size of their population, the Dutch regarded them as untrustworthy and incapable soldiers. As Dutch

---

190 Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 3.


consolidation of the Indies proceeded they expanded KNIL by recruiting Ambonese and others from Christian regions. In the late 19th century, two factors contributed to the increased recruitment of Ambonese: the steep decline of the Moluccan spice trade spurred by a global overabundance; and conflicts, such as the Aceh War, that created a demand for more soldiers. As Chauvel notes, “the Ambonese soldier was a product of the changing nature of colonial rule in the second half of the 19th century.”193 Because Ambonese were reluctant to join, social and economic incentives for Dutch recruitment had to be created in order to increase the rolls, including paying rajas for each man taken into service and creating elite “European” schools for the children of soldiers.194 Once these steps were made, recruitment increased and Chauvel argues an “identity” developed among Ambonese linking them to the Dutch.195

As pan-Indonesian nationalism emerged in the early decades of the 20th century, the Ambonese elites were confronted with a decision. They could give up their preferred status among natives, back the emerging nationalists, and join their fellow Indonesians in opposing Dutch rule, a move promoted by nationalists such as A.J. Patty through various publications and organizations such as the Sarekat Ambon (Ambon Union) and Mena Moeria (Ever Onward), both formed in Java by Moluccan nationalists.196 Or as

193 Chauvel, Nationalists, 39. Teitler adds that Dutch uncertainty was compounded by the growing power of Germany and Japan. Teitler, 366; cf. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, 458.


195 Chauvel, Nationalists, 43-45.

196 Richard Z. Leirissa, Maluku Dalam Perjuangan Nasional Indonesia (Maluku in the Indonesian National Struggle) (Jakarta: University of Indonesia, 1975), 57-84.
“loyalists” they could side with the Dutch in an attempt to preserve their privileges. Some Ambonese sided with the nationalists, but not as many as other native Christian groups such as the Menadonese, who wanted to eschew their “Ambonese” label.\(^{197}\) In March 1921, the Military Salaries Commission passed a regulation under which all native soldiers would be paid the same, which was met by vocal dissatisfaction among elements of Ambonese soldiers. Ambonese soldiers were barred from attending meetings of Sarekat Ambon, which helped to ensure their political isolation and prevent their contamination from nationalist ideas.\(^{198}\) The spread of nationalism created a bifurcation in politics in Ambon, at least among Christians. Indonesian nationalism was also the first viable, modern alternative to the colonial status quo, although there had been Ambonese rebellions against the Dutch in the past and, in the late 18\(^{th}\) and early 19\(^{th}\) centuries, some Ambonese had protested the return of their region to the Dutch after it had come under British control.\(^{199}\)

Despite their decline in status under the new military regulations, Ambonese continued to enlist in the military; in 1939, between ten and 20 percent of the adult male population served in the colonial army.\(^{200}\) Ambonese soldiers in the KNIL fought with the Dutch against the Japanese and were imprisoned alongside them following the


\(^{198}\) Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 68.


\(^{200}\) Herman and van der Laan Bouma, 227.
Japanese victory. Ironically this was the only time the Ambonese were treated as equals of the Dutch.²⁰¹

Concurrent with the development and spread of political parties in the 1920s and 1930s was a challenge presented to traditional leaders in Ambonese negeri (villages). Rajas and their Christian counterparts (pendeta; preachers) were manifestations of adat or traditional law and custom.²⁰² The challenges to this traditional authority began with the onset of education for some (mostly) Christian Ambonese and the ability of some Muslim Ambonese to travel outside of their negeri to Ambon Town or further afield and gain worldly experience following the end of the clove monopoly.²⁰³ As these Ambonese returned to their home negeri, rajas and pendetas saw them as threatening to their authority as they were better educated or had a more sophisticated outside experience, and many were wealthier than the rajas and pendetas.²⁰⁴ Political parties with nationalist leanings provided an outlet for these Ambonese, and presented a well coordinated effort

²⁰¹ Chauvel, Nationalists, 70.

²⁰² The positions of Raja and Pendeta are roughly analogous to village head; in the Ambonese region there was no overarching political leadership as was found in the sultanates of Tidore and Ternate in the North Moluccas.

²⁰³ Chauvel notes that Muslim enrollment in Dutch language education was less than five percent of the total in Ambon. Chauvel, “Republik Maluku Selatan,” 17. Education was limited to the equivalent of high school in Ambon during the late colonial period, although some Ambonese traveled to Java to continue their educations, and even fewer went to Holland. Yos Nusapessy, interview by author, 29 June 2006, Ambon. Nusapessy is a former Indonesian civil servant, a former office worker for KNIL, and former member of the RMS; a pseudonym is used to protect his identity.

²⁰⁴ Chauvel, Nationalists, 84-103. Chauvel notes that at the end of the colonial period there was thought to be no illiteracy among Christian Ambonese, but that illiteracy prevailed among Muslims. Chauvel, “Ambon’s other Half,” 49.
to challenge the traditional leaders’ authority. The Dutch administrators, including Resident B. J. Haga, realized this threat, and in 1934 made moves to shore up the adat leaders’ positions. As Chauvel notes, “the raja and the saniri-negeri (village councils) had the right to control all political activity in the negeri… (which) meant that the nationalist political parties were excluded from the negeri. Officials hoped that by these means Ambonese negeri could be isolated from rapid social and political changes taking place elsewhere in the archipelago.”

The Japanese attacked Ambon on 31 January 1942. Dutch defenses, despite being bolstered by an Australian battalion, fell within 24 hours, and Ambonese support evaporated. The Japanese occupation served to aid the nationalists in Ambon to the detriment of the loyalists. Pro-Dutch officials, many from raja families, were replaced by nationalists. E. U. Papella, the head of Sarekat Ambon, was appointed head of the sub-regency of Ambon Island, and his compatriots were assigned high positions in the administration as well. The Japanese sponsored youth organizations, promoted nationalist media, and encouraged Islamic organizations. Dozens of Protestant pendetas were killed early in the occupation.

The decisive defeat of the Dutch led to much uncertainty in the Ambonese region, especially among its Christian population, and, as Chauvel notes, “arguably had a greater impact on Ambonese society than anywhere else in the archipelago.” He notes three

---

205 Chauvel, Nationalists, 89.
206 Ibid., 102. See also: Chauvel, “Republik Maluku Selatan,” 20.
major social changes during the occupation: severe economic hardship, as Ambon was a strategically important region and hosted a large number of Japanese; a shift in relations between Muslims, whom the Japanese favored, and Christians, who were regarded with suspicion; and the replacement of leaders with traditional authority by those with nationalist credentials (although their authority proved elusive). The Japanese banned the use of Dutch and promoted the Indonesian language as well as a pan-Indonesian identity, as opposed to the Ambonese exceptionalism promoted by the Dutch and many Ambonese themselves.\textsuperscript{209} Ambonese in Java and elsewhere in Indonesia, especially those in KNIL, were treated with suspicion and persecuted by both the Japanese and Indonesians; many were jailed alongside the Dutch. This treatment further alienated the émigré Ambonese from the Indonesians and increased their identification with the Dutch.

The Indonesian Revolution

The declaration of Indonesian independence on 17 August 1945, forced the hands of Ambonese elites in Ambon and outside of the region; they now had to choose their positions with respect to the two sides, loyalist or nationalist. The experiences of the two groups, émigrés and those still in Ambon, differed significantly as the revolution was fought almost entirely on Java. Ambon returned to uncontested Dutch rule, therefore the struggle of the nationalists there was not violent.\textsuperscript{210} Many Ambonese émigrés, however, were deeply distrusted or attacked and persecuted in Java and elsewhere. Ambonese

\textsuperscript{208} Chauvel, \textit{Nationalists}, 173.

\textsuperscript{209} Ibid., 174-194.

nationalists in Java, such as Latuharhary, a member of *Badan Penjelidik Oesaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Body to Investigate Efforts for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence), appealed to Ambonese to join the nationalists and to the Indonesians not to condemn them wholesale as tools of the Dutch.\(^{211}\)

As the Allies along with Dutch political and military representatives (including some Ambonese) began arriving in Java, many émigré Ambonese who suffered under the Japanese reaffirmed their loyalty to the Dutch. The Dutch mobilized Ambonese prisoners and recruited soldiers in Ambon, and Ambonese soldiers were key to the retaking of Jakarta, which in turn caused reprisals against both Ambonese in KNIL and civilian Ambonese in Java and elsewhere.\(^{212}\) These reprisals, in turn, alienated many Ambonese from the Republican cause. Ambonese began to organize themselves in groups such as the *Perkoempoelan Kebangsaan Moloekoe* (Moluccan National Association), which pressed for recognition of a Moluccan commonwealth (including West Papua) and was acknowledged as loyal by the Dutch, and the *Persatoean Timoer Besar* (Association of the Great East, PTB), which had the goal of ensuring the right of self-determination of the people in the eastern archipelago.\(^{213}\) Returnees to Ambon included members of both groups, and with their telling of persecution by the Republicans they swayed the opinions

\(^{211}\) Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 198. On 17 August 1945, the *Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan* (Committee for the Preparation for Independence) appointed Latuharhary as governor of the Moluccas, a symbolic move as the Moluccas were quickly back under Dutch control while Latuharhary was still in Java.

\(^{212}\) Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 201-02. Van Kaam notes that the Dutch Protestant newspaper *Trouw* carried a headline on 15 October 1945 that read: “Sukarno Declares War on all Dutchmen, Indo-Europeans and Ambonese.” Although it was not true it did reflect some of the republican sentiments of the time. Van Kaam, 55.

of many Ambonese. The prewar prohibition of Ambonese soldiers joining political organizations was lifted, as the Dutch viewed many of these organizations as being sympathetic if not completely consistent with their goals.

In Ambon, political camps began forming around potential outcomes, including inclusion in an independent but federal Indonesia with Dutch commonwealth status as part of the State of Eastern Indonesia (represented by the dominant Perkoempoelan Kebangsaan Maloeke [National Moluccan Organization]). Others favored the nationalist/Republican side, and on 17 August 1946, Partai Indonesia Merdeka (Indonesian Independence Party, PIM) was founded by nationalist leaders, with 75 percent of the membership Muslim (although it favored a federal system). Leirissa has noted that in 1946, no body or institution existed to overcome the differences between the two groups peacefully.

In 1946 the Dutch created the Dewan Maloekoe Selatan (South Moluccan Council, DMS), representing an area that was the lowest level of federal administrative authority, the groepsgemeenschap, and using for the first time the name “South

---

214 Chauvel notes that there were exceptions to persecution of Ambonese. Surabaya (East Java) presented an interesting case: young Ambonese formed the Pamoeda Repoeblik Indonesia Maloekoe (Young Moluccan Indonesian Republicans, PRIM) and attacked and seized weapons from the Japanese. PRIM received assurances from other youth groups and Republicans that Moluccans would not be targeted and that loyalists would be turned over to them. Prominent Republican Ambonese emerged, and both loyalists and Republicans sometimes drew supporters from the same families. Chauvel, Nationalists, 202-203.

215 Ibid., 220 -221; Leirissa, Maluku Dalam Perjuangan, 174. The PIM leadership was involved in pre-war nationalist groups such as Sarekat Ambon and Balai Pendidikan.

Moluccas.” This step demonstrated the Indies Government’s rejection of the Moluccan Commonwealth concept. The council had 37 members, 28 of whom were elected. Both the nationalists and the loyalists had reservations about the DMS; the PIM was worried about the indirect electoral system that would automatically place the resident, the senior Dutch administrator for the region, as chair of the council, and the loyalists (including the rajas, the pendeta, and the military) were worried that the council posed a threat to their leadership. Chauvel describes the loyalists as being somewhat out of touch and suffering from the “psychological disadvantage” of believing that they were the rightful rulers of Ambon and that most of society agreed with this position. Political sympathies of other elites were often divided.

In late October the election of members of the electoral college for the DMS (kiesmannen) was held. The electoral college met on 4 November, and the nationalists, led by PIM, and the loyalists jostled for the attention of the electors. Of the seven seats in Ambon Town, PIM members won four, D. P. Tahitu, supported by PIM, won the fifth, and only two seats went to the loyalists. In Lease the electors chose PIM sympathizers for all of the positions. In the non-Ambonese regions of the Southern Moluccas PIM sympathizers dominated electoral positions. Chauvel notes that the new post-war reality in Ambon, including open electoral competition, left rajas struggling to find support. They were alienated by electoral tactics and wrongly assumed people’s loyalty to them as traditional leaders. Loyalist KNIL soldiers were also alienated and angered by the turn

217 Chauvel, Nationalists, 222-223.
218 Ibid., 224.
of events. Reacting to the new situation, the loyalists created the *Gaboengan Lima Serangkai* (Federation of Five Organizations, later expanded to nine and renamed *Gaboengan Sembilan Serangkai*, or GSS), an umbrella for pro-Dutch organizations and “the spiritual forebears of the RMS.”

Among the first tasks given the DMS was the selection of three members to represent the region at the Denpasar Conference in Bali, during which the creation of the state of Eastern Indonesia would be formalized. The three selected, Pupella, Tahitu and Julius Tahya, were nationalists. Protests from the loyalists resulted in the government naming two more representatives: R. J. Metekohy, as a fellow commissioner, and Vigeleyn Nikijuluw, as an observer. Metekohy later defected from the loyalist camp in support of the NIT over assurances of Ambonese autonomy, leaving the GSS without representation in the NIT parliament. Moderates began to see the NIT as a middle ground between the Republic and the old colonial order, and, as Chauvel notes, “an institution in which the moderates could establish a political career.”

In the aftermath of Denpasar, the Council met to discuss the implementation of its mandate. Chauvel notes the reversal of the two main blocs in reference to the Dutch: the nationalists, led by Pupella, supported the Dutch proposal for the State of Eastern Indonesia, and the loyalists fiercely criticized Dutch moves. In the end, the DMS

---


221 Ibid., 251.

222 Ibid., 235.
decided to become a provisional member of the State, which confirmed the dominance of PIM and the alienation of the old elite. As a result, in late 1947 the pro-Dutch GSS issued a motion of no confidence in the DMS, and took its grievances to Soekawati, the President of Eastern Indonesia, in Makassar. The visit had little effect, but Soekawati’s reassurances appeared to dampen the separatist leanings of the GSS as they reorganized themselves as a party and announced policies consistent with the federalism policy of the NIT. Their opposition to the indirect system of voting, which they blamed for their trouncing in the Council election, may have resulted in new regulations that employed direct voting. Under the new system, however, the GSS was even less successful.224

Political activity in Ambon was spurred as much by events in Java and elsewhere as by events in Ambon. The first “police action” of July 1947, an attempt by the Dutch to seize and control economic strongholds in Java and Sumatra, resulted in caution from those in Ambon. The Dutch had freed many Ambonese living in Republican controlled areas and their stories of persecution fed the loyalist cause. For its part, the PIM sought reaffirmation of support for the 1946 Linggadjati Agreement, which recognized the de facto authority of the Republican government on Java, Sumatra and Madura, although it had been rendered defunct.225 Following the signing of the Renville Agreement on 19 January 1948, PIM maintained its activity while the GSS suffered from a lack of cohesion, especially among some rajas sympathetic to the nationalists.226 Chauvel also

223 Ibid., 243.
224 Ibid., 251-53.
225 Ibid., 260.
points to the emergence of a third group, the intellectuals, whose allegiances were complex. They were educated through the Dutch system and therefore felt some allegiance toward the Dutch, but they also sympathized with the Republican side. As Ambonese, they supported development of the region and urged the return of Ambonese troops fighting for the Dutch in Java.

These three groups, the intellectuals, the nationalists (PIM) and the loyalists (GSS) were all working above ground within the framework allowed for political mobilization by the Dutch. There was, however, one group that operated underground with the goal of violently ousting the Dutch: *Pemoeda Republik Indonesia Maloekoe Ambon* (Republic of Indonesia Youth, Maluku Ambon, or PRIMA), a predominantly Muslim group. The Dutch did not view the organization as a serious threat; however when its plan to attack government buildings and seize weapons was discovered the Dutch moved quickly to arrest PRIMA’s leadership. PRIMA gave outward support to PIM.227

Non-Ambonese residents of the region generally supported the Republic as they felt it would be a way for them to get out from under Ambonese domination. Because of their favored status, Ambonese were better educated and therefore the immediate administrators of the territory under the Dutch. The non-Ambonese position in favor of the Republic was vocalized through the DMS.228 Chauvel notes that despite the Councils’ status as an “imposed institution rather than an indigenous one… it was the forum for...

---

226 Ibid., 261.

227 Ibid., 269-70.

228 Ibid., 270-72.
much of the political process in the South Moluccas until late 1949.”

229 The voting system for the DMS remained a contentious issue, with the loyalist GSS pushing for direct elections and appealing to the Prime Minister of the NIT, Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung. In August the Council adopted a direct election system for three regions, Ambon-Lease, Ceram and Tual, with an election to be held in 1948. Influenced by the PTB, an organization with members culled from the entire Eastern Indonesia region who favored separation and independence, the GSS sought separation from the NIT over fears of Muslim hegemony despite the fact that several of the GSS’ leaders were Muslim rajas; Chauvel notes that the GSS was plagued by problems of internal discipline.230 The nationalist PIM similarly had problems at the leadership level but they did not translate to ineffective campaigning at the village level. The election took place on 16 December 1948, just two weeks before the Dutch were to cede sovereignty under the Linggadjati Agreement, and just days before the Dutch Second Police Action that would postpone Indonesia’s independence.

In the Council election, PIM gained one seat in Ambon Town and two in Saparua; the GSS and the rajas were humiliated by this loss.231 Although it controlled the DMS,

229 Ibid., 273. He also notes: “Unlike the situation in parts of Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, the political struggle for Indonesian independence (in Ambon) was conducted within structures determined by the Dutch.” Richard Chauvel, “Ambon: Not a Revolution,” 238.

230 Chauvel, Nationalists, 276-77.

231 The Dutch were equally surprised by the results, expecting the direct election to reveal predominantly loyalist sentiments. As Richard Chauvel argues, the Dutch perception was influenced by contact predominantly with Ambonese in the colonial administration and military, who were loyalist. “It was not so much that the stereotype
the nationalist PIM did not dominate Ambonese society. The unelected and generally pro-Dutch *Kepala Daerah* (Regional Heads) maintained significant power, and the DMS was held in low regard by a large section of the population.\textsuperscript{232} The GSS and the rajas campaigned against the Council, influenced by the uncertain atmosphere caused by the second police action. They organized a meeting and established the *Comité ter Bestudering Status Maloekoe Selatan* (Committee to Study the Status of South Moluccas), made up entirely of unsuccessful candidates in the recent elections, to discuss the future of the South Moluccas, but the *Kepala Daerah* banned all public meetings until August 1949 over security fears. The GSS and the committee sent a telegram to Louis Beel, the Dutch High Representative of the Crown in Indonesia, reaffirming the desire to separate from the NIT (the Committee would later form the core of the RMS).\textsuperscript{233} The ban on meetings had the effect of “freezing” Ambonese politics as they stood, hindering both the loyalists and separatists.

On 17 February 1949, Lucas Polhaupessy, the leader of the PTB, arrived in Ambon after a tour of the Minahasa region in support of separation for the PTB. Although he was Ambonese, he was considered an outsider and not of noble class, which hindered his efforts at support for the PTB cause. Furthermore, because the GSS included some Mulsim rajas, the concept of an independent Minahasa, Timor and Ambon as Christian regions failed to resonate. Nevertheless, Polhaupessy gathered signatures for a

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{232} Ibid., 279.
\textsuperscript{233} Ibid., 280-81.
\end{flushright}
third petition that he would submit to the Queen; similar petitions were filed in 1947 and 1948, but were rejected due to overriding concerns over the establishment of NIT. The third petition, however, was received well and viewed as a bargaining tool against Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, the Prime Minister of the NIT, who had undermined Dutch goals following the second police action. The Dutch pressured Anak Agung by recognizing the PTB and proposing representation for the Ambonese, Menadonese and Timorese at the upcoming Round Table Conference (RTC), and by drawing his attention to article 5.1 of the NIT’s provisional constitution, which allowed for self-determination of the NIT’s constituent parts.234

The reaction to the PTB and the Committee was swift. Anak Agung agreed to representation for Ambonese, Menadonese and Timorese, but that the representatives would have to be chosen by the NIT parliament. Pellaupessy, the Kepala Daerah, asserted that the PTB was not representative of Ambonese public opinion, and if there was to be Ambonese representation at the RTC, only the DMS could appoint them. The Council decided against direct Ambonese representation but hoped that one of its members could be on the NIT delegation. In the Dutch outline for the Round Table the PTB was not included as an official participant but was recognized as a “significant interest” as leverage against Anak Agung. This recognition conferred significant status for the PTB in Ambon, allowing Polhaupessy to campaign openly there, and acted to perpetuate the myth in Holland that the PTB represented the majority opinion of Ambon (although the true situation was much less clear). Polhaupessy was aware of the limitations of his newfound status, however, and he was circumspect in his answers as to

234 Ibid., 285-87.
the role he would be playing while in Holland. He approached some of the leaders of the separatist cause in Ambon and urged them to declare an independent state, but they refused.235

The Round Table Conference to negotiate Indonesian sovereignty began in the Hague on 23 August 1949. Ambon was represented by five people: Julius Tahya, the NIT representative in Jakarta and a former NIT minister; Johannes Leimena, a member of the Republican delegation; Polhaupessy, a leader of the PTB, a group of “significant interest;” Pupella, a journalist; and Pellaupessy, who went in an unofficial capacity.236 Thus the entire spectrum of Ambonese political opinion was represented. The Dutch offered Polhaupessy a forum in a sub-committee in order to decide if his case should be heard by the full committee; he refused, arguing that he did not think the sub-committee competent to judge the merits of the PTB’s case. Rather, he argued that the PTB should be allowed to join the Netherlands delegation since they considered themselves citizens of Holland. This request was rejected, and the PTB lost its ability to argue its case effectively.237 A modified version of self-determination remained on the table.

In Ambon, both sides attempted to influence the proceedings in the Hague through telegrams. Pupella, for his part, continued to attack the PTB in the PIM newspaper Masa, writing dispatches from the Hague. Wim Reawaru, an influential PIM

235 Ibid., 287-89.

236 Pupella and Pellaupessy were nominated by the DMS to attend, but their nominations were withdrawn.

237 Chauvel, Nationalists, 297-99. Chauvel points out that conversely Pupella and Pellaupessy could not air their arguments against Polhaupessy, and the myth of Ambonese loyalty was perpetuated.
leader, began organizing pemuda militias and created the *Persatoean Pemoeda Indonesia* (United Indonesian Youth, PPI). Returning members of KNIL joining those already in Ambon, as well as local conservative groups including the police, viewed the marching in the streets by the PPI as provocative; deadly clashes resulted.\(^\text{238}\) As the situation became more tense, the PTB sympathizers held the upper hand in some ways. In Muslim negeri, the conservative rajas remained influential, although violence between sides was becoming increasingly common. In Christian negeri there was more stability, for two reasons. First, the Christian negeri were less formally organized, there were no PIM leaders among them, and few people registered as PIM members (despite majorities supporting PIM). Second, the KNIL soldiers were influential because they brought money into the negeri through their pensions and pay and supported many people in the negeri; as a result the nationalist PIM supporters were afraid of retribution if they openly displayed their allegiance.\(^\text{239}\) As American anthropologist Raymond Kennedy noted, the PTB supporters dominated in terms of force of arms but were held back by the realization that they were not in the majority opinion.\(^\text{240}\)

Pupella returned to Ambon on 29 November 1949, to explain the results of the RTC and to appeal to conservatives to respect the new situation. On 27 December, the Dutch tricolor was lowered and replaced by the Indonesian *merah-putih* (red and white). The prevailing calm soon gave way to violence with the KNIL and police on one side,

---

\(^{238}\) Ibid., 300-1.

\(^{239}\) Ibid., 302-3; Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 458-59.

and the PPI on the other. Dutch colonial special troops (KST), known for their lack of discipline and predisposition toward violence, landed in Ambon on 17 January 1950 to await demobilization and immediately joined the fray against the pemuda and supporters of Indonesian independence. The KST also harbored anti-Dutch sentiment; they felt used and now believed that Dutch promises of reconstruction had been lies. The PIM leadership treaded carefully so as not to alienate the KST, believing that they might be swayed to the PIM side.\textsuperscript{241} Elsewhere, the establishment of an Indonesian army incorporating both members of KNIL and Republican fighters was understandably causing conflict. Chauvel notes that the introduction of violence in early 1950 was the turning point toward the declaration of the RMS.\textsuperscript{242}

Following the granting of sovereignty to Indonesia by the Dutch, the question of the integration of the federal state set up by the Dutch loomed. The NIT was caught in this process, and its leaders became factionalized. Some supported an independent NIT, many supported a federal Indonesia, and some supported a unitary Indonesia. Under the NIT, the various factions of Ambonese leaders attempted to influence the discussion as well, with the question of demobilization of the KNIL and potential fighting between KNIL troops and Republican troops (who might have been sent to NIT) at the fore. The Dutch commanders issued directives for Dutch troops to remain neutral in case of fighting between forces from the NIT (including KNIL) and the TNI (including the Angkatan Perang Republik Indonesia Serikat, the Armed Forces of the United Indonesian


\textsuperscript{242} Ibid., 309.
Republic or APRIS), and KNIL troops were told that if they engaged the Republicans they would forfeit the opportunity to transfer to APRIS.\footnote{Ibid., 335.}

The strain between the NIT forces and APRIS came to the fore with the Azis Affair in Makassar, Sulawesi, also a member of the NIT. The Republicans sent a ship of TNI soldiers (the Worang Battalion) to Makassar to dissuade the NIT leadership from opposing the central government despite protestations of NIT military and civilian leaders. On 3 April a meeting of 700 KNIL soldiers in Makassar, aware of the looming landing of the Worang Battalion, voted to oppose it. Abdul Andi Azis, a former KNIL officer who had fought the TNI, was put in charge of resisting the Worang Battalion’s landing by Soumokil and Soekawati on April 4. Since Azis had been commissioned into APRIS just days prior, Soumokil and Soekawati hoped that the resistance would be viewed by the central government as internal to APRIS. On the morning of 5 April, Azis, backed by his APRIS company and 300 KNIL soldiers and police, took and occupied key positions in Makassar, captured the APRIS leader, Colonel Mokoginta, and announced their intention to defend the NIT.\footnote{Ibid., 338-39.} Diapari, as Premier of the NIT, distanced himself from Azis’ actions, but Chauvel describes the Azis Affair as the first stage of four in an elaborate scheme to declare NIT independent.\footnote{Ibid., 340-41.} Soekarno demanded an apology from Azis in person, but Azis declined to go to Jakarta. On 8 April a meeting attended by representatives of the separatists, the State of Eastern Indonesia, and the Republicans decided little about the situation, but Mokoginta, having been freed by Azis and returned...
to Jakarta, came back to Makassar and proposed a compromise: Azis would be pardoned if he went to Jakarta and apologized; no TNI or APRIS would be sent to NIT; and attempts by the central government to liquidate the NIT would cease.\textsuperscript{246} Although Jogjakarta’s Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX as Minister of Defense announced on Radio Jakarta that the compromise had been accepted, Azis balked and made a counter announcement on Radio Makassar.

Jakarta’s patience ran out, and on the deadline of 13 April, at 8:15 pm, Soekarno announced his declaration that Azis was to be considered a rebel and he appealed to KNIL units to remain calm. Soekawati spoke with Soekarno by telephone, with the latter assuring the former that the only way to avoid an attack on Makassar was to send Azis to Jakarta. The NIT leadership and Azis believed the promise of safe passage made by Mokoginta to be in effect, but Azis and Mokoginta were arrested on their arrival in Jakarta. After assessing support for an independent state in Menado and Ambon, Soekawati doubted the strength of Azis’ support. On 19 April, Azis’ troops surrendered, on 20 April the Worang Battalion entered Makassar, and on 21 April Soekawati agreed to the NIT forming a part of the unitary state of Indonesia.\textsuperscript{247}

Ambonese followed the events in Makassar closely. The KNIL soldiers were anxious, the FST soldiers had broken into an armory and seized weapons, and “the prospect of TNI troops landing in Ambon undermined the support PIM had developed amongst the soldiers.”\textsuperscript{248} On 18 April, Manusama called a meeting in Ambon and rallied

\textsuperscript{246} Ibid., 341.

\textsuperscript{247} Ibid., 344-45.
the observers, including elites and local rajas, in support of federalism and against Jogja and Jakarta’s influence. He sent a telegram to Soekawati urging him to support federalism, and implied that should Makassar fall, the fight would continue in Ambon.\textsuperscript{249} The day after Soekawati’s 21 April concession, Ambonese parliamentarians voted no confidence in the Diapari cabinet. The next two days saw a series of meetings in Ambon and the proclamation, on 24 April, of the \textit{Republik Maloekoe Selatan}.\textsuperscript{250} Soumokil’s and Manuhutu’s accounts of the proclamation relay the pressure exerted on them by FST troops in attendance, with thinly veiled threats if the proclamation was not made.\textsuperscript{251}

The announcement was broadcast the following day by Radio Ambon, emphasizing the right of self-determination as the RMS leaders interpreted it from the Denpasar, Linggadjati and Round Table agreements. The proclamation found support among many segments of society in an atmosphere heated by a larger than normal presence of Ambonese soldiers anxious about their futures, Ambonese émigrés who had suffered persecution during the revolution, and Christians swayed by rumors that after the TNI landed in Ambon they would be forcibly converted to Islam.\textsuperscript{252} There was little support from the Muslim community in general, with the exception of some of the rajas.

\textsuperscript{248} Ibid., 347-48.

\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., 352.

\textsuperscript{250} Kahin wrote that the declaration was made by the DMS, although given the nature of the membership of the DMS this is not a realistic account. Kahin, \textit{Nationalism and Revolution}, 458; cf. Chauvel, \textit{Nationalists}, 359.

\textsuperscript{251} Ibid., 355 -57.

\textsuperscript{252} Ibid., 360.
Outside of the Ambon region there was widespread condemnation.\textsuperscript{253} Nevertheless the RMS held the Ambonese islands and parts of Ceram until December 1950.

Following the proclamation, the RMS leadership formed a government, although it was marred by a lack of cohesion. Three of the leaders (Manusama, Soukomil, and Alex Nanlohy) viewed the state as theirs based on their prior roles, and they parried with each other for influence.\textsuperscript{254} The RMS created a parliament of 75, 60 of whom were rajas and all of whom were nominated but not voted on by the public as a democratic pretense in the hopes of securing international recognition. The movement lacked a coherent ideology, however, as Chauvel notes: “Given the hasty circumstances in which the RMS came into existence, it is understandable that very little thought had been given to the nature of an independent government.”\textsuperscript{255} Nationalists were screened by the RMS leadership, and some who compromised were incorporated into positions of authority. Some, however, were murdered, such as Reawaru and some members of his PPI. Aside from the \textit{pemoeda}, Muslims were also targets of the soldiers. Although the RMS leadership viewed the region as a Christian stronghold resisting Muslim domination, they had to be careful not to alienate the Muslims who supported them, including conservative Muslims.

\textsuperscript{253} In reaction to the declaration of the RMS, the governors of Sulawesi, Sunda Kecil (later Nusa Tenggara) and Maluku signed a proclamation in Medan for the NIT to immediately join with Indonesia. In the notes from the meeting, the \textit{Ikatan Pemuda Indonesia Maluku} (Youth Union of Moluccan Indonesia), among other groups, called for Moluccan integration as well as the trial of Westerling. “Tjatatan Ringkas (Notulen) Rapat Terbuka Kenferensi Polombangkeng Pada Hari Abad, 2 May 1950, Medan. KPM RI #88” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1950).

\textsuperscript{254} Chauvel, \textit{Nationalists}, 367.

\textsuperscript{255} Ibid., 368-69.
Muslim rajas. The inadequate food supply in Ambon exacerbated tense relations between soldiers and civilians, as soldiers seized food.

The KNIL soldiers in Ambon, numbering 1739, were reorganized into the *Angkatan Perang RMS* (Armed Forces of the RMS, APRMS), but they suffered from a lack of discipline.²⁵⁶ Soumokil and Nanlohy proposed establishing an emergency government on nearby Ceram Island in case Ambon was overrun. Soumokil left for Ceram with some of the FST troops, and Nanlohy went to New Guinea to secure arms (a trip from which he never returned, instead staying and using the capital to trade and make more money for himself). Soumokil wrote to the Australian Prime Minister, R. G. Menzies, asking for recognition and portraying the RMS cause as resisting Javanese hegemony and communism.²⁵⁷ J. P. Nikijuluw, an Ambonese doctor who lived in the Netherlands, also asked for Dutch recognition, as well as Australian, but was denied.

The RMS established a presence in Dutch New Guinea in May 1950. There they established a radio link through Dutch intelligence that enabled communication between the RMS in Holland and in Ambon. Through this link they were also able to monitor Indonesian troop movements, which allowed them to break the Indonesian blockade and earn money for diplomatic efforts overseas by selling goods in New Guinea.²⁵⁸

---

²⁵⁶ Van Kaam notes: “Although there was a government, the KNIL soldiers usually went their own way. The ‘berets’ (KST) were a separate group again, over whom no one other than Soumokil had any hold.” Van Kaam, 117; Kahin noted the inability of the Dutch military to bring the Ambonese KNIL under control. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 459.


²⁵⁸ Ibid., 379-80. Chauvel posits that the communications link with military intelligence allowed the RMS to resist ten TNI battalions for so long.
Chauvel argues that there were schisms between the military and civilian leaders and that the civilian leaders were unable to exert effective control over the military.\textsuperscript{259} And in diplomatic efforts with the Dutch, Ambonese KNIL soldiers were told that should they align themselves with the RMS they would be voiding their association with the Dutch, and therefore risk losing their benefits and pensions. Most of the KNIL soldiers chose to defend their Ambonese homeland. To the consternation of the RMS, the Dutch began evacuating its citizens, and the negotiations between the Dutch and the RMS were considered a failure.\textsuperscript{260}

The Indonesians surrounded the Ambonese islands and on 13 July 1950, the first battle occurred on Buru Island. Diplomatic efforts between RIS and RMS continued, but were not fruitful with serious constraints on the process – such as the refusal of Ambonese officials to allow Javanese to represent the RIS – and with the military wings of both groups apparently against a negotiated settlement. In October the Indonesians began to land on Ambon, and the Ambonese were buoyed by rumors of Dutch assistance which turned out to be false. It took two months for the Indonesians to take Ambon Island, and in December 1950 most of the RMS ministers and many of the RMS soldiers had fled to Ceram, where a shadow government had been set up and where Pellaupessy led an Ambonese TNI battalion against the RMS troops. Heavy fighting ended in 1951, and although the Indonesians never fully controlled Ceram they were able to control effectively the Moluccan archipelago.

\textsuperscript{259} Ibid., 382.

\textsuperscript{260} Ibid., 385-87.
On the aftermath of the movement, Chauvel notes: “If there were any Ambonese victors following the RMS, it was the Republican émigré leaders who during the 1950’s and early 1960’s did at times hold the senior civilian and military positions in Ambon.”

Party politics, once considered secular, reflected religion, and in the 1955 election Ambonese voted consistently with parties affiliated with their religions, most prominently Muslim Masjumi and Protestant Parkindo. Christians, due to their head start in terms of education and their role in the bureaucracy, maintained their privileges for some time, but they slowly eroded as a Muslim elite emerged.

The Ambonese military “caste” disappeared, although many of the RMS troops were offered amnesty and positions in the TNI. Around 4,000 Ambonese soldiers garrisoned outside of Ambon during the conflict fled to Holland with their families, where they continued the RMS struggle politically.

The civilian leadership of the RMS, Manusama and Soumokil, were both returned émigrés who had shared some of the bad experiences of the revolution, including persecution at the hands of Javanese Republicans; they were able to draw appeals based on those experiences that resonated. But their preference for the Dutch began long prior to the revolution; through collaboration with the colonial regime they had sought to advance through the Dutch system; later they saw the federal system as the best way to preserve their position privilege. When both of these options failed, Ambonese

261 Ibid., 393-94. He also notes the change following the imposition of the New Order: “Since 1968 these positions have been held by non-Ambonese and non-Moluccans. Neither the émigré nor Ambonese-based elite were able to defend the region’s autonomy as central control was strengthened with the consolidation of the New Order government.”

262 Ibid., 394-95.
separatism became their choice of last resort; according to Chauvel, they realized an independent South Moluccas would be restrictive given their “occupational skills which were dependent on the existence of a large political unit in the archipelago.” This background led them to fear Indonesian nationalism as they clearly viewed it as a threat to their position.263

The rajas and pendetas had played an early role in the establishment of separatism by providing a link between the leadership and residents of the negeri, but with few exceptions they remained peripheral to the movement, indicating a radical shift in their influence in Ambonese society. Their opposition to the nationalists was understandable given the perceived threat of nationalist intervention in negeri politics and dispute resolution.264

The successful group among the Ambonese leadership was the nationalists. They had built a following by appealing to those who remained marginalized from the benefits of association with the Dutch, predominantly from the Muslim negeri and city populations. Nationalists, led by PIM, gave these people a voice through elections, and the militias were of “great symbolic importance” despite being outgunned by the KNIL.265 As van Kaam notes: “An independent Indonesia… would naturally not allow (KNIL soldiers) to retain (their) exceptional position with all the status attached to it. Put

263 Ibid., 398-401.
264 Ibid., 403-04.
265 Ibid., 405
simply, the departure of the colonial government would benefit the Moluccan intellectual but not the semi-skilled Moluccan KNIL soldier in the lower ranks.”266

The Aftermath of the RMS

As Chauvel’s analysis shows, support for the RMS in the Moluccas was not the position of the majority of the population. Rather, he paints a much more nuanced picture of events and circumstances in Ambon that shows the motivations and interests that collided to result in the RMS and the brief battle for secession. The question as to what happened to the RMS movement following its defeat remains.

Much of the core of the RMS left for Holland. Despite the passage of time, there are still adherents to the free South Moluccan cause in Holland, spurred in part by their treatment in Holland. Upon resettlement the Moluccans were housed in camps amidst but separate from their Dutch towns, in former concentration and military camps. The Dutch and the Moluccans assumed that the relocation was temporary, so the Moluccans did not receive much attention (West Papua, at that point a disputed territory held by the Dutch, was one place under consideration for the relocation of the Moluccans).

The original generation of Dutch Moluccans maintained their belief in Moluccan sovereignty, and continued to petition the Dutch government and the United Nations for recognition and assistance. Eventually the second generation of Moluccans in Holland turned to acts of terrorism to draw attention to their case, including train hijackings and hostage taking episodes.267 The young Dutch Moluccans were frustrated at the lack of

---

266 Van Kaam, 53.

267 The acts of the RMS supporters in Holland in the 1970s drew attention to the Ambonese community there, including the attention of academics who wrote on the
attention to their cause and their actions shocked Holland, although it did lead to positive steps toward alleviating their sequestration. There remains in Holland today sympathy for the RMS cause as well as for a new group that emerged in 2000, the *Front Kedaulatan Maluku* (Moluccan Sovereignty Front, FKM).

In the Ambon region itself, the results are less certain, although the post-RMS period beginning in 1951 was crucial for bringing the region into the Indonesian fold. This was a critical juncture for Jakarta, and in this case Jakarta’s response was effective at controlling separatist sentiment in the region. RMS supporters waged a low-level insurgency until the early 1960s, but the region was for the most part under effective Indonesian control. The defeat of the RMS did not leave a power vacuum among


Bartels notes an upswing in youth participation in RMS events in 1985 on the 35th anniversary of the declaration of the RMS. Bartels, “Can the Train,” 25.

For the “critical juncture” concept, see Bertrand.
indigenous Ambonese; there were many educated elites (who were still predominantly Christian) sympathetic to the Republican cause who were trusted by Jakarta and allowed to step into positions of power.\textsuperscript{271} In contrast to the other cases, once Indonesian sovereignty was established in Ambon, Jakarta did not flood the region with politicians, bureaucrats and transmigrants from Java; the region was governed by local elites.\textsuperscript{272} The first four governors of Indonesian Ambon, for example, were Ambonese: J. Latuharhari (1950-55), a civilian and one of the framers of the constitution; M. Djosan (1955-60), a civilian; M. Padang (1960-65), a civilian (and muslim); and G. J. Latumahina (1965-68), a military officer).\textsuperscript{273} Furthermore, as described above, the Muslim population was finally allowed to “catch up” to the Christian Ambonese and it developed its own elites who jostled for power in Ambon and Jakarta over time, leading in turn to the violence in the region in 1999.

\textsuperscript{270} As van Kaam notes, there was a brief recognition from the US and Australia during the transition to Guided Democracy and the PKI’s increasing influence over Sukarno that support for an anti-communist RMS might be strategically sound over fears of Indonesia going communist. This also led to expressions of support for the RMS from these two states, although it had “little to do with a real understanding of the Moluccan quest for independence; it amounted at the most to anti-Communist Western opportunism.” Van Kaam, 118-19.


\textsuperscript{273} It was not until after the consolidation of the New Order that Suharto appointed a Javanese military officer, Soemitro, to lead Ambon.
Although Chauvel writes that the rise and defeat of the RMS was “perhaps the worst possible way for Ambon to be incorporated into independent Indonesia,” there were much worse scenarios possible. If the Dutch had supported the RMS militarily, for example, or the KNIL and RMS leadership had not gone into exile, or the Ambonese KNIL troops elsewhere in Indonesia had rallied to the fight in Ambon there could have been more bloodshed and a protracted conflict. For many Ambonese not tied too tightly to the nationalist or loyalist sides, there was little sting to the defeat of the RMS and the potential advantages of joining Indonesia could be rationalized once the other option was taken off of the table. Despite a dearth of information about Ambon and the South Moluccas in what I deem the critical 1950-65 period, it appears as though an acceptable balance was struck between Jakarta and the Ambonese elites which also placated most of the Ambonese population, reinforced through a strong military presence. I explore these factors below.

Despite the resounding defeat of the RMS in Ambon, the Indonesian government under both Soekarno and Suharto retained suspicions about the Ambonese. A large military presence remained in Ambon (and remains to this day). Outward expressions of sympathy for the RMS cause or affinity for Holland are met with violence or arrest. That

---


275 To the author’s knowledge, there are no comprehensive written accounts of political, social and economic development in Ambon during this period, which is surprising given its history. See: Lee, 74. Although it is speculation on the part of the author, part of the reason for this could be that political analysts of the period showed an inclination to study events in Jakarta and Java or to focus on the conflicts that emerged after the RMS was defeated, such as the PRRI and Permesta rebellions, Darul Islam, and West Papua. Scholarship in politics tends to focus on conflict as opposed to harmony, whereas this dissertation takes a more balanced approach.
being said, the majority of Ambonese, both Christian and Muslim, were successfully integrated into Indonesia. By the time of the New Order, when Suharto tightened his control on Indonesia and sent military cadres to take up government posts throughout the archipelago (including Ambon), many Ambonese were disgruntled about the appointment of foreigners, but this was insufficient to cause them to rebel again (although events in Ambon may have helped spur the RMS in Holland, as the hijacking and hostage taking episodes followed by a few years the consolidation of the New Order).

Events in 1999-2002 in Ambon, however, led to a misplaced renewal of fear over the RMS. Following the abdication of Suharto in May of 1998 and the rapid political opening of a reforming and democratizing Indonesia, violence broke out in Ambon between Christians and Muslims. Explanations of the violence vary, depending on the analyst. Most agree that the new openness provided by the reform movement and democratization allowed for increased competition between elites, encouraging underrepresented Muslim elites to vie for power against their Christian counterparts. Both Indonesian government officials, including the military and police, as well as some Muslim figures, blamed the RMS for the violence, and attempted to portray the violence as separatist in nature, accusations that simply were not true. Their position was

---


bolstered, however, by the 15 June 2000, declaration of the separatist Front Kedaulatan Maluku amidst sectarian violence in Ambon.\textsuperscript{278}

The FKM is a times differentiated from the RMS, and at times linked to the RMS. In interviews conducted in Ambon with FKM members and others in June and July 2006, the FKM was portrayed as the “new generation” (generasi baru) struggling for Moluccan independence.\textsuperscript{279} The FKM is a cover organization for a variety of rights organizations, and is avowedly non-violent. Despite its small following in Ambon, members who are caught are arrested and sent to prison.\textsuperscript{280} Some view the FKM (and the RMS legacy) as a

\begin{flushright}
Indonesia” (PhD diss., Murdoch University, 2006). Using a constructivist analysis that focuses on nationalism, she argues that the violence in the 1999-2002 period was nationalist and separatist in nature. Most analyses acknowledge the emergence of the FKM as a reaction to the violence, and very peripheral. Turner’s thesis, while insightful in some areas, is significantly flawed by several factual errors and her evidence gathering severely limited by travel restrictions in place at the time of her research.
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{278} A. H. Manuputty, the Executive Director of the FKM, published a tract in May 2001 entitled Republik Yang Hilang (The Republic That Disappeared) in which the violence of the prior three years plays a significant role in his call for a separate South Moluccas. Similar to work supporting the RMS, his historical analysis ignores significant facts concerning support for Indonesia among Moluccans but rather paints a one-sided view of the conflict. A. H. Manuputty, Republik Yang Hilang (Ambon: 2001). Because of the nature of the tract, no publishing information is given. The author obtained a copy of the original document from an FKM sympathizer in June 2006, and it was photocopied at a shop sympathetic to the FKM cause.

\textsuperscript{279} Nusamura; Sitipessy; Wilma Ranamissa; Wilem Soumoukil, interview by author, 29 June 2006, Ambon. Wilem Soumoukil is a Protestant Pastor; a pseudonym is used to protect his identity.

\textsuperscript{280} An FKM sympathizer estimated that around 60 percent of Ambonese harbored some sympathy for the FKM, but that it was almost entirely “passive.” When compared to interviews in other regions such as Papua and East Timor, where interviewees commonly claim support of 90 percent or more, the 60 percent figure, certainly an exaggeration, combined with the adjective “passive” connotes minimal support for the FKM. Wilma Ranamissa.
conduit for general anti-establishment feeling and youthful rebellion. Children, for example, paint the RMS flag’s colors on their soccer shoes and consider it a game not to get caught.²⁸¹ Sidney Jones of the International Crisis Group discounted the FKM’s influence and importance, stating that the TNI was “pushing” its members to act, and labeled its leaders “crazy.”²⁸² Prevailing analyses of the violence in Ambon at the turn of the century show that it was not conducted on separatist grounds nor was it strictly sectarian.

**Elite and Party Representation, 1951-65**

Even prior to the achievement of Indonesian independence Ambonese intellectuals and elites played a role in the development of Indonesian nationalism. This is partially explained by the privileged position of the Ambonese, which allowed them access to education as well as opportunities to circulate outside of the Ambon region.²⁸³ Although there were incentives for some Ambonese to support the Dutch during the revolution and then to revolt against encroaching Indonesian sovereignty, there were also many Ambonese elites who sided with the Indonesian nationalists, including a majority of members of the *Dewan Maluku Selatan*.

---
²⁸¹ Wilma Ranamissa.
²⁸² Sidney Jones, interview by author, 5 May 2006, Jakarta. Jones is the Southeast Asia Project director for the International Crisis Group.
²⁸³ Ironically, the Dutch “Ethical” policy that resulted in the education of native elites to help run the colony also helped spur the nationalist movement. Leimena, for example, graduated from the Dutch doctor’s schools STOVIA (*School Tot Opleiding Van Inlandsche Artsen*) (1930) and Geneeskunde Hogeschool (1939). Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 118-139; Leirissa, *Maluku Dalam Perjuangan*, 51-4.
Aside from Pattimura, the “Indonesian” national hero from Ambon who led a revolt against the Dutch (and who was also claimed by the RMS), there are a number of Ambonese elites who played a significant role in Indonesian national consciousness in the period 1951-65. Three such men are exemplars of Ambonese nationalists, Alexander Jacob Patty, Johannis Latuharhary and Johannes Leimena, men who helped shape an inclusive Indonesian identity as the nationalist movement emerged and who went on to represent the Ambonese on the national and local stages.  

Alexander Jacob Patty was a young Ambonese journalist living in Magelang, Java, when he founded the Sarekat Ambon (Ambon Union) in 1913. He had attended STOVIA’s (School Tot Opleiding Van Inlandsche Artsen) medical program but did not complete it, finishing his studies in bookkeeping and stenography. His immediate goals were to improve the lives of Ambonese in Java, specifically the families of KNIL members living in the tangsi (barracks). Because of its work, Sarekat Ambon was formally recognized in 1915 by the Dutch government. In May 1920, another branch of Sarekat Ambon opened in Semarang, and as Leiressa notes, this was the first to have overtly political goals. Unlike the Ambonseh-Studiefonds, membership was open to

---

284 Chauvel dedicates one chapter each to A.J. Patty and Latuharhary in his seminal book on the RMS, reflecting their importance.

285 There were Ambonese groups formed prior to 1913, such as Jong Ambon (Young Ambon) and Ambonsch-Studiefonds (Ambonese Study Funds). The latter helped Ambonese students at STOVIA and elsewhere, and the former was a youth group that was better known as soccer organization. Leirissa, Maluku Dalam Perjuangan, 52-54.

286 Chauvel, Nationalists, 105.

287 Leirissa, Maluku Dalam Perjuangan, 58-59. This recognition was cancelled as the organization became political, and then granted again in 1933.
Muslim Ambonese and not just Christians. Over time, and in conjunction with other emerging nationalist groups, *Sarekat Ambon* grew increasingly political, including pledging non-cooperation with the Indies government. The government responded with “surprise” and “shock” that the organization was open to both Muslims and Christians, and especially to KNIL soldiers, who the Dutch perceived as loyal. The Dutch banned KNIL members from joining the *Sarekat Ambon*, which led to KNIL members’ political isolation and was an important stage in differentiating loyalist and nationalist Ambonese.

In April 1923, Patty returned to Ambon and although there was not yet a *Sarekat Ambon* office there he encountered numerous Ambonese organizations, though none overtly political (aside from the *Ambonraad*, formed in 1921 as a part of the Dutch plan for local autonomy) and none particularly receptive. Patty traveled throughout the region and spread the idea of the *Sarekat Ambon* to receptive Ambonese at the negeri (village) level, although he found opposition as well, especially among traditional leaders whose authority was threatened (see above). In 1924, he was elected to the *Ambonraad* along with two other *Sarekat Ambon* members, J. D. Poetiray and J. Tupamahu.

Although he had alienated many among the entrenched pro-Dutch elite and rajas, some of

---

288 Ibid., 59.


290 Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 105

the latter of whom had banished him from their territories, he and Sarekat Ambon had won over many other Ambonese.

Following an earlier attempt to have him banished, in October 1924 the Dutch arrested Patty for incitement, sent him to be tried in Makassar, and banished him to Bengkulu. Patty was replaced in the Ambonraad by another member of Sarekat Ambon, Abraham Barnella. In Bengkulu, Patty attempted to raise funds to travel to Holland for his exile, but failed. Instead he found work in July 1926 as a public servant, the next year, after a move to Palembang, he was promoted to clerk. There he renewed his political activity and joined the Soekarno’s PNI (Partai Nasionalis Indonesia, Indonesian Nationalist Party), but in 1930 he was sent to Flores. There he started a branch of Partai Indonesia, and was again moved, this time to Boven Digoel in West Papua, where he was the only Ambonese. After the Japanese invasion, Patty was sent with the other prisoners to Australia and continued his political organizing among the exile communities. He returned to Java in 1946, lived in Jogjakarta, and was considered a leader among Ambonese Republicans there. On Pattimura Day (15 May) 1946, Patty and others formed the Partai Politik Maloekoe (Moluccan Political Party) which supported a unitary republic. Patty later joined the PIM.

Johannes Leimena’s life trajectory was similar in many ways to Patty’s. Leimena was born in Ambon in 1906, but moved to Jakarta when he was a youth. Similar to Patty and many other nationalists, he attended STOVIA (School Tot Opleiding Van Inlandsche

292 Ibid., 71-2.

293 Chauvel, Nationalists, 203.

294 Ibid., 124-126.
Artsen) to study medicine and graduated in 1930. He went on to study at Geneeskunde
Hogeschool (Medical High School), where he continued his medical studies and
graduated in 1939. Both places were hotbeds of nationalist activity, and many of the
emergent Indonesian nationalist elites were educated at these schools designed to provide
native doctors.295 As an Ambonese Christian, Leimena would have been trusted by the
Dutch until his activities drew their attention; as noted above, Ambonese were privileged
in the late colonial period.

In 1946, Leimena founded the predominant Christian party of early Indonesian
history, Parkindo (Partai Kristen Indonesia), and he served as its Chairman. Parkindo’s
goals were representation for the minority Christian population of Indonesia, but they
were also consistent with the overall goals of the Republicans. At the time of the party’s
founding, differences between parties and groups concerning the nature of the state
(federal or unitary, secular or Islamic) were overshadowed by the immediate goal of
ousting the Dutch and winning the Revolution. Leimena, nevertheless, supported the
dominant Republican position of a unitary state.296

During World War II, he continued his work both as a doctor and a nationalist. At
the outbreak of the Revolution, he went with the nationalists to Jogjakarta. Leimena was
appointed Junior Minister of Health in the second Sjahrir Cabinet (March 1946 – October
1946), and reappointed for the third Sjahrir cabinet (October 1946 – June 1947). He was
promoted to Heath Minister for the First Amir Sjarafuddin Cabinet (July 1947 -

295 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (New York: Verso, 1998), 79-82. That they were in these schools to begin with was already an indication of their elite status, hence the emphasis on “nationalist.”

November 1947), and retained under the Second Sjarifuddin Cabinet (November 1947 – January 1948). He served as Amir Sjarifuddin’s deputy representing the Republicans during the Renville negotiations in January 1947, and as a delegate to the Round Table Conference in August – November 1949. In 1949 he was offered a position in the Dutch created federal government, but he refused; he was allowed to remain free to practice medicine, but not to engage in political activity following the “Second Police Action” and the seizure of Jogjakarta by the Dutch in late 1948.297

On 20 December 1949, Vice President Mohammed Hatta formed the first cabinet after independence and swore in Leimena as Minister of Health, representing Parkindo. Leimena was incorporated into the cabinet directly under the auspices of the Republic of Indonesia symbolizing his closeness both physically and ideologically to the heart of the Republican government (he spent the revolution in Java), as opposed to the State of East Indonesia (as a Minahasan and Balinese were – Arnold Mononutu and Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, respectively). Three other representatives came from other federal states, including Kosasih Purwanegara (Pasundan), Sultan Hamid II (Kalimantan Barat), and Suparmo (Madura). The other ten members entered the cabinet under the auspices of the Republic of Indonesia.298

Leimena served as Health Minister for a variety of cabinets, and in the first Djuanda Cabinet (April 1957 – July 1959) he became the Third Deputy Prime Minister,


signaling his rise to further prominence in subsequent cabinets. Following Prime Minister Djuanda Kartadiwidjaja’s death in November 1963, Leimena, along with Subandrio and Charul Saleh, formed a presidium to lead the cabinet, Leimena as the Second Deputy Prime Minister under the fourth “Working Cabinet” (November 1963 – August 1964), again under the Dwikora Cabinet (August 1964 – February 1966) and the Revised Dwikora Cabinet (February 1966 – March 1966). Under the Second Revised Dwikora Cabinet (March 1966 – July 1966), Suharto’s first after the Supersemar proclamation, he was named Deputy Prime Minister for General Affairs, despite his close relationship with Soekarno. He was not appointed to any subsequent cabinets; he had spoken very openly to Suharto following his takeover about the poor treatment of Soekarno, and he refused to denounce him or any other nationalists despite the hostile political climate.

Leimena was a close associate of Soekarno through the Guided Democracy period, although with the army consolidating its role, Leimena and Parkindo, which represented a numerically small constituency, could not provide Soekarno with large scale grassroots support.

299 Crouch, 77.

300 Ibid., 200. Supersemar is an acronym for *Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret*, the Eleventh of March Governing Letter, which transferred power from Soekarno to Suharto.


302 Crouch acknowledges Leimana’s and others’ (including Roeslan Abdulgani, Chaerul Saleh, Mohammad Yamin, Subandrio and Djuanda) intellectual and political capabilities, but it was the PKI that could provide the grassroots support that Soekarno needed to shore his position. Leimena remained a very public – and trusted – advisor to
Despite the end of Leimena’s ministerial career and his subsequent alienation from representational politics, he served during a crucial time for the Ambonese. He had served in a total of 18 cabinets from 1946 to 1966, the most of any Indonesian. He was a trusted advisor to Soekarno and a very public figure, and he was viewed as a symbol of representation for Eastern Indonesia, for Christians, and for intellectuals. He was selected to represent RUSI and meet with the rebels shortly after the declaration of the RMS in April 1950, but the meeting was refused when the RUSI leadership declined to acknowledge RMS as a state.

A third key figure was Johannes (alt. Johannis) Latuharhary, born on Saparua on 6 July 1900. Similar to both Patty and Leimena, as a youth he moved to Java and studied at HBS (Hogere burgerschool, a secondary institution) in Batavia, and with the help of the Ambonsch-Studiefonds he traveled to Holland to complete his studies at the University of Leiden, becoming its first Indonesian graduate. After his return to Indonesia, he worked in the High Court in Surabaya from December 1927 to May 1929 as an assistant to the court and as an advocate.

Soekarno; it was Leimena who advised Soekarno to retreat to Bogor rather than Bali or East Java following the G30S. Crouch, 48, 132.

303 Theofransus Litaay, email communication with author, 7 May 2008. Litaay is a Lecturer in the Faculty of Law, Satya Wacana Christian University; Haire. As both a representative for Ambonese and Christians, Leimena was asked by the World Council of Churches to explain the situation in Ambon in 1950, in the context of the dispute being framed as a war against Christians by supporters of the RMS. Leimena, J. The Ambon Question: Facts and Appeal (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan, Republik Indonesia, 1950). Leirisaa notes the importance of Leimena’s appeal not only to outsiders but to Ambonese, who would be more willing to hear it from a fellow Ambonese. Leirissa, in an apt metaphor given Leimena’s training, likened Leimena’s speech to curing the cause as opposed to the symptom. R. Z. Leirissa, Kewarganegaraan Yang Bertanggungjawab: Mengenang Dr. J. Leimena (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 1977 (1995)), 228-9.
After leaving his job, Latuharhary became a leader of Sarekat Ambon in an attempt to change the direction of the organization from the counterproductive policies of Patty. Latuharhary moved the offices of Sarekat Ambon from Batavia to Surabaya, created a split in the leadership between him and Apituley, who stayed in Batavia and formed the Moluksch Politiek Verbond (Moluccan Political Union) in response. From Surabaya, Latuharhary continued to petition for recognition from the Indies government, which was finally bestowed in 1933. He viewed the Ambonese as an essential part of Indonesia despite regional cultural differences, but tempered Sarekat Ambon’s emergent pro-independence stance.\(^{304}\)

After returning to Ambon, Latuharhary joined the Ambonraad, and from that position ran for a seat in the Volksraad in 1939, but was defeated.\(^{305}\) In the Japanese period, he was appointed to the Home Affairs office in Jakarta, and joined the Badan Penjelidik Oesaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (Body to Investigate Preparations for Indonesian Independence), where he pushed for a federal state and against an Islamic state. At the end of the war he convened a meeting of Ambonese leaders in Java and asked them to support independence.\(^{306}\)

Latuharhary was appointed the first governor of the Moluccas by the Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan (Committee for the Preparation of Independence), but he remained in Java because of the situation in Ambon. From Jakarta, however, he formed

\(^{304}\) Chauvel notes that “Latuharhary was the first Ambonese leader to formulate an argument for Ambon’s inclusion in an independent Indonesia and to consider Ambonese as Indonesians.” Chauvel, Nationalists, 136-40.

\(^{305}\) Ibid., 151.

\(^{306}\) Ibid., 196, 198.
the Ankgatan Pemoeda Indonesia Ambon (Ambonese Indonesia Youth Forces), which became a core group for Ambonese nationalists in Jakarta, and pleaded with Ambonese in Ambon, especially KNIL members, not to be “misused” by the Dutch and to support Indonesian independence.307

After independence, Latuharhary continued his role as governor of the Moluccas after moving his staff to Ambon. In 1955, he stepped down as governor and moved back to Jakarta, where he worked in the Department of State. He died on 8 November 1959, and is revered to this day as a national hero.

This brief accounting of Ambon’s best known modern nationalists is not meant to be exhaustive, as the list of Ambonese nationalists during the period 1920 – 1965 is extensive. Rather, it is to show that there were Ambonese in important and high profile positions in the Indonesian government since its inception, and that these people allowed Ambonese to feel as though they and their interests were represented in the government. Furthermore, through the Soekarno era and into the first years of the New Order, Moluccans were led by a Moluccan governor and were represented in the cabinet, as well as through local and national positions.308 Overall, Ambonese national representation has been disproportionally high.309

307 Ibid., 198-99.

308 Local and national representation by Ambonese and Moluccans is cited as the main reason for the violence of 1999-2002, as emerging Muslim elites jostled for power with the traditionally dominant Christians in an atmosphere of newly open politics. See: van Klinken, “New Actors.”

Beside individual political representation among Ambonese and other Moluccans, their political aspirations and representation were facilitated through Parkindo, the Indonesian Christian Party. Despite their unwavering dedication to the Indonesian state, Ambonese nationalists were confronted with the possibility that their interests could be endangered in the dialogue over the shape of the emerging state. Some, such as E. U. Pupella of PIM, supported federalism (but were resigned to a unitary state after the decision had been made), and Christians rejected the creation of an Islamic state, something under consideration. Parkindo came to play a significant role in electoral politics in the open period of the early to mid 1950s.

Despite Christians making up a small minority in Indonesia (around ten percent of the population), Parkindo allowed them influence beyond their numbers (see above).310 In the national elections of 1955, Parkindo came in sixth place in both the parliamentary election and the constituent assembly elections. It received votes from every region except West Kalimantan, albeit in mostly small proportion to the other parties. The exceptions, however, were in expected regions with large Christian populations, including North Sumatra (where Parkindo came third), North Sulawesi (where Parkindo came in third), South Sulawesi (where Parkindo came in fourth), and East Nusatenggara (where Parkindo came in second, trailing the Partai Katolik). In Maluku, which included the entire region including the Muslim north, Parkindo came in close second to the Muslim Masjumi (losing by about 8,500 votes in the parliamentary election, and by about

---

310 In Indonesia, the term “Christian” means Protestant; Catholics are referred to as “Katolik” and treated as a separate group.
13,500 votes in the constituent assembly vote).\textsuperscript{311} Parkindo won eight seats out of 257 in the parliament, and 16 seats out of 514 in the constituent assembly.\textsuperscript{312}

The election of Parkindo representatives and the selection of Ambonese among them were immediate signs to the Ambonese population that they would be represented on a national scale. Furthermore, because none of the major parties carried a clear majority, the medium sized parties, including both Parkindo and \textit{Partai Katolik}, exercised influence beyond their sizes by working in coalition with other parties, as well as through the disproportionate number of Christians in the civil service, the military, in universities and schools, and in important businesses, and due to the extraordinary prestige of some of the leaders, including Leimena.\textsuperscript{313}

Christian representation on a national scale was able to influence some key decisions made about the nature of the Indonesian state. Leimena (siding with secular nationalists) argued against the Jakarta Charter, for example, which would have made Islam a state religion. Although he supported a unitary state, Leimena also argued on behalf of autonomy (“to be regulated by central legislation”) for the regions, including Ambon, and on behalf of pardoning RMS rebels who wished to join Indonesia.\textsuperscript{314}

By 1960, as the last remnants of the RMS were slowly withering on Ceram, the ten-year consolidation process in Ambon had succeeded enough for Soekarno to appoint

\textsuperscript{311} Herbert Feith, \textit{The Indonesian Elections of 1955} (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1957), 65-72.


\textsuperscript{313} George McT. Kahin, ed., \textit{Major Governments of Asia} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958); 550-551; Feith, \textit{The Decline}, 145.

Mohammed Padang, a Muslim, as governor of Ambon. His appointment caused some concern among Christians, but Christian domination over the bureaucracy, education, and other areas as well as the subsequent appointment (1965) of Gerrit Latumahina, a Christian Ambonese colonel, as governor counteracted this apprehension. And, as Bartels notes, the post-independence years in Ambon were marked by a search for identity in a new situation, and relations between Muslims and Christians were strengthened by *pela* (alliance) bonds within this context.

---

315 Both Latumahina and Latuharhary were not from the island of Ambon, but rather from Haruku and Nusa Laut, respectively; these islands are within the ethnic Ambonese realm, however. Latumahina’s military background caused some consternation among Ambonese, including those in the civil service, some of whom protested and were punished with house arrest. As a result, after three years Latumahina was forced to step down and was replaced by Soemitro, a Javanese military man appointed by Suharto. In the context of the time (1968), however, there was not a lot of open protest at Soemitro’s appointment, and the fact that his wife was Ambonese may have calmed some. Had Soekarno during the period 1951-65 been unsuccessful at integrating Ambon, however, there surely would have been more resistance to Soemitro; and had the RMS remained strong, this surely would have pushed it into direct conflict with the central government. The acts of violence in the Netherlands, perpetrated by the second generation of Ambonese living there, could be interpreted as, among other factors, a reaction to the indifference of Ambonese in Ambon to events there. Suharto rationalized the imposition of a Javanese as governor because “Moluccans just cannot get along;” his appointments coincided with what one expert referred to as a “security approach.” The next three governors were Javanese military men, although Soemitro’s successor, Soemeru, did not serve his full term. His wife was a bacillophobe, and often panicked after shaking people’s hands. Her behavior was deemed an obstacle to his success as governor, and he was replaced following the military’s recommendation. Theofransus Litaay, email communication with author, 3 January 2008; Flip. P. B. Litaay, interview by author, 8 October 2006, Salatiga, Central Java. Flip P. B. Litaay is a former civil servant in the governor’s office in Ambon. Suharto appointed a Muslim Moluccan civilian, Akib Latuconsina, as governor in 1992 ending the string of Javanese military personnel. Bertrand, 116.

The Dutch-oriented elites who remained in the region following the defeat of the RMS were marginalized. Although his dissertation examines the interplay between religion and government in Ambon in the post-RMS period, Frank Leonard Cooley did very little to describe the overall political situation in the region during the time of his research, published in 1960. He did, however, note that following independence, nominations and elections became the standard way of choosing village level officials including rajas, as opposed to primogeniture or even selection based on heredity.\footnote{Frank Leonard Cooley, “Altar and Throne in Central Moluccan Societies: A Study of the Relationship Between the Institutions of Religion and the Institutions of Local Government in a Traditional Society Undergoing Rapid social Change” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1960), 323-24.} These new methods applied throughout Indonesia for choosing village leaders reflected the modernizing nature of the emergent Indonesian state consistent with Soekarno’s vision (despite the fact that the term “raja” was still applied), but would also serve as a check on the power of traditional hereditary elites, many of whom sided with the Dutch and the RMS.\footnote{Although Soekarno’s plans for modernizing the government and bureaucracy were meant to be applied consistently throughout Indonesia, it took significantly longer to implement these rules in some regions, particularly those with low levels of education. As the Ambonese region was among the best educated in Indonesia, these rules could be implemented immediately there.} These elected rajas were also in charge of overseeing the implementation of adat, another point of contention between the loyalists and the nationalists (see above). Despite these changes, Cooley argues that the overall pattern of village-level decision making – generally passive and top down – was marked by continuity, and that villages
retained a significant amount of autonomy in their affairs.319 And Bartels notes that, following the end of Dutch colonialism and the defeat of the RMS, Ambonese “searched for a new strength and a new cultural identity in adat,” thereby giving these elected leaders newfound influence.320

Other elites who were not deeply or ideologically wedded to the Dutch or the RMS but rather went along because of benefits that they accrued were able to adapt to the new circumstances, and shift their allegiances. As Cooley noted:

Perhaps it would not be going too far to say that by now it is clear to most Ambonese Christians that their destiny lies within the Indonesian Republic, that there is absolutely no hope of maintaining any sort of relationship with the Netherlands, and that under the present form of government the rights and privileges of the Christian minority stand everywhere the Central Government is able to exert its authority. Hence the sentiment in favor of the R.M.S., while still present, has died down to a considerable degree.321

The region was flooded with new media that were distinctly Indonesia oriented but also had content from outside of Indonesia, which was a significant opening compared to the

---

319 Cooley, 334-5, 340. Juliet Lee notes that in the late New Order period villages try to “reconcile” adat and the government by selecting kepala desas from the proper royal lineage but who also possess a high school certificate. Lee, 71.


321 Cooley, 371-72,
controls imposed by the Dutch. The Indonesian government also worked hard to keep anti-Moluccan sentiment in other parts of the archipelago in check.

Economy, Resources and Dependence, 1951-1965

Ambon served as the major port and center of operations for the VOC and in the early period of the Dutch East Indies due to the clove monopoly and the value of other spices cultivated in the region. The importance of Ambon declined in the 19th century, however, and its role in commerce was replaced by Batavia (Jakarta) and other port cities (especially Surabaya). Although prices for cloves remained high through the 1880s, the 1890s saw a precipitous drop in prices, and attempts to cultivate nutmeg, coffee and coconuts proved little better. Furthermore, population increases were not met with food production increases (Ambonese remained reliant on subsistence cultivation of sago, and papeda made from sago remains a staple dish) which led to food imports.

The declining economic stature of Ambon coupled with the military actions of the Dutch in the archipelago resulted in the increased recruitment of Ambonese in the military and a subsequent spread of education to Christians. This system established a relationship of economic reliance tied to military service on the part of Ambonese to the Dutch. Despite Ambon’s decline in economic importance, between 1911 and 1940 the

---

322 Ibid., 517-18. Juliet Lee describes the role of Ambon Town as the locus for the distribution of this national media to other places in the Moluccas. Lee, 61.

323 Cooley, 375.

324 Chauvel, Nationalists, 21-23. Chauvel notes the rise in demand for cloves in association with the kretejk cigarette industry in the 1920s and 1930s, and the “cruel irony” that ten times as much cloves were imported from Zanzibar as produced in the Moluccas.
region as a whole (Maluku, including the northern regions) ran a surplus in balance of trade every year except three, which had slight deficits.³²⁵

During the revolutionary period Ambon was poor, but it retained a steady stream of cash in the form of soldiers’ salaries and pensions, income that many other regions in Indonesia did not accrue. Furthermore, loyalists in Ambon felt that if they succeeded, “the Dutch would discover an economic interest and resources to develop which they had overlooked in the preceding eighty years… (they) were confident that the Dutch would not be disappointed because the South Moluccas was a very rich area.”³²⁶ Despite these feelings among some loyalists, which could be considered wishful thinking given Ambon’s food production capability and dearth of valuable natural resources, loyalists would never know what the Dutch would do given the loss of the RMS and the integration of Ambon into Indonesia. Despite education efforts on the part of the Japanese to instruct Ambonese in planting vegetables, the interruption of inter-island trade caused by World War II and the increase in demand for food by Japanese soldiers further stressed the region during the Japanese occupation, leaving Ambon in dire

³²⁵ Adrian Clemens, J. Thomas Lindblad and Jeroen Touwen, *Regional Patterns in Foreign Trade 1911-1940, Changing Economy in Indonesia, Vol 12*, ed. Peter Boomgaard (Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute, 1975), 59. These figures include exports to other regions in the Indies as well as foreign exports; the two are not differentiated. Furthermore, beginning in 1924 the data include West Papua, which was incorporated into the Maluku province. West Papua ran deficits in four years between 1911 and 1924, although trade in the region was a small fraction of that of Maluku (between 1.4 percent (1916) and 1.7 percent (1911) in exports, and two percent (1921) and 14 percent (1919) in imports – West Papua had zero imports in 1911 and 1912.

³²⁶ Chauvel, *Nationalists*, 240. The idea that the Ambon region is rich in natural resources continues to be echoed by those who harbor separatist sentiments. Soumoukil; Sitipessy.
economic straits at the war’s close. World War II and the Revolution further shattered the Indonesian economy; afterwards Indonesia attempted to build a national economy focused on export-oriented foreign enterprises and peasant agriculture from the fragments of both the late colonial and wartime economies in the context of the settlement with the Dutch. Despite the myriad resources throughout the country, Indonesia in the 1950s was mired in deep-seated and wide ranging poverty.

Ambon’s post-independence economy remained subsistence-based and reliant on the spice trade despite its weakness, with no significant industry. Civil service jobs continued to be a major source of employment for Ambonese, and Ambonese assumed positions within the Indonesian bureaucracy in other regions, including West Papua following its incorporation in 1963 (see following chapter). The tradition of Ambonese joining the military, albeit now the TNI rather than the KNIL, continued as well, pushed by Jakarta’s desire for a strong military presence in the region, first to counteract the remaining RMS forces in Ceram, and second as the staging ground for assaults against the Dutch who remained in West Papua. As the easternmost region prior to the


330 Lee, 65.
incorporation of West Papua, Ambon became home to the most important naval base in Indonesia, providing jobs that Jakarta hoped would satisfy the population.\textsuperscript{331} Thus the tradition of a large block of the Ambonese population relying on military wages continued. The overwhelming presence of the Indonesian military in other provinces such as East Timor, West Papua and Aceh has been cited as a provocation that spurred separatist sentiment in those regions, yet in Ambon this does not seem to have been the case.\textsuperscript{332} It was this role as a base for the military that turned Ambon into a target for the Permesta rebels in the late 1950s rather than a potential ally; had there been more lingering support for the RMS, one is hard pressed to imagine the Permesta rebels, with many of the same grievances, not doing more to bring the Ambonese into the conflict on their side.\textsuperscript{333} Chauvel notes that during the Permesta rebellion the military in Ambon was led by Herman Pieters, an Ambonese who fought for the Republicans in Java during the revolution. Two other Ambonese, Leo Lopulissa and Domingus Nanlohy, held senior military positions at the time, and as Chauvel notes, these three “ensured that Ambon


\textsuperscript{332} Ambonese serve in both the military’s various branches as well as in the police (prior to 2000 the police were subsumed under the military). In interviews, some Ambonese stated that the Ambonese were happier to join the police than the military, and that following the violence that began in 1999 some Ambonese soldiers were not issued firearms. There were reports of Ambonese Christian soldiers seizing weapons from military armories during the outbreak of violence, and of Christian police and soldiers fighting Muslim soldiers. Kingsbury, “Diversity in Unity,” 107; Nusamura; Wilma Ranamissa. There remains, however, some lingering resentment toward the military since the recent violence because of some soldiers taking sides in the conflict and not acting to stop it, as well as reported support from the military for Laskar Jihad.

\textsuperscript{333} Although, as noted in the previous chapter, the Permesta rebels were not separatists. There is little scholarship on the relationship between the Permesta rebels and the RMS, if there was one.
remained formally loyal to the central government while at the same time securing control over the area’s external trade.”

After the RMS movement in Indonesia was quashed, crises in other parts of the archipelago commanded the attention of Jakarta, including the simmering Darul Islam rebellion and the PRRI/Permesta rebellions. Rather than spur Ambonese to join these rebellions, Ambon was a frequent target of the rebels and their supporters due to the large Republican military presence there. It was in Ambon Harbor that Allan Pope was shot down after a bombing run that killed up to 700 Ambonese civilians in a church, and hence it was associated with contributing to the rebels’ loss following the withdrawal of support from the Americans and symbolic of the suffering of the Indonesian people at the hands of the rebels.

Aside from government, civil service and military positions, there were few opportunities for Ambonese in Ambon during the latter half of the 20th century. The spice market had deteriorated, and the Ambon region produced little by way of commodities for export other than copra; most agriculture was geared toward subsistence. Ambon did not possess vast quantities of natural resources as did other regions in Indonesia, so its economic survival depended on the civil service, government and military, all institutions

334 Chauvel, Nationalists, 393-94, fn 1.

335 While the United States supported the PRRI/Permesta rebellions, discussion in official circles of aiding Ambonese rebels was put on the table by American officials. Kahin and Kahin brush aside these communications as fanciful, arguing that the movement was “dormant” and “overcome by Jakarta seven years before” and “seven years dead,” although RMS rebellion in Ceram continued on a very low scale until around 1961. Kahin and Kahin, 133, 156.

336 Ibid., 180.
of the state that serve socialization functions as well as provide employment; the situation remains much the same today.

**Conclusion: Separatism Defeated**

The violence that emerged in the Moluccas in 1999 and the subsequent formation of the FKM led some observers to explore the role of separatism in the violence. The most convincing arguments have discounted the role of separatism in the recent violence, and have downplayed the importance of the FKM. Although lingering resentment simmers among many Moluccans because of the way Jakarta handled the violence and its aftermath, serious separatist sentiment remains a politically peripheral position in Ambon for several reasons. First, the separatism that was expressed following Indonesia’s independence was supported by a small albeit important minority that due to its relationship with the Dutch colored the perceptions of support for the RMS. Second, Ambonese elites were able to play significant roles locally and nationally, and replace some of the traditional, Dutch or RMS oriented elites. Third, Ambonese political aspirations were channeled through Parkindo, a small but effective party with disproportional clout. Fourth, Jakarta allowed some autonomy in Ambon following the defeat of the RMS (and with its attention focused on other conflicts). Fifth, the Ambonese economy remained extremely limited, and the Indonesian government and military provided outlets for employment.

Despite declining separatism in the Ambon region, there remains support for the RMS and FKM in Holland among the exiled Ambonese community and its offspring. Much has been written about this exiled Moluccan community in the Netherlands. This literature covers three basic stages that correspond roughly with generations. In the first
period, the recent émigrés to Holland were put in camps as their relocation was viewed as temporary. These Moluccans remained, for the most part, sequestered from Dutch society as a whole, although with time they began to integrate. This generation continued efforts at recognition of the claim to South Moluccan independence from both the Dutch government and the world community. Their tactics were generally non-violent as they appealed through the Dutch legal system.

The second period roughly corresponds with the next generation of Moluccans, the sons and daughters of the RMS members who fled Indonesia. This cohort reacted to the integration of the earlier generation into Dutch society by asserting its claims to Moluccan identity. Furthermore, this group grew disillusioned by the ineffectiveness of the non-violent tactics of the previous generation, and subsequently turned to acts of terror in Holland, including kidnappings, train hijackings, and murder.

Following the failure of this group, most Moluccans in Holland became resigned to their fate as Dutchmen and Dutchwomen while still maintaining some degree of their Moluccan identity. Many have, for example, internalized (white) Dutch ideals of beauty such as pale skin and facial characteristics. As Bartels notes, they have reached a “symbiosis” wherein they want to be “separate but equal partners in Dutch society.”

Though far from the “worst possible way” to be incorporated into Indonesia, the RMS rebellion and its aftermath continue to shadow the Ambonese region, with occasional acts of civil disobedience punctuated by more serious episodes, including violence. Yet history shows that a more serious outbreak of separatist rebellion was averted, in part due to the lack of support within Ambon, but also in part due to the

---

actions of nationalist Ambonese and the central government. Thus the process of consolidating Indonesian sovereignty proceeded and was accepted by the majority of Ambonese.
CHAPTER 4: WEST PAPUA 1930 - 1969: UNATTAINED ASPIRATIONS

“Why are there no Irianese National Heroes?” – George Aditjondro

“Sukarno likes to state that Papuans are Indonesians. What is to keep him from claiming that butterflies belong to the family of spiders?” – Nicolaas Jouwe

Entering West Papua through the Sentani airport near the capital Jayapura, one is immediately struck by the beauty of the natural surroundings. Passing Lake Sentani and the monument to General Douglas MacArthur (still revered as a hero to Papuans for ousting the Japanese) on the way to Abepura, where the Cendrawasih University campus lies, and on to Jayapura, the bustling capital, the road is nestled between a glassy lake and hills filled with trees. My trip was broken up, and my introduction to West Papua authenticated, when the van in which my wife, our Papuan guides, and I was nearly run...

338 George Junus Aditjondro, Cahaya Bintang Kejora: Papua Barat dalam Kajian Sejarah, Budaya, Ekonomi dan Hak Asasi Manusia (Jakarta: Elsam, 2000), 5. This question is posed as that of a schoolchild in Jayapura to his father after an Indonesian history lesson. Despite the existence of several prominent pro-Indonesia Papuans during the Indonesian Revolution, no Papuans are held in the same esteem as those Indonesians from revolutionary period. Rather, an Indonesian officer killed during Indonesia’s confrontation with the Dutch over Papua, Yos Sudarso, and a politician from Sulawesi, Sam Ratulangi, are the most prominent Indonesian heroes with ties to Papua. The situation has changed somewhat since the publication of Aditjondro’s book, with efforts to recognize prominent pro-Indonesian Papuans. Richard Chauvel argues that the promotion of West Papuans as “national heroes” is just one of a number of tactics that came from a meeting of Ermaya Suradinata, then Director General of National Unity in the Department of Internal Affairs with representatives of Indonesian intelligence and military units on 8 June 2000 in response to growing displays of Papuan nationalism. Richard Chauvel, “The Backlash: Jakarta’s Secret Strategy to Deal with Papuan Nationalism,” Inside Indonesia, No. 67, July – September 2001, accessed 7 September 2008, available from from http://insideindonesia.org/content/view/452/29/. Years later, however, many Indonesians outside of Papua would not be able to identify the names Papare, Kaisiepo, and Indey, the three Papuans named national heroes by Suharto’s presidential decree (no. 077/TK/Tahun 1993).

off the road by an Indonesian military truck transporting troops at nearly double the speed of the surrounding traffic. Our driver looked at me across the front seat and shrugged his shoulders, explaining that this is how it is in Papua: the military drives with impunity and one must get out of their way or risk being killed or beaten. The military is rumored to have killed people unlucky enough to be caught under the trucks’ wheels.

The towns of Abepura and Jayapura are a microcosm of Papuan society in general, and examples of towns throughout West Papua. Few stores or restaurants are owned by Papuans, but rather they are owned by Javanese, Balinese, Ambonese, Makassarese, Chinese, Butonese, Madurese, or others. Some employ Papuans, but many do not. Rather, Papuans sell areca nut, lime and tobacco behind small desks or on the ground, or have stalls in the weekly local markets. Even taxi and ojek (motorcycle taxi) drivers are mostly non-Papuan.\(^{340}\) Despite the two towns’ relatively large sizes, westerners walking around and shopping elicit glances and sometimes stares. Although the ban on raising the Papuan nationalist flag the Morning Star (*Bintang Kejora*) remains, trinkets bearing its likeness, such as coin purses and woven bracelets, are openly sold.

In major towns, Papuans remain marginalized and are often treated with disdain by immigrants. Even in the *Museum Loka Budaya*, a museum devoted to Papuan culture

---

\(^{340}\) Two sources remarked that after 2002 there was an influx of foreign *ojek* drivers, and that they suspected they were Indonesian intelligence operatives. Yosua R. Mansoben, interview by author, 5 August 2006, Abepura, West Papua. Mansoben is an author and lecturer in the Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social Science and Politics, Cendrawasih University, Abepura, West Papua; Socratez Sofyan Yoman, interview by author, 9 August 2006. Yoman is the leader of the Baptist Church of Papua. The proportion of West Papuans to outsiders in urban regions remains small. Between 1971 and 1990, for example, “Irian born” – which includes West Papuans but perhaps others as well – made up only 13 percent of the urban population. Hal Hill, *Unity and Diversity: Regional Economic Development in Indonesia Since 1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 89.
on the Cendrawasih University campus, ethnic Papuans are viewed as second class citizens. After we entered the museum, several Papuan students were shooed away by a contemptuous Ambonese caretaker, who did not ask but rather told us that the students were bothering us. I disagreed and told him that this is a museum of their culture and they had every right to be there, to which the caretaker replied with an angry series of clicks of his tongue and headshaking. The students told me that kind of behavior is common.

The dispute over West Papua following Indonesia’s independence has been blamed for the radicalization of Indonesian politics and the decline of democracy during the Soekarno regime. Jakarta has been faced with armed, violent separatism from West Papua since its incorporation, and has tried various tactics to eliminate the separatist threat, including military, diplomatic, and policy approaches. Its most recent attempt, in conjunction with the increase in separatist sentiment congruent with Suharto’s abdication as well as the breakaway of East Timor, has been through the implementation of “special autonomy” for the region. Yet many analyses show that this autonomy is viewed with skepticism or downright hostility by many Papuans, who portray it as a divide and conquer tactic, and by outside experts who assert that autonomy is not producing the desired results. This chapter will explain the genesis of the West Papua conflict through its method of incorporation into the Indonesian nation-state, and then examine some of the relevant factors contributing to the long-lived separatist movement, including the role of elites, economic factors, and the treatment of Papuans at the hands of Indonesians.

Background

West Papua is the western half of the world’s second largest island, New Guinea (the Eastern half is Papua New Guinea). The region was never home to any of the “great civilizations” of what was to become Indonesia, although there is evidence that Papuans were used as slaves as early as the 8th century AD in the Sri Vijaya empire. Rather, Papua remained one of the last regions unexplored due to its forbidding geography and rampant tropical diseases. Because of its mountainous geography there was very little contact among West Papuans; more than 300 languages and 200 dialects are spoken. Social organization was based primarily on kinship and ethnicity, and what little contact occurred between ethnic groups was usually tribal warfare.

Robert C. Bone, in what George McT. Kahin called “the first major study of the (Western New Guinea) dispute,” notes that early “Indonesian” (sic) influence on the region began with the establishment of “petty, mostly ephemeral” trading states in coastal areas on the island’s western shores by Moluccan traders, pirates and slave raiders in the 15th century and perhaps prior: “Such as they were, they represented New Guinea’s most advanced form of political organization.” Slaves remained Papua’s chief export until

---


343 In a volume published jointly by the Indonesian Academy of Science and Leiden University, Johszua Robert Mansoben classifies traditional West Papuan political organization in four ways: the “big man” system whereby a leader emerges due to his physical and spiritual capabilities; ondoafi or clan-based; king or raja based; and mixtures of the three. Johszua Robert Mansoben, Sistem Politik Tradisional di Irian Jaya (Traditional Political Systems in Irian Jaya) (Jakarta: LIPI-RUL, 1995).

344 Bone, iii, 4. Saul Hindom, a Papuan, described tribal organizations prior to outside influence as “sovereign small tribal states… (linked by) common ancestors.”
the end of the 19th century. This contact encouraged the use of Malay as a *lingua franca* in the region.

European contact with West Papua was sporadic and met with resistance by West Papuans. The first Dutch contact was in 1597, and in 1605 the Dutch established the first European colonial presence in an effort to dominate the Moluccan and Javanese spice trade. In 1714, in a treaty with the Sultan of Tidore, the Dutch established sovereignty over West Papua, although it was administered ineffectively by proxy through the sultan until the early 20th century.\textsuperscript{345} The English and Germans had divided the eastern half of New Guinea in 1885 (formalized in a treaty in 1910), and their presence led the Dutch to create permanent settlements in the western half of the island, and to reinforce their claim to the territory based on the “myth” of Tidorese rule.\textsuperscript{346} Western New Guinea was thought by the Dutch to be valueless in terms of resources, and not worth the trouble of establishing a significant presence. As Bone notes, from the 17th through the 19th centuries, it remained “unwanted and largely unclaimed land… Neither the poverty of its natural resources, the fierceness of its barbaric peoples nor the unhealthfulness (sic) of the coastal areas offered any inducements in this area.”\textsuperscript{347}

---

\textsuperscript{345} Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 6-7; Bone, 9-20.

West Papua remained remote, however, and considered a “backwater” and “stepchild of the Indies,” and was used primarily as a penal colony for Indonesian nationalists after the communist uprisings of 1926-27, many of whom were sent to Boven Digul prison camp, as well as a place to send delinquent colonial administrators.\textsuperscript{348} It was also thought of as a “barrier against foreign intrusion.”\textsuperscript{349} The discovery of oil in 1907 by Royal Dutch Shell led to further expeditions into the interior (15 by 1935).\textsuperscript{350} The search for souls to convert provided another impetus for exploration, and missionaries (both Catholic and Protestant, and mostly from Holland) wove their way into the interior, often followed by the Dutch administration. As Indonesian nationalism began to manifest, West Papua came to be viewed differently. Tidorese sovereignty was firmly rejected as West Papua became imagined as a place for Dutch-Indonesian Eurasians (“\textit{Indische}”) to settle. This became perhaps the most important factor in the pre-World War II era,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Bone, 12. Bone’s analysis, written in 1958, reflects the predominant mindset regarding the value of West Papua’s resources, which would be shattered in the decades to come with discoveries of huge deposits of gold, copper, oil and natural gas: “Indeed to list the minerals and mineral products which geologists have concluded New Guinea does not possess, is to name most of the commercially important items in this category” (7, underline in original). Arend Lijphart, writing in 1966, concurred. Arend Lijphart, \textit{The Trauma of Decolonization: The Dutch and West New Guinea} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 43.
\item W. F. Wertheim notes: “The government reacted to these disturbances (of 1926-27) by exiling over a thousand Indonesians to Boven Digul, a dreaded detention area in western New-Guinea. For the first time the Netherlands had a use for its colonial power over half of that huge island.” Wertheim, \textit{Indonesian Society}, 72.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
helping to establish blocs that dominated the discussion of the region, including the aforementioned Eurasians, the Dutch, and Indonesian nationalists. Another important factor in Dutch thinking about Papua was Japan’s rise, and the economic pressure it put on the Dutch in New Guinea along with the realization that New Guinea was an important strategic location. Papuans remained largely absent from the major analyses of events of this time period, and continued to be marginalized throughout the process of their integration with Indonesia. Papuan resistance, however, both secular and millenarian, was frequent and often a result of the imposition of Dutch forced labor.

**A Eurasian Homeland?**

As Indonesian nationalism took root and spread, Eurasians found themselves in an increasingly precarious position in the Indies. They were not considered full Dutch, and therefore had less prestige among the colonials. Yet they did enjoy some benefits of their status as being of mixed race, which led to resentment on the part of the Javanese and other indigenes. E. F. E. Douwes Dekker (aka Setiabudi), an *Indische* and distant relative of Multatuli, founded the *Indische Partij* in 1912 with support from some Indonesians.

---

351 In 1931 the Dutch conceded a 6000 hectare land grant to the Japanese for plantation use. The Japanese continued to press for more, and in reaction the Dutch formed the *Nieuw Guinea Comité* to protect its territorial claims and push economic development. Lijphart, 63, 84; Penders, 60.

352 Garnaut and Manning, 10; Whittaker, 19.

353 Multatuli (Latin for “I Have Suffered Greatly”) was the pen name of Edward Douwes Dekker, the author of *Max Havelaar, or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trading Company*. A former Dutch colonial official in the Indies, Multatuli wrote of the injustice of the “Cultivation System” of the 19th century. His work caused an uproar in Dutch society in Holland, and spurred the reform movement that led to the “Ethical System.” Multatuli remains highly regarded in Holland, and in 2002 he was proclaimed by the Society for Dutch Literature the best Dutch writer of all time.
It was the first nationalist party in the Indies, advocating independence, but was quickly suppressed by the Dutch authorities and its leadership exiled.\textsuperscript{354} Within seven years, following Dutch suppression and suspicion by indigenes, \textit{Indische} aspirations turned conservative with the founding of the \textit{Indo-Europeesch Verbond} (Indo-European Union) in 1919. Wertheim notes that despite the Union’s conservatism based on the realization that ties to the Netherlands were essential to maintain the group’s privilege, nationalism was a vague undercurrent.\textsuperscript{355} They did not, however, exert much influence on emerging Indonesian nationalism, either in opposition or support.\textsuperscript{356} Of the \textit{Indische} in the early awakening period, Robert Cribb notes that an \textit{Indische} identity never coalesced despite shared attributes; as a group they occupied a middle niche between “natives” and Europeans in the legal system most often depending on whether their fathers acknowledged them legally, but the social lines regarding their status were blurred.\textsuperscript{357}


\textsuperscript{355} Wertheim, \textit{Indonesian Society}, 320. See also: Van Niel, 162; cf. Lijphart, 89: “There was no question about (Eurasians’) completely loyal pro-Dutch stand in the Indonesian Revolution.”

\textsuperscript{356} For the role of mixed race people (“Creole Pioneers”) in nationalism, see: Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities}, 47-65. Robert van Niel notes in the Indonesian case that Eurasians espoused conceptions of racial superiority more so than even among pure Dutch, and that they were unwilling to consider complete “unification,” that is, treating all residents of the Indies as equal. Van Niel, 38.

\textsuperscript{357} Early designations for those in the Indies included Europeans, those who had assimilated to “European-ness,” Natives and those who had assimilated to “native-ness.” See: Lev, “Colonial Law,” 15. Beginning in 1848 the term “foreign Orientals” was used as a racial classification, and it was codified into law throughout the Indies in 1925. See: E. Adamson Hoebel and A. Arthur Schiller, “Introduction,” in B. Ter Haar, \textit{Adat Law in}}
key factor in Cribb’s analysis is the restriction on land ownership for Indische people; they developed no ties to the land in Java and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{358} C. L. M. Penders notes that Indische in Java suffered high rates of unemployment as newly educated indigenes began competing with them for jobs; as a result many turned away from prestigious white collar jobs and looked toward agriculture.\textsuperscript{359} Due to restrictions and increasing competition from an exploding indigenous population, Eurasians looked east.

It was this restriction on land ownership combined with their uncertain status that led some Indische to view West Papua as a potential homeland, and Eurasians established agricultural colonies in the region in the 1930s. Most of these were miserable failures, however, due to bad planning; many of the pioneers returned to Java. Yet the project allowed for the Dutch in Holland to promote the West New Guinea highlands as a suitable home for Dutch migrants, and the coastal areas suitable for Eurasians. The concept resonated chiefly among right wing Dutch, including the Dutch Nazi movement Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging who viewed it as important for white Dutch to shore up their empire.\textsuperscript{360} They formed the Nederlandsche Emigratie Vereeniging Nieuw Guinea (Netherlands New Guinea Emigration Society) to further their goals, although the Dutch


\textsuperscript{358} Robert Cribb, “‘Indische’ Identity and Decolonization,” \textit{International Institute for Asian Studies Newsletter}, No. 31 (July 2003), 52. Although very brief, Cribb’s essay completely ignores the Indische push to recognize Papua as a “homeland.” See also: Lijphart, 71.

\textsuperscript{359} Penders, 55-56; Bone, 28-29; Lijphart, 70-71. Given their social position, van Niel refers to Eurasians as the “flotsam” of the Indies. Van Niel, 12-13; 63-64.

\textsuperscript{360} Penders, 56-7.
government’s reaction to the group was cold.\textsuperscript{361} Despite the failures of early attempts to create a homeland in West Papua, the idea was revived following World War II and during the Indonesian Revolution, and affected the negotiations over the fate of the territory.\textsuperscript{362}

As a result of pressure from the \textit{Nieuw Guinea Comité}, founded by the Dutch to promote economic growth in the face of Japanese encroachment, the Netherlandsche Nieuw Guinea Petroleum Maatschappij was founded in 1936 to explore for oil, finding some success in the Vogelkop region. In 1937 the Nederlandsche Maatschappij voor Nieuw Guinea set up an experimental plantation near Hollandia (which would later become Jayapura), and the Dutch government set up a plantation near Manokwari.\textsuperscript{363}

\textbf{World War II}

The Japanese almost completely eradicated any advances made by the Dutch and Eurasians in West Papua during Japanese occupation in World War II. Dutch and Eurasians were shot and killed when encountered, or imprisoned; the majority of prisoners died.\textsuperscript{364} Their farms lay fallow. In the north, where the Japanese force was concentrated, some of the Dutch took to the jungle following the invasion, harassed the Japanese, and gathered intelligence on their activities.

\textsuperscript{361} The NEVNG and its successor \textit{Nationale Nieuw Guinea Verenining} (National New Guinea Society) had a presence in the Indies, where meeting showing the nazi flag alongside the Dutch flag were held. Their call to turn West Papua into a “white man’s country” included Eurasians as white. Lijphart, 79-81.

\textsuperscript{362} Kees Lagerberg, \textit{West Irian and Jakarta Imperialism} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979), 22.

\textsuperscript{363} Penders, 60-61; Lijphart, 84-85.

\textsuperscript{364} Penders, 61; Lijphart, 77.
The Japanese, however, only occupied northern West Papua. Their drive south along the coast stopped at Kononaro. Much of the central and southern regions of West Papua remained under Dutch and Allied control (the Dutch colonial administration was centered in the south at Merauke). KNIL troops, sometimes aided by Papuans, fought limited battles against the Japanese. Most Papuans were against the Japanese and viewed them as crueler than the Dutch, a factor that that helped spur Dutch opposition of West Papua’s integration with Indonesia; other regions in Indonesia were viewed by the Dutch as having collaborated with the Japanese during the war.\textsuperscript{365} The Japanese also brought Javanese and other Indonesians with them to aid in occupying West Papua, and their rough treatment of Papuans added to Papuan sentiments against Indonesia and toward a national consciousness.\textsuperscript{366} Furthermore, the Japanese halted Dutch education and forced the Papuans to supply food for the Japanese.\textsuperscript{367}

Some Papuan tribal leaders rose to challenge the Japanese, sometimes with appeals to messianic or millenarian beliefs that had begun arising in the prior decades, such as the Koreri (Lost Utopia) movements which fielded armies of Papuan warriors. One such rebellion, in the Geelvink Islands, culminated in a declaration of independence for Papua and the establishment of the Morning Star (Bintang Kejora) flag.\textsuperscript{368}

\textsuperscript{365} Osborne, \textit{Indonesia’s Secret War}, 13.

\textsuperscript{366} Penders, 88-9.

\textsuperscript{367} Ibid., 107-8. Osborne notes that education was provided primarily by the churches and missionaries, and not the Dutch government, prior to WWII. Osborne, \textit{Indonesia’s Secret War}, 10.

notes that this small scale resistance scored some limited victories by, for example, outnumbering the Japanese expeditionary forces sent to deal with them. By and large, however, they were brutally put down. And because of a lack of “articulate and politically conscious leadership,” these movements were weak and unable to draw support from other regions.369 Other Papuan leaders opted to collaborate with the Japanese, even convincing the Japanese to kill Christian Chinese and Ambonese with the goal of ousting the Amberie foreigners from Papua.370

By 1944, as the war had turned against the Japanese, the former police commissioner in Monokwari and reserve KNIL member Jan van Eechoud established the Papuan Battalion to conduct mop-up operations against the Japanese (by early 1945 the battalion numbered close to 400 men). A reward of a half guilder was provided for each Japanese head. The battalion (as well as others) took to their task with gusto; van Eechoud estimated 2119 Japanese killed and 249 prisoners taken from mid to late 1944. Papuans proved their kills through trophies including ears or severed heads, and sometimes brought in prisoners completely naked and tied to poles like pigs.371 As acting Resident, in 1944 van Eechoud established a police training school for Papuans, and later that year a Bestuursschool for training Papuans for the civil service, which enabled


370 Penders, 126-8, 142-44. The Japanese were aware of the collaboration between the predominantly Christian Ambonese members of KNIL and other elites with the Dutch, as well as the favored status for Christians in general. The pejorative term Amberie originally refers to Ambonese who lived in West Papua and who were resented for their arrogance and economic domination. The term later came to encompass all Indonesians.

371 Ibid., 90-93.
Papuans to begin displacing Indonesians in the civil service.\textsuperscript{372} He also established a paramilitary force called the \textit{Papoea Bataljon}, gathering recruits from throughout the region in a conscious effort to instill a pan-Papuan identity.\textsuperscript{373}

Another significant factor that influenced Papuan consciousness was their encounters with American servicemen during the war. In regions where the Americans were active, Papuans marveled at the amount of “cargo” or materiel they possessed and were willing to distribute freely among Papuans, leading to the formation of “cargo cults,” and Americans were sometimes viewed in messianic terms and linked to \textit{Koreri} movements.\textsuperscript{374} In order to continue this largesse, the people of Nusi Island wrote to President Truman to ask to be incorporated into the US in order to maintain the flow of goods.\textsuperscript{375} Furthermore, Papuans saw African American soldiers working alongside and proving themselves as capable as their white counterparts, including as pilots, contrary to Dutch colonial assertions of racial superiority. Papuans could see physical resemblances

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{372} Ibid., 93. For opening the school, van Eechoud was given the title “Bapa Papua (sic), father of the new Papua.” The \textit{bestuurschool} produced the majority of Papuans who would play a significant role in the political events that followed. Bertrand, 146.
  \item \textsuperscript{374} Lagerberg, 128-9.
  \item \textsuperscript{375} Penders, 135. When the Americans pulled out and left Papua again to the Dutch, the rapid decline in the amount of goods available caused widespread resentment against the Dutch, and led some to turn to the Indonesian cause.
\end{itemize}
to these soldiers: “kinky” hair, dark skin, and broad, flat noses.\(^{376}\) Despite the racism of the US military and American society in general at that time, to the Papuans it appeared as though there was equality, and this impression has lasted to this day.\(^{377}\)

**From Malino to the Round Table Conference**

The Japanese surrender brought the Indonesian Declaration of Independence on 17 August 1945, and the start of the Revolution. British, Australian and American troops came to the Indies first to oversee the Japanese surrender and to prepare the Indies for the eventual Dutch return. In Java, the Allied troops were met with unexpected resistance, and the revolution began. In Papua things were very different.

The Allies had never lost control of a large portion of West Papua, so in those regions there was no significant shift in authority. In the northern regions, the Japanese had been ousted before their surrender, and, as indicated above, the reaction to the Allies and returning Dutch was mostly positive, given the cruel treatment of the Papuans by the Japanese and their Indonesian subordinates.

Indonesian nationalism was not foreign to all Papuans, and in 1945 there were some Papuan voices sympathetic to the republican cause. By March of 1946, two

---


\(^{377}\) Penders, 89-90; Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 13; Lagerberg, 48; Paul W. van der Veur, “Political Awakening in West New Guinea,” *Pacific Affairs*, 36, No. 1 (March 1963), 57; Mansoben, interview. John Yosiya (pseudonym), interview by author, 5 August 2006, Abepura, West Papua. Yosiya was a former West Papuan civil servant in the Dutch period. African American groups such as the NAACP have been sympathetic to the West Papuan cause. Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 56. Some Papuans feel the sacrifices that Papua made during WWII and the risks they took amount to a debt owed to Papua by the United States. Yoman.
Indonesians, Dr. Gerungan (a Minahasan) and B. B. Pujasubrata (Javanese or Sundanese?), had formed the *Komite Indonesia Merdeka* (KIM, Indonesian Freedom Committee), but some prominent Papuans were members as well. While the revolution was fought in Java, Papua was among the constituents of the State of Eastern Indonesia. In the series of meetings held during the Revolution (the Malino conference, the Denpasar Conference, the Round Table Conference, the Linggadjati Conference), a Papuan representative, Frans Kaisiepo, was present only at the first in the Malino in July 1946, where he argued that Papua should be incorporated into the Moluccan region, surprising his Dutch sponsors and angering educated Papuans, who considered the *Amberies* colonizers. Rather, most elites argued that Papua should be a separate part of the Indonesian federation. And in November 1946, Silas Papare, “the most important

378 Penders, 136. Gerungan’s full name was Gerungan Saul Samuel Yacob Ratulangi, and he was also known as Ratu Langi. He was the exiled Republican governor of Sulawesi. Penders’ account also refers to a Ratu Langi but does not make the connection between the two men, treating them as two different men. Furthermore, Penders places Gerungan in Papua for the March forming of KIM, but other reports state he was arrested and exiled to Papua until April 1946. Peter Savage also writes of Gerungan and Ratulangi as if they were two people. Savage, 144.

379 Penders, 137; Lijphart, 33. Kaisiepo was from Biak, and it is unclear just how he became the sole West Papuan representative at the early Dutch-Indonesian talks regarding the future of West Papua, especially considering the fragmented nature of the multitude of ethnic groups at this point. He initially opposed integration into the republic, then worked with Indonesia as Indonesia began its occupation in 1962. He was the Governor of Irian Jaya from 1964 to 1973, but grew disillusioned with the Indonesia occupation and joined the OPM. He is credited with giving the region the name “Iryan,” Biak for “steamy” (describing the view one sees approaching the territory from the sea), and later changed to “Irian” (supposedly an acronym for “Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti-Nederland” [Join the Republic of Indonesia Anti-Netherlands]). The airport in Biak is named after him, but there is little biographical information about him. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, “A New Kind of Self-Determination in Papua: The Choice Between Independence and Autonomy,” in *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific: Histories, Political Economies and Policies*, ed. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, et al. (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2005),
Papuan to link up with the Indonesian nationalists,” formed the *Partij Kemerdekaan Indonesian Irian* (Party for a Free Indonesian Irian, PKII). Papare was alienated by the Dutch selection of Frans Kaisiepo as the representative of Papua for the Malino conference and was influenced by Gerungan. Pro-Indonesia sentiment and anti-Dutch activities occurred in regions where Islam had penetrated more deeply or where there were large pockets of Javanese or other Indonesian migrants, especially in the northwest regions such as Fak Fak, Sorong and Kokas. The Dutch were acutely aware of the danger presented to their rule in West Papua if Indonesian nationalism took root among Papuans, so they moved quickly to present the Dutch-led alternative and put down support for Indonesia.

The small core of modern Papuan elites, including around 200 educated at a secondary training college for evangelist teachers, held differing views about which side to support. According to Penders, individuals weighed their perceived potential economic gains and joined one side or the other based on those considerations. Choosing sides was also colored by the treatment these people received at the hands of the Indonesians.

217. Osborne argues that Kaisiepo “made it clear… that Papuans wanted nothing to do with an Indonesian republic.” Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 14. Given Kaisiepo’s later role as governor during the Indonesian period, Penders’ and Lijphart’s interpretations of Kaisiepo’s stance at Malino seem much more likely.

380 Van der Veur, “Political Awakening,” 7, fn. 18; Penders, 140.

381 Penders, 146. Biak island was another region that supported Indonesia in the beginning, although its residents are not predominantly Muslim. Rather, Biak was the origin of many of the Dutch-educated elites. Biak residents eventually turned away from a pro-Indonesian stance. Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 20; Rodd McGibbon, *Plural Society in Peril: Migration, Economic Change, and the Papua Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: East West Center, 2004), 12-13.

382 Penders, 146-47; Lijphart, 30-31; Bone, 40.
which some Papuans considered worse than their treatment by the Dutch. Furthermore, allegiances remained at the village and clan level, and rivalries existed between elites from different areas. The notion of a free Papuan state was, for the vast majority of Papuans, not on the table in 1946. By 1949, however, Penders notes a shift in the perceptions of Papuans as a result of the “Papuanization” policies of the Dutch. Ambonese were being pushed out of their jobs and being replaced by Papuans who saw that joining Indonesia would shut off their upward social mobility. Among many elites, support for the Dutch in the short term would better serve their emerging nationalist ideals. Bone, however, argues that until 1947 there was a “political ferment” with a Republican orientation in West Papua, and that the Dutch had stamped it out by 1947.

In the conferences, decisions about the fate of West Papua were considered primarily by the Indonesian republican side and the Dutch, and to a lesser extent among other western powers such as the United States and Australia. The Dutch had decided

---

383 Penders, 150-1.

384 Critics of West Papuan nationalism point to the small proportion of elites leading the movement. Yet as Penders points out, the same argument can be made for Indonesian nationalism, led mostly by a smaller proportion of (mostly) Javanese elites. In making this argument, Penders is echoing the sentiments of some of the emergent Papuan elite at the time, such as Johan Ariks. Ibid., 151, 156.

385 Bone, 40-41. This argument contradicts Bone’s assertions that gauging West Papuan political desires was impossible (see below).

386 Australian policy regarding West Papua was shaped by its experience during the war. Since the Japanese rolled through the Indies without much of a battle from the Dutch, the Australians proposed an overseer role for West Papua although that idea was quickly rejected by the Dutch, in part due to a shipping ban imposed by communist influenced Australian unions during the revolution. Indonesian collaboration with the Japanese influenced Australian opinion that it would be better to have the Dutch in West Papua than to have it become part of Indonesia. Fear of communism was another factor for both the Americans and the Australians, although the failure of the Madiun revolt in
that a unified, representational Papuan voice was impossible given the diversity of the region and the lack of political cohesion, and Kaisiepo’s actions during the Malino conference were condemned by the Dutch.\textsuperscript{387} Prior to the Denpasar Conference, however, van Eechoud held a meeting in Hollandia with a “number of prominent Papuan figures” from a variety of locations in Papua. From these discussions, van Eechoud determined that New Guinea would be excluded from the United States of Indonesia and would form a Dutch administered territory.\textsuperscript{388} The Governor General of the Indies Hubertus Johannes Van Mook also argued that because of its low level of development, it would not be feasible for it to be integrated into the State of Eastern Indonesia (NIT), as Prime Minister Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung and others wished, although van Mook did not rule out fitting Papua within the Indonesian Federation to the chagrin of his Dutch superiors.\textsuperscript{389}


\textsuperscript{387} Penders, 137-140; cf. de Bruijn, 81. In a sympathetic and overstated passage, de Bruijn argues that “in just a little more than 60 years Western New Guinea had progressed from a conglomeration of scattered, small, local groups of tribesmen with strong ingroup-outgroup feelings, to a nationally conscious Papuan people with its own flag, its own national hymn, and great confidence in its abilities to stand on its own two feet.”

\textsuperscript{388} Penders, 137.
\textsuperscript{389} Ibid., 69-70; Bone, 24-26.
As a result, Papuans who participated politically chose sides and could influence the decisions being made about their fate by the Dutch and the Indonesians, but they could not directly participate in the decision making process itself following the Malino conference.\(^{390}\) And similar to the divisions among Papuans regarding their fate, opinions among both Dutch and Indonesians differed as to the future status of West Papua. Although Indonesian opinion overwhelmingly favored West Papua’s integration, there were some notable exceptions.\(^{391}\) Future vice-president Mohammad Hatta, leading an influential constituency, maintained that West Papua should be a part of Melanesia. Although some Dutch may have favored the integration with Indonesia at this time, popular opinion was colored by two main factors: the desire to maintain a homeland for Eurasians and the desire to maintain some kind of empire to retain some of Holland’s status (as well as access to resources rediscovered during the war).\(^{392}\) A third argument emerged to replace the first by 1950: Papuan self-determination. Given the overall international political climate, including the wave of decolonization following World War II.

\(^{390}\) Van Eechoud felt that should Papuans be given a representational voice in subsequent conferences and meetings it would undermine the Dutch goal of keeping West Papua off of the agenda, despite protests from some of the Papuan elite. Penders, 156. Bertrand, 146.

\(^{391}\) That an independent Indonesia should include West Papua was articulated by Soekarno when he gave his *panca sila* speech to a preparatory committee on Indonesian independence in June of 1945. The speech was not only ideological, but, as Kahin argues, geopolitical in defining West Papua as Indonesian. Kahin and Kahin, 27-28.

\(^{392}\) When a US warplane crashed due to interference with its magnetic compass. I say “rediscovered” because there is evidence that Europeans were aware of the potential wealth in West Papua as early as the mid-1600s, when European travelers noticed that the West Papuans adorned themselves with gold. It is thought that the West Papuans lost interest in goldsmithing as it had disappeared by the twentieth century, similar to Borneo. Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 114.
War II and beginning with the Philippines, this position held much more moral suasion.

The politics surrounding the series of conferences and agreements and the confusion and competing interpretations of all of this are at the roots of the disagreement over West Papua. This section will provide an overview of these debates, conferences, and agreements.

The first meeting between the Dutch and the republicans was at Malino, in southern Sulawesi, 16-25 July 1946. As stated above, this was the only meeting between the Dutch, Republicans, and others at which a Papuan representative was present. The discussion concerned the creation of *Timur Besar* (the Great East) within federal Indonesia. As stated above, Kaisiepo’s position during the conference (to join with the Moluccas, which had, since 1926, encompassed West Papua) angered the Dutch and alienated many of the Papuan elite. There is no evidence that the proposal for *Timur Besar* would exclude West Papua.395

The next conference, in Pangkalpinang in October 1946, addressed the issue of minorities in the Indies, including Chinese, Arabs and Eurasians. The latter group pushed for West Papua as a homeland, and while not explicitly naming West Papua, the agreement endorsed Indonesian self-determination but allowed for the “possibility of an association with the Netherlands of the territories of Indonesia eligible therefore (sic) and

393 Bone, ix-x.
394 Ibid., 28; Lijphart, 11,
395 Bone, 28.
also of a special status for those territories within the Kingdom (Holland).”\textsuperscript{396} As Bone notes, “while New Guinea in this particular expression of opinion was not directly mentioned by name, it was clearly the area most directly concerned.”\textsuperscript{397} A Dutch policy statement from the conference stated specifically that since in both Holland and the Indies certain groups saw West Papua as a potential place to settle, “a separate political status within the Kingdom should be awarded to New Guinea, separated from Indonesia.” Bone notes that perhaps this latter statement puts an official date on the uncertainty that would surround the question of West Papua in the years to come.\textsuperscript{398}

On 15 November 1946, the Dutch, represented by Lieutenant General Governor van Mook and negotiating from a position of weakness following World War II, and the Republicans, represented by Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir, signed the Linggadjati Agreement (named for the village in Central Java where the meeting took place). The agreement recognized the republic and granted it dominion over most of Java, Madura and Sumatra, and named it a constituent state of federal Indonesia, which would be under a Dutch-Indonesia Union ruled by the Dutch sovereign.

Articles three and four of the Linggadjati Agreement are most cited in arguments made by Papuans (and others, including Ambonese) for self-determination. Article three allowed for a “democratic process” to determine if any areas do not wish to join with the United States of Indonesia, but rather maintain a “special relationship” to Indonesia and Indonesia.

\textsuperscript{396} Quote from the original document, cited in Ibid., 29.

\textsuperscript{397} Ibid., 29.

\textsuperscript{398} Ibid., 29-30.
Holland. Article four named the constituent states of Indonesia but allowed for a “democratic procedure” for any territory to establish “another footing.” The interpretation of these two articles has been the source of confusion and competing claims ever since.

Bone argues that although the Agreement is cited with specific reference to West Papua (as well as Ambon), that was not the intention:

(It) is certainly not without a certain irony, in view of the oft-cited future appeals made to the Linggadjati Agreement in connection with the settlement of the Irian issue, that actually as of 1946 there were few areas in the Netherlands Indies to which an application of the principles in Articles 3 and 4 were less appropriate. At most only 50% of the Papuan population was even in contact with any administration officials. And even this 50%, except for an infinitesimal handful, was divided into small tribal groups, possessing an upper Stone Age culture, in a state of perpetual warfare among themselves and automatically with any and all outsiders. It was clear that even the thought of the population of such an area determining anything ‘by means of a democratic process’ and ‘after consultation with the other areas’ was so absurd as to merit no consideration… and indeed no such proposal was ever made from either Indonesian or Dutch sources.

Bone’s analysis is typical of the time. For him, the fate over West Papua was a decision to be made between the Dutch and the Indonesians, without need for consultation from Papuans, deemed incapable of articulating their political desires. His entire analysis reflects this position, virtually ignoring Papuan voices, which is a fundamental weakness in his argument.

---

399 Ibid., 30-31.

400 Ibid., 32. It is unclear, however, in the last sentence of this quote if Bone included West Papuans as Indonesians. From the tone of his work, written in 1958, it appears he did not, but also held no reservations about excluding Papuans from any consultative process whatsoever, given the preceding sentences.

401 Arend Lijphart also argues that the two articles were not meant to cover New Guinea. Lijphart, 12
The Dutch Explanation (Toelichting) from the Commission-General that followed the Agreement made specific references to West Papua, allowing for “difficulties” in the implementation of Articles three and four in West Papua but envisioning a “special relationship” between the Dutch and West Papua. A second Explanation, from the Dutch government to the lower house of parliament, stated that West Papua must maintain a special status as a region for resettling Eurasians. On 20 December 1946, during the Denpasar Conference (see below), the lower house signaled its approval of government policy regarding the Linggadjati Agreement with specific reference to West Papua, arguing that “Netherlanders” (including Eurasians) would want to live under their own administration in West Papua.402

During the Denpasar Conference (7-24 December 1946) the Dutch, represented by van Mook, took a much stronger and more explicit stand on West Papua; Papuans were not represented. The Conference was convened in order to consolidate Timur Besar into a constituent state of Indonesia, and, aside from West Papua, delegates from all of the major regions were represented. Van Mook argued that trusteeship of West Papua would be too significant a financial burden on the new state of Indonesia.403 And he was certainly feeling pressure brought by Eurasian interests. Despite arguments from

402 Bone, 32-33.
403 Bone cites this position coming from a personal conversation between the author and van Mook, occurring in 1957. Ibid., 35. While perhaps true to some extent, the argument reeks of patrimonialism. Furthermore, if the Dutch were so concerned with Indonesia’s economic well-being, it raises the question of the final agreement on the transfer of sovereignty in which Indonesia was saddled with 70 percent of the debt of the colonial administration. See previous chapter.
representatives of East Indonesia, including that the terms contravened the Malino Agreement, West Papua was excluded.

When presented with the Nadjamoedin motion (see below) and according to the official minutes of the conference, however, Van Mook made the following statement:

“(It) was not the Government’s intention to shut New Guinea out of Indonesia but rather to examine carefully in what fashion in should be included within the extent of Indonesia… it is apparent that the intention is to keep the area within the compass of the United State of Indonesia.”

The Nadjamoedin motion represented:

the earliest comprehensive statement of Indonesian opinion on the Irian issue and it indicates that even as of December, 1946, even the carefully screened delegates to a Dutch-sponsored conference felt strongly on the matter and already regarded the issue as an important point of controversy between the Netherlands and an, as yet, unformed united Indonesia.

The motion explicitly stated that West Papua was a part of Eastern Indonesia, the people of West Papua considered themselves Indonesian; the region was essential to Indonesian security, and that its resources, already under exploration, could “add greatly to the international solvency of Indonesia.” Here again is the remarkable patrimonialism typical of the West Papua issue, this time as displayed by Indonesians, who presume to know how West Papuans identify themselves (as Indonesians). Furthermore, the last section about West Papua’s resources reveals a contradiction between van Mook’s

\[^404\text{Ibid., 36-37, underlines in Bone’s reprint of the original.}\]

\[^405\text{Ibid., 37.}\]

\[^406\text{Ibid., 37-38. The reference to West Papua’s resources contradicts accounts of the time that viewed West Papua as a burden to whomever was administering it. See below.}\]
statements and Bone’s argument that West Papua would be a burden to an independent Indonesia.

Sources differ as to the interpretation of van Mook’s words during the Denpasar conference. Bone places a good deal of importance on them in his argument but both Penders and Lijphart discount them. They argue that van Mook overstepped his bounds and was not articulating Dutch policy. Within weeks of the conclusion of the Denpasar Conference, the Dutch, along with the United States, Australia, New Zealand, France, and the United Kingdom, organized the South Pacific Commission to oversee non-self-governing territories including West Papua. Bone argues that this move may have been a way for the Dutch to thwart the political, economic and cultural association of West Papua with Indonesia.

In November 1946 the Dutch and Indonesians signed the Linggadjati Agreement, but the Republicans and the Dutch differed irreconcilably as to the proper interpretation of the document with regard to West Papua. These differences were not solved by the subsequent Renville Agreement of January 1948 (signed on an American warship under UN auspices) following the “First Police Action” the previous summer, an attack on Republican positions in Java and Sumatra by the Dutch, which ratified Dutch territorial gains but subsequently weakened the Dutch position in international opinion. There was no clarification about West Papua; rather the Agreement explicitly reiterated

---

407 Penders, 69-70; Arend Lijphart argues that the two articles were not meant to cover New Guinea. Lijphart, 16.

408 Bone, 40.

409 Ibid., 39.
the contentious third and fourth articles of the Linggadjati Agreement; both sides clung to their conflicting interpretations. The “Second Police Action” on 19 December 1948 gave the Dutch an immediate victory, including the seizure of Jogjakarta, the Republican capital, but guerilla resistance continued and international opinion turned against the Dutch. The Dutch also realized that their economic interests were at stake, as Indonesians began a scorched earth policy against Dutch holdings.\footnote{American opinion had also turned decisively against the Dutch. Kahin, \textit{Nationalism and Revolution}, 432.}

Both sides agreed to a cease fire on 1 August 1949, and the Round Table Conference at The Hague (from 23 August to 2 November) finalized the agreements concerning the transfer of sovereignty. The two biggest concessions made by the Indonesian side were the issues of Indonesia’s assumption of Dutch debt (see previous chapter) and West Papua. Dutch opinion on the latter issue was split; Dutch public opinion and the top Dutch officials in Indonesia favored ceding the territory to the Indonesians, but Dutch parliamentarians disagreed. Despite the financial burden of keeping West Papua (approximately 10,000,000 guilders a year), many Dutch argued that “psychological” reasons connected to Dutch nationalism and the desire to maintain a presence in Asia led the Dutch side to intransigence on the issue.\footnote{That psychological factors drove the Dutch to try to hold the territory predominate in early analyses critical of the Dutch. See, for example: Lijphart. Soekarno agreed with this conclusion. See: Cindy Adams, \textit{Sukarno: An Autobiography} (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965), 286.} In the end, a compromise was reached. The \textit{status quo} would remain in West Papua, but negotiations over the following year would determine the region’s fate. Following parliamentary
ratification, the Netherlands formally granted Indonesia sovereignty on 27 December 1949.\textsuperscript{412}

**Negotiations, 1950-1961**

The promise of negotiations was kept, but to little avail. In March 1950 the ministerial council of the Netherlands-Indonesia Union (a product of the Round Table Conference) established a six-man Joint Committee on New Guinea which met several times and traveled to West Papua. The members remained at loggerheads, however, and by August each side published separate reports, reflecting their differing opinions.\textsuperscript{413} By the end of the one-year period nothing was resolved, and the Dutch looked as though they would fight to maintain their foothold in West Papua. The Dutch position reflected public opinion, including that of many in the Netherlands who had fled Indonesia, although some Dutch who remained in Indonesia, including those with significant business interests, favored ceding the territory. Papuans began to take sides, courted by the Dutch and Indonesians.\textsuperscript{414} Both the United States, who had supported Indonesia in 1949, and Australia favored the *status quo*.\textsuperscript{415}

\textsuperscript{412} Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 444-45. The agreement was not without its Indonesian and foreign critics (including the Soviet Union), who called the economic aspects of the agreements neo-colonialism. Some Republicans, such as Ali Sastroamidjojo, felt that the RTC was merely the first step in realizing true Indonesian independence. Penders, 51.

\textsuperscript{413} Feith, *The Decline*, 155.

\textsuperscript{414} Feith, *The Decline*, 155.

\textsuperscript{414} Appeals to religion and tradition were often made in appeals for support. A document from Serui, for example, compares the nationalists Markus Kaisiepo, Johan Ariks, and Nikulaas (sic) Jouwe to Judas Iscariot, “selling the Beloved Son of God, even though society did not agree.” H. Wareni, Salinan Agenda No. 362/Lampiran 6; “Sedia Pajung Sebelum Hudjan (“Preparing the Umbrella before the Rain”), 30 January 1950,” Indonesian National Archives. Markus Kaisiepo arrived in Serui on 7 January and held a
Soekarno and many nationalists ratcheted up their rhetoric regarding West Papua as the one-year deadline approached. A non-governmental *Badan Perjoeangan Irian* (Body for the Struggle of Irian, BPI) was formed with chapters throughout the country. As Feith argues, the issue of West Papua was one on which nearly everyone in Indonesia agreed:

It enabled issues to be focused in terms of Indonesians versus enemies of Indonesia, thus rallying all-Indonesian solidarity. It provided a central leadership role for “solidarity makers.” And it helped absorb some of the restless energies of the former revolutionaries who wanted to be active participants still in a political movement (and who threatened to give their support to anti-governmental organizations if the government did not offer them outlets).  

The importance of the issue, however, carried different meaning for Indonesian elites. For Soekarno and the “solidarity makers” the issue played to their strengths to rally Indonesians; West Papua was viewed as a way to unite the three major competing axes of power in Indonesia, the military, the communists, and the Muslims. For the “administrators” it loomed large as an unsettled issue, the solution of which would allow them to continue with the political and economic tasks they deemed most important. The meeting in a *rumah adat* (traditional house), appealing for support for the nationalists. Nationalist leaders were also portrayed as “pro-colonialism.” Alwi Rachman, “Ketua II PKII, Serui, letter to the head of BPI, Jogjakarta, 10 January 1950” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1950). These letters and others like them reported the whereabouts and actions of Kaisiepo, Jouwe and other nationalist leaders, as well as the persecution of PKII members.

---


416 Ibid., 158.

417 The PKI restored its reputation following the Madiun rebellion by distancing itself from China and Russia in order to cement its nationalist reputation, and through its support for the West Papua issue. Internationally, however, Soekarno portrayed Western support for Indonesia’s position as way to turn Indonesia away from communism. Kahin and Kahin, 45, 109-110.
two sides pursued the goal differently, with the former agitating and the latter pursuing diplomacy. A trip to the Netherlands by a parliamentary commission to discuss West Papua in late October began on a bad note when Muhammed Yamin, an unaffiliated parliamentarian chosen as spokesman for the group, gave a thinly veiled threat of retribution against Dutch interests in Indonesia if Holland did not cede its claim. The meetings did not progress the issue any further, and Indonesian domestic pressure increased, including a call for boycotts and the severance of relations. December meetings in Holland between the two groups, in which both sides offered major concessions, ultimately failed, and shortly thereafter Natsir’s cabinet fell partly as a result over differences regarding West Papua.

Through 1951 and the Sukiman cabinet the issue remained deadlocked, despite the continuing conversation between the Dutch and Indonesians. Differences among the parties remained with regard to the question of West Papua in the context of the abrogation of the Netherlands-Indonesia Union: Masjumi favored separating the issues, whereas the PNI favored treating them as inseparable. This difference of opinion continued following the fall of the Sukiman cabinet and into the Wilopo cabinet, with the PKI among others ratcheting up anti-Netherlands rhetoric. In August 1953 the first Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet followed the fall of the Wilopo cabinet. The rhetoric regarding West Papua was the same, but as Bone points out, the tactics were much more

418 Feith, *The Decline*, 158-9. See previous chapter for the Feith’s argument differentiating “solidarity makers” and “administrators.”

419 Ibid., 159-62.

420 Ibid., 198-99.
sophisticated, due in part to Sastroamidjojo’s international experience, including his brief
tenure as Indonesia’s first ambassador to the United States. His goal was to mobilize
international support for Indonesia’s claim to West Papua, especially among the Non-
Aligned Movement’s Asia-Africa bloc in the context of anti-colonialism.421

By 1954, Indonesia had begun covertly infiltrating West Papua, but diplomatic
efforts continued and resulted in the Sunario-Luns Protocol that year. The Protocol
voided the Union and canceled some of the clauses of the Round Table Conference
Agreement. Indonesian nationalists considered it a failure as it did little to address Dutch
economic interests in Indonesia and the Dutch made no concessions regarding West
Papua.422 On the ninth anniversary of Indonesia’s Declaration of Independence, the
Indonesian Representative to the United Nations requested that the issue of West Papua
be included in the General Assembly’s agenda. It failed to garner the two-thirds majority
needed.423 The Sastroamidjojo Cabinet was prepared for this, and, unlike prior cabinets,
had taken a more radical position toward the dispute. Soekarno organized the All-
Indonesia Congress in order to create a unified front among groups with regard to West
Papua. In February 1955 the government indirectly supported the creation of the West
Irian Liberators’ Front, and some of its members received “quasi-military” training.

421 Bone, 120-21.

422 Feith, The Decline, 391.

423 Bone describes the possibility of the UN passing a resolution as
“mathematically impossible,” and notes the superior position the Dutch held, i.e.
defending the status quo. Bone, 125.
Foreign countries began to support Indonesia as well; the subsequent Asia-Africa Conference in 1955 reinforced this support explicitly in its final communiqué.424

Under pressure during the subsequent Burhanuddin Cabinet (which began in July 1955) as rhetoric threatening Dutch investments in Indonesia increased and, with Burhanuddin leading the Indonesians to look for support outside of the Asia-Africa bloc, the Dutch agreed to a meeting in Geneva in late 1955.425 The Indonesians sought concessions from the Dutch regarding West Papua, including a shift in the Dutch position that might allow for a future plebiscite and allow Indonesian language education in the region.426 Talks broke down on 11 February and on 13 February 1956 the Indonesian cabinet unilaterally announced its abrogation of the Netherlands-Indonesia Union. As Feith notes, the announcement was more symbolic than a reflection of political reality: “Indonesia had stopped playing the game on the Dutch home ground of agreements and formal regulations. It had seized the initiative in a symbolic assertion of national self-reliance.”427 In Holland, various groups began loosening their stances on the West Papua issue, not limited to groups such as liberals, but also spreading among businessmen concerned for their investments; discussions of forfeiting West Papua to a UN trusteeship


425 Burhanuddin Harahap represented the Muslim-oriented and anti-communist Masjumi party, which added to a loss of sympathy for the Dutch position by removing (briefly) by several degrees the specter of a communist Indonesia. This specter returned following the results of the 1955 general election, in which the PKI gained significantly. Bone, 134, 142.


427 Ibid., 454-56.
began. Reflected the new political reality, Burhanuddin dissolved the cabinet and no cabinet replaced his until the selection of a new parliament on 26 March; the second Ali Sastroamidjojo Cabinet resulted, but it fell in less than a year and was replaced by the Djuanda Cabinet on 14 April 1957.

With the assumption of a new cabinet and the formal abrogation of the Union, economic concerns came to the fore. The question of Dutch capital remained, including assertions of neo-colonialism tied to the issue of West Papua, but the issue began shifting focus to the ethnic Chinese as Dutch business owners began selling off their assets to the Chinese in an increasingly hostile environment. Regional dissatisfaction led to the “barter trade” and the outbreaks of regional rebellions (see above and previous chapter). The issue of West Papua remained salient and the rhetoric from Jakarta continued in its fiery defiance, but the regional rebellions, the role of the military in politics and the economy, and party politics took much of the attention of government. The success of the PKI in the elections of 1955 caused consternation among western powers, affecting their positions regarding the control of West Papua. These shifts encouraged Dutch programs in West Papua, including academies for training health professionals, police,

---

428 Bone, 135-36.


430 Bone, 154-55. Daniel S. Lev’s seminal work on Guided Democracy, for example, covers mainly the period 1957-59. He likens his account to Herbert Feith’s *The Decline*, but whereas Feith’s account considered many aspects of Indonesian politics, including the issue of West Papua, Lev’s analysis ignores this issue and focuses primarily on internal politics in Jakarta, the parties, and regional rebellion. Most academic literature on Indonesia politics in general during this period focuses on the three aforementioned subjects. Robert C. Bone’s excellent analysis was published in 1958 at the height of the crisis, and therefore does not cover the endgame.
soldiers and bureaucrats (although no university was established at the time). In 1956, the Dutch Parliament voted to include West Papua in the constitution as part of the Netherlands Kingdom.\footnote{Penders, 287-88.} That same year, however, cracks emerged in the Dutch façade of unity in policy toward West Papua, with some groups questioning the utility of keeping the region.\footnote{Ibid., 288-90.} Immigration continued, with many coming from Indonesia, including Dutch, Eurasians, and Indonesians who found work in the middle niches of the bureaucracy (which alienated Papuans). The West Papuan economy was still operating with a deficit, but as Osborne notes both the economy and political development “shone” in comparison to Indonesian politics and economy. In 1957, 30 percent of government posts were held by Papuans, by 1960 that figure was 50 percent, and a local parliament was scheduled to convene in 1961. The Dutch support for self-determination in West Papua became discursively linked by Indonesian nationalists to the dissolution of Indonesia itself, and Indonesian rhetoric became increasingly militant.\footnote{Osborne, Indonesia’s Secret War, 18-23; Whittaker, 22.}

The end of 1957 marked a watershed in the West Papua issue. Regional rebellions were breaking out in Indonesia, spurred in part by the West Papua crisis; Papuan elites’ perceptions of what life would be like under Indonesian rule were no doubt colored by the chaos and rebellion that they saw in Indonesia.\footnote{Penders, 416.} Jakarta tried and failed for a fourth time to get the issue onto the UN General Assembly’s agenda, and public rhetoric became increasingly hostile in order to whip up nationalist sentiments among the...
population: Foreign Minister Subandrio announced that “another course” might be required, implying that diplomacy had run its course and Indonesia might look to a military resolution. A three-day boycott of Dutch industries began on 28 October accompanied by intimidation of Dutch residents, and it was repeated a week later. Following failure in the UN on 29 November, Justice Minister G. Maengkom announced that all Dutch citizens would eventually have to leave Indonesia, beginning with the unemployed and those in non-essential services. Various Indonesian youth, labor and veterans groups began seizing Dutch industries, which led to an economic emergency as Dutch-owned transportation and communication networks, as well as a number of important industries, shut down. Rice shortages plagued Java and some regions, stimulating the barter trade in some of the outer regions. At the height of the crisis, Soekarno linked the country’s troubles to West Papua, and argued that Indonesians should be prepared to go without food and clothing in a national effort to get West Papua back.  

435 Prime Minister Djuanda Kartawijaya guaranteed the return of Dutch enterprises if West Papua was transferred to Indonesia, but nationalization was formalized in February of 1959. 436

As Penders notes, 1958 became pivotal to international aspects of the West Papua issue as the United States began to exert its influence more forcefully. Penders argues that Washington had placed itself on the “Indonesian side” since the Madiun rebellion and that the US began to view the West Papua debate vis-à-vis American interests in a

436 Feith, The Decline, 584. Lijphart notes that had the Dutch played the West Papua card differently, it could have been used as a guarantee against the seizure of Dutch assets. Lijphart, 65.
non-communist Indonesia. In policy calculations, the latter greatly outweighed the former. The US outwardly proclaimed neutrality, but there were some in the State Department with sympathies for the Indonesian position. US Ambassador to Indonesia John Allison began to advocate for change in the US position to favor the Indonesian claim with stipulations concerning the preservation of Dutch capital but, given the increasing influence of the PKI, Allison’s prescriptions were rejected and he was transferred. Following the electoral gains of the PKI in 1955 and the subsequent failures of the regional rebellions despite American support, the US was forced to reevaluate its position regarding West Papua. As Indonesian rhetoric became increasingly belligerent, the Dutch looked for security guarantees from the US; these were not forthcoming.

The Australian government strongly favored the Dutch position over security concerns (see above), which were communicated to the Americans. By 1959, however, the obstinacy with which Australia pushed for continued Dutch sovereignty was beginning to wane, especially as Australia cultivated a political relationship with Indonesia, and as internal divisions over which course of action to pursue divided Australian opinion.

In 1960, Indonesian rhetoric was still increasingly belligerent. Armed excursions into West Papau increased. The Dutch responded to the increasingly hostile Indonesian position by continuing to look for assurances from Canberra and Washington (although

438 Ibid., 298-300.
439 Ibid., 301-329.
they never came) and by sending an aircraft carrier and two destroyers to the region.\footnote{Ibid., 330.}

Holland responded to the changing situation in two ways: it attempted to have West Papua placed under UN trusteeship without Indonesian involvement; and it accelerated education and Papuan political participation. On 5 April 1960 it unveiled a ten-year development plan that included the establishment of local and regional councils for Papuan political representation, and the New Guinea Council, a national parliament.\footnote{Ibid., 330.}

The Council was comprised of 28 members, 12 appointed by the Dutch Governor, and 16 elected. Voter turnout was high in urban areas, and about 50 percent in rural areas, with 22 seats won by Papuans; an anti-Indonesian stance dominated.\footnote{Whittaker, 23. Detailed analysis would render this information more valuable to an overall analysis. For example, given that 12 people were appointed, it raises the question of how many Papuans were appointed versus elected. And given that there were 12 Dutch appointees out of 28 positions, only three elected members need have been anti-Indonesia for a majority. In other words, it is possible, but highly unlikely, that the majority of \textit{elected} members were pro-Indonesia.} Within one year, by the time of the 5 April 1961 opening of the New Guinea Council, Penders notes that the chances for West Papuan independence were slim following the shifting of support toward Indonesia by the Kennedy Administration and a visit by Soekarno to the US at the end of April, despite Dutch protestations.\footnote{Penders, 332-35.}

In a 30 September address to the United Nations General Assembly, Soekarno called West Papua “a colonial sword poised over Indonesia… it points at our heart but it also threatens world peace.” He referred to Dutch
efforts to maintain the territory as an imperial “cancer” that required “surgical effort” to remove.444

In May 1961, Dutch Foreign Minister J. M. A. H. Luns unveiled his plan for West Papua based on his overoptimistic reading of the situation (despite the clear signs coming from the Americans). The Luns Plan included three key provisions: sovereignty would at some point be transferred to the West Papuans; the UN, for the time being, would oversee the administration; and the UN would be given a mandate to educate West Papuans with the ultimate goal their self-determination.445 This was the first explicit mention of the Dutch ceding sovereignty, but it came after the United States was already beginning to commit to an Indonesian takeover of the territory. Americans began to warm to the Luns plan as they viewed it as allowing the Indonesian takeover following an act of self-determination consistent with the Luns Plan, which would allow the Dutch to save face. In the end, however, the plan failed after being presented to the UN General Assembly, stymied by the Americans, who decided that its provisions unacceptably bypassed the Indonesians.446

444 Soekarno, “Major Address by President Sukarno to the Fifteenth United Nations General Assembly, New York, 30 September 1960. NST 1327/60, Pidato Presiden, Arsip 223” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1960). This language would be repeated during the “Act of Free Choice” by Ortiz Sanz, who referred to West Papua as a “cancerous growth.” See below.

445 Published in 1964, but written before the fate of West Papua was sealed, E. F. Wertheim noted that developments in Papua would mirror those of Indonesia, in terms of the development of nationalism and a national consciousness, and that “Dutch colonial rule will probably come to an early end at the hands of Papuans, whether they join Indonesia or create a state on a narrower ethnic basis.” Wertheim, Indonesian Society, 366.

446 Penders, 336-38.
Despite the lack of Papuan participation in negotiations, Papuans were not frozen out completely. In September 1961 the former French colonies known as the Brazzaville Group met in Tananarive, Madagascar, and, with the participation of Papuans Nicolaas Jouwe and Herman Womsiwor, supported self-determination for Papuans. If by 1 March 1962 there was no agreement as to the future of West Papua, the group proposed the formation of a commission to establish an interim international authority. There was enough similarity to the Luns Plan for the Dutch government, at the prodding of the United States, to sign on to the Brazzaville Resolution, but it failed in the UN’s General Assembly. At this point, the Americans began to feel that ceding control to the Indonesians was a \textit{fait accompli}, that it could aid the US position of limiting communist influence in Indonesia (especially if securing West Papua could be construed as a victory for Indonesian moderates), and that it would be counterproductive to prevent this from occurring, including through military support for the Dutch.\footnote{Penders, 339-40; Chauvel, “Decolonising,” 568.}

Indonesia continued its aggressive stance, including a military build up. On 15 January 1962, an Indonesian attack on Vlakke Hoek was repelled by Dutch frigates, with one of three Soviet-made Indonesian motor torpedo boats sunk. Many of the crew were captured and interrogated; the Indonesians had planned on wiping out the Dutch defenses at Kaimana. The Dutch began sending troops from Holland to West Papua. On one hand, the Americans were worried about a Dutch military response. On the other, they were worried that American citizens would be targeted for retaliation in Indonesia. American military equipment shipments to Indonesia were halted, but Soekarno continued his
belligerent posture. Subandrio met with President Kennedy, US Ambassador to the UN Adlai Stevenson, and UN Secretary General U Thant and stated that Indonesia would agree to more negotiations on West Papua only if the region was transferred to Indonesian control immediately, with the stipulation that within five years a plebiscite would take place. The Dutch balked, but unofficial meetings between the Dutch and Indonesians began.448

On 11 February 1962, US Attorney General Robert Kennedy arrived in Jakarta to discuss the West Papua issue (as well as the imprisonment of American pilot Allan Pope, who was subsequently released – see previous chapter). As a result of the meeting, Soekarno began to back down from his position that the Dutch had to cede control before any talks would be held, and he was assured that the Americans would not support the Dutch militarily. Kennedy then went to The Hague where he met with Luns and several other ministers, although his “loutish performance” did not impress his Dutch hosts.449 The reality of the situation for the Dutch, however, finally began to sink in.

On 20 March secret talks between the Dutch, represented by J. Hermand van Roijen and C. W. A. Schürmann, and the Indonesians, represented by Adam Malik and Sudjarwo Tjondronegoro, and overseen by American diplomats Elsworth Bunker and Robert Linquist, began at the Huntland Estate near Washington, D.C. Initial Dutch

---

449 Penders, 353. Kennedy’s dismissals of West Papuan arguments about self-determination angered West Papuans as well. They sent him a strongly worded telegram that included appeals to the right of self-determination as well as information about the education level of Papuans, the West Papuan Council, and the comparative levels of development in Indonesia. Jouwe, 18.
skepticism at the Bunker Plan was overcome despite the continuing Indonesian troop build up. West Papuans remained outside of the process. The talks faltered, although van Roijen assured Malik that should the Pauans decide to join with Indonesia following a plebiscite, the Dutch would not object.\textsuperscript{450} Indonesian military infiltration at Waigeo and an attack on a Dutch ship caused the Dutch to send more troops to the region. It also pushed President Kennedy to increase pressure on both sides to resume talks in the context of the Bunker Plan.\textsuperscript{451}

As Penders notes throughout his book, Luns’ overly optimistic approach in his assessments to the Dutch regarding West Papua, such as the degree of American military support or the fragility of the Indonesian economy, had been coloring Dutch perception of the conflict, but by 1962 the \textit{façade} was cracking, and following a NATO meeting in Athens on 4-6 May in which Luns attacked American “fidelity” on the issue, it was torn down. Diplomatic relations between the US and Holland suffered.\textsuperscript{452} West Papuan elites continued to press their case, but it was becoming a \textit{fait accompli} without their input.\textsuperscript{453}

\textsuperscript{450} Penders, 359.

\textsuperscript{451} Ibid., 359-60. The reinforcement of Dutch troops did not stop Indonesian advances, however. From late April to mid May at least six drops of Indonesian paratroopers supported by “volunteers” were made.

\textsuperscript{452} Ibid., 363-65.

\textsuperscript{453} A tract entitled \textit{Voice of the Negroids in the Pacific to the Negroids throughout the World} was published in Hollandia sometime after 19 March 1962 (the latest dated document in the booklet). It included a brief essay written by Nicolas Jouwe as well as statements signed by Jouwe and other members of the Papuan Council, a copy of a letter sent to the leaders of Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Congo, Ghana, Ethiopia and Guinea, and a response to Robert Kennedy’s statements. It also had photographs of West Papuan life with captions that extolled their progress and differentiated Papuans from
An invasion of West Papua loomed as troops amassed in eastern Indonesia; the Dutch were losing strategic and diplomatic ground quickly, and Jakarta pressed its advantage increasing its demands of the Dutch in negotiations, such as shortening the interim period, claiming fears of a potential Westerling-like incident, the arming of Papuans, or other sabotage. This posturing by the Indonesians incensed US Secretary of State Dean Rusk, who had been working closely on the issue with both sides, as well as President Kennedy. They both pressured Subandrio to accept terms, and on 28 July 1962 a preliminary accord was signed, leaving the West Papuans’ fate to Indonesia.\(^{454}\)

Although Indonesia was not to assume control until May 1963 following a UN transfer under the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), Indonesian \textit{de facto} control came immediately; the Indonesians operated under the assumption that their takeover of the territory would be permanent despite the articles of the New York Agreement, and UNTEA officials began to feel that Indonesian control was imminent.\(^{455}\) Many of the UN staff hired were Indonesians, and a peacekeeping force of 1500 Muslim Pakistanis was brought in, a controversial choice given the importance of pigs to the predominantly animist and Christian Papuans. The surviving Indonesian paratroopers were allowed to stay to help with the maintenance of law and order, and the Indonesian flag was allowed to be unfurled on 1 January 1963.\(^{456}\) Conflict between the Papuan Police and volunteer troops and Indonesians erupted almost immediately. Some Papuan Indonesians, as well as photographs of the West Papua Council members, including the Dutch ones. Jouwe.

\(^{454}\) Penders, 368-75. \\
\(^{455}\) Saltford, 34-42. \\
\(^{456}\) Ibid., 16; Whittaker, 30.
nationalist elites were courted by the Indonesians (see below), and others were simply coerced. Under these conditions, the nationalists became increasingly fragmented and their ability to articulate their position disappeared.457

From Netherlandsche Nieuw Guinea to Irian Barat to Irian Jaya to Papua Barat

Indonesia had prevailed, and West Papua was de facto integrated into Indonesia. As a result, Jakarta banned West Papuan nationalist symbols and public gatherings, disbanded parties, implemented restrictions on speech and movement, and eliminated the remaining traces of the Dutch period, including the education system. Dutch-trained Papuan police were not trusted and were confined to barracks.458 Despite UNTEA’s resistance, Indonesian administrators insisted on raising Indonesian flags on 1 January 1963, sometimes resorting to coercion of both UN officials and the Papuan population; flag raisings on both sides were considered provocations and frequently led to violence or disorder. The pro-Indonesian side, along with the Indonesian military, took to open intimidation and acts of violence toward Papuan nationalists, including the Papuan police force.459

Leading up to the transfer to Indonesia on 1 May 1963, UN personnel began leaving the territory. In a speech at a ceremony for the transfer that day Under Secretary-

457 Saltford, 45.


459 Saltford, 47-57. Both the Indonesian and Papuan flags became lightning rods for controversy in the early period. The ban on the Papuan flag was lifted briefly under the administration of Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001) but flag raisers were severely punished following that period. Items bearing the Papuan flag, however, such as beaded coin purses, are sold openly in Jayapura and Abepura.
General of the UN Chakravarthi Narasimhan reminded the Indonesian diplomats and Papuans present of their responsibilities regarding an act of self-determination, although the Indonesian speeches made no such mention. Elias (alt. Elizar) Bonay of PARNA (Partai Nasional, a pro-independence party) was selected as the first governor of the territory. That night, Narasimhan and the 100 or so UN personnel remaining in the territory left. In a presidential speech in Ambon on 1 May Soekarno referred to himself as the “Great Pattimura” (“Pattimura Agung”) and the “Great Leader, Highest Commander for the Freedom of West Irian” (“Pemimpin Besar Komand Tertinggi Pembebasan Irian Barat”), and he emphasized that West Papua had not been brought in to Indonesia but rather returned to the Indonesian fold as a continuation of the Revolution; Soekarno emphasized this rhetorical differentiation frequently. Groups formed to support Indonesia’s claim to West Papua echoed this rhetoric. Three days after the transfer, Soekarno visited the territory and renamed several mountain peaks; his

---

460 Saltford, 67.

461 Later in the speech Soekarno’s rhetoric takes a more modest tone, as he states that he is simply the spokesman (“penjambung rakyat”) of Indonesia, and that he did not ask for his titles but that they were the choice of the people. On the day that West Papua was formally turned over, his speech also shows that he had the next conflict on his mind, as he condemns the “imperialism, colonialism” of “Kalimantan Barat” or Malaysian Borneo. Soekarno, “Pidato PJM Presiden Sukarno Pada Rapat Raksasa Dilapangan Merdeka Untuk Menjambut Masuknya Irian Barat Kedalam Wilajah Kekuasaan Republik Indonesia,” 1 May 1963, Konstituante 487, NST 3385/63,” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1963). In a speech reeking of patrimonialism toward the Papuans (if not eugenics) the day before, also in Ambon, Soekarno exhorted Ambonese to marry Papuans from the Peseheim tribe, who are of short stature, “the tallest only 1.4 meters,” in order to “improve on the existing types.” Soekarno, “Pidato PJM Presiden Sukarno Pada Pemberian Nama.”
speech on that day also emphasized the rhetorical differentiation above. On his return to Jakarta Soekarno banned all Papuan political parties and prohibited political activity, contravening the New York Agreement. On 18 August, one day after Indonesians celebrated their independence, Soekarno dedicated the Free Irian Statue in Jakarta. He used a construction metaphor, “muscles of wire, bones of steel” (“otot kawat boning wesi”), for Indonesians engaged in a multifaceted and long-term revolution, and as a symbol of the Indonesian soul, spirit, sentiments and aspirations. The statue was not yet finished, but in the years since it may have come to symbolize more dramatically Jakarta’s troubled relationship with West Papua: the park in which the statue resides is unkempt, homeless Jakartans sleep there and urinate on the base of the monument, and it has been used as a meeting place for illicit homosexual sex.

On 21 May 1963, Narasimhan met with Dutch representatives who agreed that voting in the proposed plebiscite in West Papua could occur through representational

---

462 Soekarno saw fit to rename one of the mountains after himself. Soekarno, “Amanat PJM Presiden Soekarno pada Upatjara Pemberian Tanda Djaspa Kepada Para Anggota Team Tjendrawasih di Istana Negara, Djakarta, 18 March 1964, NST 432/65,” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1964); Soekarno, “Pidato PJM Presiden Sukarno Pada Rapat Raksasa Dan Upatjara Pemberian Gelar ‘Maha putra Irian Barat’ Kepada PJM Presiden Sukarno, Kotabaru, 4 May 1963, Konstituan 488, NST 384/63” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1963); Saltford, 74

463 Soekarno, “Pidato PJM Presiden Sukarno Pada Peresmian ‘Monumen Irian Barat’ Dilapangan Banteng, Djakarta, 18 August, 1963, Konstituante 515, NST 617/63” (Jakarta: Indonesian National Archives, 1963). A similar statue was erected in Dili, East Timor, by the Suharto government following the Indonesian invasion; although defaced during the tumult of 1999 and the butt of Timorese jokes, the statue still stands.

councils, obviating the one-man, one-vote principle.\textsuperscript{465} This was repeated to Soekarno a year later. Support for a plebiscite, by definition a one-man, one-vote process, from all sides was waning, excepting among Papuans themselves. The Dutch were concerned about the normalization of their relations with Indonesia, and preferred that the exercise occur by 1966. The UN was willing to concede to an appearance of an act of self-determination, given that genuine self-determination would be “both impractical and undesirable.” The British, already facing a hostile Indonesia over the incorporation of Sabah and Sarawak into Malaysia, felt that supporting the Papuans would endanger support for their Malaysia plan among African and Asian governments. The Australians also did not want to risk a conflict with Indonesia; their control over the Territory of Papua New Guinea meant that West Papuan refugees were already crossing into their territory and the Indonesians were pressuring for their return and moreover Australian troops had been fighting alongside the British in Borneo to repel invading Indonesian troops during Confrontation. The United States also placed diplomatic relations with Indonesia at the fore.\textsuperscript{466} Strategic considerations were clearly trumping adherence to democratic values, respect for the UN and the New York Agreement, and the principle of self-determination as agreed to by all parties.

The last years of Soekarno’s rule were spent focusing on \textit{Konfrontasi} (Confrontation with Malaysia). West Papua began to fade from Indonesian consciousness.

\textsuperscript{465} Writing in February 1963, Paul W. van der Veur predicted the circumstances and outcome of a potential act of self-determination based on consultation with Papuan leaders, and noted that it would be a violation of both the letter and the spirit of the August agreement. Van der Veur, “Political Awakening,” 73.

\textsuperscript{466} Saltford, 81-89.
following Indonesia’s triumph. Indonesian civil servants appeared reluctant to go to the region to help govern, and those who did anxiously awaited the end of their two-year assignment so they could leave. In the wake of the shutting of Dutch educational facilities, Indonesian development plans were stalled. The environment of oppression remained, answered by the OPM (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, Papuan Freedom Organization) rebellion, as Indonesian migration to the territory continued despite opposition from Papuans. West Papua remained closed to outsiders, including journalists. On 7 January 1965 Soekarno withdrew from the United Nations in opposition to Malaysia assuming a non-permanent seat on the Security Council, as part of the overall policy of Konfrontasi; in so doing Indonesia lost $30 million per year in UN funds dedicated to the development of West Papua. In May 1965, Soekarno announced that there was no need for an act of self-determination for the Papuans, claiming that they did not want one and were satisfied with Indonesian rule.

Suharto’s ascension to power following the events of the G30S (see chapter two) marked a shift in Indonesian foreign policy, and significantly affected events in West Papua. Suharto’s foreign minister Adam Malik arranged for Indonesia to rejoin the United Nations in September 1966, and he announced that there would be an act of self-

467 Malaysia, despite the consternation of the British, proved initially receptive to the Papuan cause for independence, most likely because of its conflicts Indonesia. Nicolas Jouwe’s message was received well in Malaysia in October 1963, but nothing other than verbal support appears to be the result. Ibid., 85.

468 Ibid., 91. Indonesian development funds for West Papua totaled $4 million. Ironically, part of Indonesia’s complaint with Malaysia was that it felt there should be a plebiscite in Malaysian Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak), with the option to join Indonesia. There was no such support for a plebiscite in West Papua at the time from Soekarno’s Indonesia.
determination for West Papua. Given geopolitical considerations, Jakarta was confident that it could carry out some kind of act with the acquiescence of the rest of the world and pass it off as legitimate; international opinion had come to favor the Indonesian position as well, at least among the important actors, including Holland.\textsuperscript{469} The “Act of Free Choice” was scheduled for 1969.

The UN appointed Bolivian diplomat Ortiz Sanz to oversee the “plebiscite.” He arrived in Indonesia on 12 August 1968, but his departure to West Papua was delayed for 11 days while Indonesian security forces, led by Brigadier-General Sarwo Edhie, put down local resistance, including a long-simmering rebellion in Arfak, and attempted to stem the tide of refugees heading into the Australian Territory of Papua New Guinea. Sanz was treated lavishly while in Jakarta, and during his first trip to West Papua reported that he was impressed with Indonesian developments in the region, despite acknowledging that he was only seeing their side and hearing vehement criticism of Jakarta coming from other sources. His one major criticism was that Papuans did not know about the upcoming “Act of Free Choice;” he recommended an “enlightenment campaign” for the region but also acknowledged that a one-man, one-vote plebiscite would be difficult and that, consistent with Jakarta’s wishes, some kind of consultative act might be necessary. Sanz received 28 “political communications” from Papuans critical of Indonesia, and in nearly every one a one-man, one-vote system was supported. Eventually Sanz proposed a mixed system that would entail a one-man, one-vote system in urban areas, and representative councils in other areas – he was apparently unaware of

\textsuperscript{469} Ibid., 94-95.
the assurances that the Dutch, UN Under Secretaries General José Rolz-Bennet and Chakravarthy Narasimhan made to Jakarta five years prior (see above). Indonesian complaints of Sanz, including his insistence on spending the majority of his time in the territory as opposed to Jakarta, resulted in pressure from his UN superiors to acquiesce to Jakarta’s wishes; one result was that despite Sanz’s complaints of the lack of housing for his UN team and Indonesian intransigence on the matter, his team was reduced from 50 to 16. Sanz was also critical of Indonesian efforts to stymie criticism among Papuans, but as Saltford notes, Sanz’s compromises “meant abandoning (the UN’s) responsibilities towards the Papuans.” By early 1969 many observers had concluded that the “Act of Free Choice” would leave West Papua to Indonesia, despite Papuan opposition.470

In the face of increasing refugee flows into Australian New Guinea at the beginning of 1969, the Australian Labor party condemned Indonesian machinations to prevent a true reflection of Papuan opinion. John Guise, Speaker of the Australian Territory of Papua New Guinea’s House of Assembly, openly advocated for a union of east and west in order to bring the island under consolidated rule. Canberra downplayed the criticism coming from Port Moresby, and openly supported Indonesia, going so far as to detain and quarantine West Papuan refugees in Papua New Guinea, and to arrest (most likely at the request of Indonesian authorities) two West Papuan leaders, Willem Zonggonao and Clemens Runawaray, who had planned to travel to the UN in New York to petition for Papuan independence.471

470 Ibid., 98-120.
471 Ibid., 126-29.
Papuan opposition to the Act was increasing. Indonesia and Sanz both portrayed this as Papuans arguing that it was unnecessary; other sources, however, concluded that Papuans were well aware that the process would not reflect their desire to separate from Indonesia. On 18 March Sanz announced that, consistent with Indonesian wishes, the Act would be through representative councils, but that the people would be able to elect directly a certain number of representatives themselves who were not members of the representative councils already in existence. By April, Sudjarwo was suggesting that these representatives be appointed and not elected, and in mid-April this process was underway. It sparked widespread Papuan resistance, however, including a resurgence of the OPM, the destruction of regional landing strips, and demands for a voting process free from Indonesian interference and intimidation. The Indonesians reacted by sending in paratroops and strafing rebellious villages. Without waiting for agreement from the UN headquarters, Sanz issued a statement that the rebellions were an internal political problem for Indonesia; Rolz-Bennett criticized Sanz as being overly cautious, and suggested he ask the Indonesians for clarification, but these directives came after Sanz’s statement was released.

Saltford is very critical of Sanz’s role in the events leading up to the Act. Sanz spent much if his time in Jakarta, and when visiting West Papua his stops were often brief and perfunctory. Furthermore, Sanz appeared complicit in presenting the situation in Papua in a good light; he drafted a letter on 12 May prior to a trip to West Papua, in which he stated that violence had stopped, order had been restored, and the overall

---

472 Ibid., 130.
473 Ibid., 134-37.
situation had improved. After his return he read a statement nearly identical to the one he had drafted prior to his departure, “clear evidence that he had no intention of acknowledging publicly anything which might have been damaging to Jakarta or the UN.” He did acknowledge in private to Rolz-Bennett, however, that conditions in the territory made it “difficult, if not impossible, to carry out an act of free choice in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the New York Agreement.” Rolz-Bennett failed to act on this information, however. As long as Indonesia remained in charge of organization and security, conditions would not change.474 Sanz also voiced his fear of communism in his rationalizations for favoring Indonesian rule in the region, stating West Papua is “a cancerous growth on the side of the UN and my job is to surgically remove it.”475

The Indonesians lied to the UN about the timing of the elections for representative councils, scheduled for early June. Sanz arrived to find that elections had already occurred throughout much of the territory, and that the UN would not be able to oversee them. In Biak, however, the elections were postponed until the arrival of the UN. Reports glowed with praise for the openness of the vote, but later the Australian diplomat Watson (first name unknown), an eyewitness, reported that the Biak vote was rigged and a show put on for the UN. Sanz reported to Rolz-Bennett that the UN oversaw only 30 percent of the election; Saltford notes: “it was hard not to conclude that Jakarta had made Ortiz Sanz

474 Ibid., 138-9.
475 Ibid., 163.
appear foolish and outwitted, both to the international press and to (UN Secretary
General) U Thant.”

Reports of many of the elections showed clear Indonesian intimidation. Since the
free election of representatives was viewed as a cornerstone of legitimacy for the UN, U
Thant insisted they be held again. The Indonesians agreed to hold fresh elections in nine
regions, but the UN only witnessed six. (In all, the UN observed the elections of 195
representatives from a total of 1026.) Reports of these new elections also described them
as farcical, with heavy Indonesian intimidation. Sanz’s reaction was to roll over and
acquiesce, “behaving, with U Thant’s consent, in a manner totally incompatible with his
official role… his preoccupation was to ensure that Jakarta took measures to minimise
the impact of any international protest over fundamental breeches of the Agreement.”

In the lead up to the vote, Indonesia barred journalists critical of the regime, and allowed
accreditation to only 20 journalists. Sanz refused to meet with these journalists, most of
whom had become critical of the situation. In July, after the OPM attacked several
Indonesian military positions, journalists were barred from these areas.

Voting began on 14 July in Merauke. Despite Indonesian press accounts and
Sanz’s defense of the *musjawarah* (consultative) system used, critical accounts reflect the
stage managed nature of the process, including, for example, the nearly identical
speeches of the representatives questioning the necessity of the Act itself. In some
regions, the Indonesians had to truck in Papuans to take part as assembly members since
the local population had fled in the face of conflict prior to the vote. Allegations of

---

476 Ibid., 147-153.

477 Ibid., 155-56.
bribery and Indonesian plants in the assemblies were widespread. The final vote took place on 2 August in Jayapura. Every single one of the representatives had voted to remain with Indonesia, a unanimous result that further casts doubt on the proceedings. Despite a plea from Rolz-Bennett to Jakarta to allow a few token votes of opposition in order to give the appearance of legitimacy, the Indonesians allowed no such dissent to take away from the myth of Indonesian rights over West Papua. The “Act of Free Choice” was condemned by major media outlets in Europe and Australia, and some Indonesian officials admitted it was a staged event.478

International reaction varied, but can be divided into three camps. The first accepted the Act, despite reservations about its implementation, primarily to safeguard relations with Indonesia. The second, led by India, accepted the Act in the context of European decolonization and Indonesian assertions that since West Papua was part of the Indies, it should therefore be part of independent Indonesia. The third camp, made up mostly of African nations and some Pacific Island nations, was opposed to the result for various reasons. Paramount amongst the concerns was the fear that the manipulation of a plebiscite such as occurred in West Papua might be used to maintain white rule and postpone decolonization in some parts of Africa. Critics compared West Papua to Papua

478 Philip Shabecoff, “Irianese Begin ‘Act of Free Choice’ on Whether to Remain part of Indonesia,” New York Times, 7 July 1969; Sanz, who in 1969 referred to West Papua as “a cancerous growth on the side of the UN,” stated in 1999 that the Act should not rule out the West Papuans’ deciding their own fate at some point in the future; Narasimhan described the Act as a “sham” and a “whitewash” in 2001 but voiced little sympathy for the plight of the Papuans, despite his role in the Act. Saltford, 160-67, 176-77.
New Guinea, where Australia had implemented one-man, one-vote elections in
preparations for PNG’s eventual independence. In assessing the “Act of Free Choice,” critics and supporters take various tacks. It
is impossible, however, to argue that it took place as it was designed in the New York
Agreement; UN officials and their documents acknowledge as much. This is the strongest
argument against the results of the Act. Other arguments against the Act center on a
variety of premises, from the near total absence of Papuan voices in the negotiations over
West Papua from 1945 to 1969 to more academic arguments based on differing cultures
and ethnicities. Indonesia’s treatment of West Papuans since its official incorporation (as
Irian Jaya) has done little to quiet critics of West Papua’s fate, and the events of 1998-
2002 have further cast attention on the issue.

What is more interesting are the justifications offered for accepting the “Act of
Free Choice.” Some are included in the above recounting of the events, including, for
example: the low level of development and education in the region; the disunity within
the West Papuan community and the inability for any one group to speak decisively for
the West Papuan people; geo-political concerns on the part of major actors including the
Dutch, Australia, Great Britain and the United States, especially with regard to their
relationships with and influence on Indonesia and the fear of communism; and the

^479 African Nations’ positions vacillated with regard to West Papua over time.
Despite Dutch claims to be preparing West Papua for eventual independence, some
African states initially favored Indonesian rule under the doctrine of uti possidetis juris,
under which old colonial borders defined the borders of the new states. In this view, the
right to self-determination for West Papua was trumped by the concern of separatism
from Indonesia. Saltford, 8, 172-77, 181-82.
assertion that the process, as flawed as it was, was the best that could be expected under the conditions.

Following West Papua’s incorporation, the objections and justifications for the “Act of Free Choice” continue to be repeated. Yet since its incorporation, it is clear that a large proportion of the population, if not an outright majority, continues to reject the imposition of Indonesian sovereignty in the region.

**The Missing Piece of the Puzzle**

Analyses to date focus primarily on the major states and their representatives’ actions involved in the resolution of the West Papua issue. This approach gives weight to a *realpolitik* approach that reflects international relations and traditional perspectives on the exercise of power in political science, and treats Papuans as though they were commodities or assets or even “objects” that come along with a parcel of land and its resources.\(^{480}\) It does not, however, take into account what should have been the most important actor in the debate over the future of West Papua, consistent with understandings of self-determination: the West Papuan people themselves.

There was token representation on the part of Papuans during some stages of the process, for example at the Malino conference, but prior to the Indonesian declaration of independence there was no Papuan representation in Indonesian nationalist circles.\(^{481}\)

Critics of Papuan representation argued that an overall Papuan “will” could not be


\(^{481}\) Chauvel, “Decolonising,” 556.
ascertained democratically, and therefore it was in the best interest of all parties concerned to have each side act in what it thought was the best interests of the Papuans. Those Papuans who were vocal in their support for the Dutch could easily be accused of reflecting self-interest by currying favor with the Dutch or fear of speaking out against the Dutch.\textsuperscript{482} Moreover, Paul van der Veur, who conducted research during the UNTEA period, noted that Papuans were similarly encouraged, bribed, or intimidated into supporting Indonesia during the UNTEA period, including the position that it was unnecessary for Indonesia to hold a plebiscite.\textsuperscript{483} In addition, there were geographic rivalries (between Biak, Serui and Hollandia, for example) and generational differences dividing Papuan elites.\textsuperscript{484}

Yet as shown above, the underdeveloped region of Papua is in some ways comparable to Indonesia during the revolution and its first years of freedom, and to the newly emergent African states, in terms of the proportions of a representational elite and the low level of education among the masses.\textsuperscript{485} And despite the decline of progress in education in the early years of Indonesian control of the region, in national elections shortly after West Papua’s integration with Indonesia, Papuans were allowed to

\textsuperscript{482} Lijphart, 32; Chauvel, “Decolonising,” 559, 562.


\textsuperscript{484} Chauvel, “Decolonising,” 564.

\textsuperscript{485} Penders, 392. On the other hand, van der Veur noted “a considerable degree of political awareness” among the 329 students he sampled in 1962, and an overall awareness and preference among Papuans for the “pro-Papua” view. Van der Veur, “Political Awakening,” 67.
Just as the list of names of the predominant early Indonesian elites is familiar to students of Indonesia, and as Ambonese elites are to students of Ambon, most analyses of West Papua cite the names of the emergent post World War II elites who expected to run their own state – Rumkorem, Krey, Jouwe, Kaisiepo, Runaweri, et al. – only in passing.

During the Indonesian Revolution, when the Dutch shifted away from thinking of West Papua as a home for Dutch and Eurasians, programs to aid the West Papuans’ political development began, although they were intended to spur a gradual shift in development. Although, for example, the Dutch devised a plan for the New Guinea Council in 1949, they did not convene it for over a decade. Local advisory councils emerged in 1955 in Hollandia (Jayapura), Manokwari and the Schouten Islands, followed by Fak-Fak in 1958 and Biak-Numfor in 1959. In the decade 1950-60, enrollment in the various kinds of schools offered by the Dutch increased dramatically, including some studying in Holland, Papua New Guinea, and Fiji. As Indonesian pressure intensified, the Dutch implemented a ten-year plan in May 1961 for Papuan political and economic development, with the goal of Papuans occupying 90-95 percent of all civil service positions by 1970.487

Economic development between 1945-1962 was mixed. The Dutch drive to exploit natural resources did not bear fruit, but the timber industry advanced. Although plantation agriculture was abandoned, small-holder production of copra, nutmeg, mace and cocoa showed promise. Small scale farms were introduced in order to turn Papuans

486 Leith, 13.
487 Penders, 390-92.
away from swidden agriculture. By 1962, however, the market economy had barely penetrated the region, and most Papuans obtained goods through barter.  

A pervasive neo-colonial racism permeated West Papua in the post-Revolution period. Despite lofty rhetoric about empowering Papuans, many Dutch treated them with disdain and enforced apartheid-like behavior. Educated Papuans were aware of the glass ceiling under which they lived.  Papuans with pro-Indonesian leanings, including members of pro-Indonesia groups such as the Partai Pemuda Indonesia (Indonesian Youth Party, PPI), were persecuted by the Dutch, but some of these groups maintained a background presence. A dominant “national” sentiment was difficult to ascertain; rather, some areas had what could be called a “regional” sentiment based on certain factors: the prior penetration of Indonesians into the region and their political leanings; the religious make up of the region; Dutch or Indonesian behavior toward the Papuans in the region; levels of education and opportunities for participation in the region; and so on. Papuan nationalist groups such as the Perkumpulan Sekerdja Kristen Di Nieuw Guinea (Gathering of Christian Colleagues of New Guinea), the Gerakan Persatuan Nieuw Guinea (New Guinea Unity Movement) and the Partai Nasional (National Party) were promoted by the Dutch, and many of them flourished. Holland was viewed by some of these groups as necessary to nurture Papuans into a state of development that would

---

488 Ibid., 393-400.

489 Richard Chauvel, “Papua and Indonesia,” 120, Chauvel, Decolonising, 573.

490 Many Indonesians in West Papua at the time supported integration with Indonesia, especially those from Java, Madura, Buton, and other regions. Indonesians from regions such as Ambon, however, had varying opinions; some supported integration, but others, including RMS sympathizers, opposed it and favored independence or even integration with a South Moluccan state.
allow them to become independent; others rejected this paternalism and demanded immediate racial equality along with increased opportunities. Many of the groups commanded local support based on their leaders’ social positions, but were antagonistic toward groups from different regions despite the fact that they held similar goals.491

Perhaps the most important of these latter groups was PARNA. Its membership was primarily made up of educated Papuan civil servants who had a more sophisticated world view than members of other parties. They promoted a “people’s credit system” to open up economic opportunities and pushed for more outlets for education in Papua. They denounced racism and promoted governance based on Christianity. In a November 1960 letter to U Thant they demanded that Papuan voices be heard in negotiations over the future of the region.492

Most Papuan elites agreed with Western analyses, however, that the region was ill-prepared for total independence by the dawn of 1960. They were also aware that events at that time were moving quickly, and that the United States was pressuring for a quick solution that favored Indonesia. This pushed some to favor immediate independence, even though they were acutely aware of the problem a lack of national leadership would present.493 The Luns Plan spurred some of the nationalist leadership, including Nicolaas Jouwe, Markus Kaisiepo and others to draft a manifesto citing Article 73 of the UN Charter and Resolution 1514 XV of the UN Assembly of 14 December 1960, which required colonial powers to set dates for decolonization. The manifesto also

491 Penders, 423-425.

492 Ibid., 415-21.

493 Ibid., 426-27.
established a National Committee.\textsuperscript{494} The announcement of the Bunker Plan spurred condemnation from Papuan nationalists who realized that it was a death knell for their political aspirations, and was followed with demands for Papuan representation in talks. When the acceptance of the Bunker Plan was announced, PARNA called for the establishment of a free West Papua by 1970. A National Congress demanded that the date for an act of self-determination be pushed forward from 1969 to 1963, and that the Papuan flag (\textit{bintang kejora}, morning star) should be able to fly during the interim period. In September 1962 a Papuan delegate declared that Papuans favored independence and that the Dutch-Indonesian agreement was counter to guarantees of self-determination; the Papuan pleas were roundly ignored despite vocal support from several African states.\textsuperscript{495}

During the UNTEA period, Papuans remained marginalized. In February 1963, a few months before the handover to Indonesia was to occur, for example, Narasimhan visited West Papua and met with both Dutch and Indonesians. On the last day of his visit he had scheduled one meeting with Papuans, but none showed up after they were intimidated by Indonesian intelligence. According to Saltford, Narasimhan’s public pronouncements concerning the fate of Papuans as being paramount “bore no relation whatsoever to the reality of (West Papua’s) situation, a fact that he was only too well aware of (sic).”\textsuperscript{496}

\textsuperscript{494} Ibid., 428.

\textsuperscript{495} Ibid., 431; Saltford, 25-26.

\textsuperscript{496} Saltford, 60.
Following the transfer to Indonesia, disillusionment with Indonesian rule set in among pro-Indonesian Papuan elites, such as Herman Wajo, who criticized corruption and theft and asked that the influx of Indonesian administrators be stopped in order to allow Papuans to fill these positions. Wajo was the President of the PNI in West Papua. Governor Bonay was removed from his post for opposing Javanese migration (but after his transfer to Jakarta to become Vice-Minister for the Interior he oversaw the continued transmigration). Karubuy, a member of the *Majelis Perwakilan Rakyat Sementara* (Provisional People’s Representative Council) in Jakarta, made a speech in that body asserting Indonesian maltreatment of Papuans, and argued that Papuan resistance to Indonesia was based on economic neglect. An American diplomatic mission to the region noted the paternalist attitude of Indonesian officials toward Papuans, and the absence of Papuans in the administration. A German agricultural administrator echoed these sentiments, stating that they were the cause of Papuan nationalism. Two years into the Indonesian administration the OPM was formed. As attacks increased, the Indonesians implemented *Operasi Sadar* (Operation Aware), their first major counter-

---

497 Ibid., 89-90.

498 Americans are not, of course, exempt from the same kind of patrimonialism toward Papuans, as literature from the 1950s and 1960s reflects. This patrimonialism survives in many quarters, including in the American diplomatic corps. Following the 2004 Carter Center observer mission to monitor the presidential election (the writer was a delegate), several delegates argued in the September 22 debriefing that a section in the final report should describe the conditions in Papua that may have affected the result of the election, such as the overwhelming military presence (a similar section was written for Aceh). Former Ambassador to Indonesia John Monjo (1989-92), also a Carter Center delegate, exclaimed that no such section should be allowed for Papua because, “for god’s sake, they’re naked!” His comment drew embarrassed looks and raised eyebrows from several of the other delegates, including those from Africa seated next to me.
insurgency campaign. West Papua has remained in perpetual low-level conflict since the creation of the OPM, occasionally flaring into large-scale acts of violence and retribution committed by both sides.

**Elite and Party Representation, 1945 – 1999: “Why are there no Irianese national heroes?”**

With regard to the role of indigenous elites, in the West Papuan case there are several factors that contrast with the preceding case of Ambon. Most significantly, during the early nationalist period (1920 – 1945) there were no Papuans participating meaningfully in the developing conversation. Furthermore, during the crucial time period of 1945-62 there were no Papuan elites recognized by the fractionalized Papuan population who could speak on behalf of the Papuan people as a whole. While there were four main positions that could have been taken by any given elite (advocating West Papuan independence, joining with Indonesia, joining the State of Eastern Indonesia [1945-49], or some kind of association with the Dutch), none was clearly embraced by a majority. A fifth position, creating some kind of Melanesian Federation, was also a

---

499 Ibid., 77-79.

500 Aditjondro, *Cahaya*, 5.

501 Literature such as biographies of key Papuan elites (especially those favoring independence) in the early period is sparse in Indonesian and English language sources. There are some Dutch-language sources, but the writer is hampered by a lack of ability to read them. This limitation is true for the other Dutch East Indies cases as well, although there are more Indonesian and English language sources for those. For the East Timor case, there are some Portuguese language sources; the writer’s limited ability is enough to read some of them. Following their recognition as “Indonesian National Heroes,” Frans Kaisiepo, Marthin Indey and Silas Papare were the subject of brief biographies published by the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture, as were others selected as national heroes.
possibility, but it was an idea that gained little traction. For their part, the Dutch attempted to cultivate a pro-Dutch Papuan elite by, for example, creating nearly 400 personal dossiers of Papuans thought suitable and receptive to the Dutch plan for development, and they directed patronage through these people. The Indonesian consolidation period (1963-69) saw the defection and disillusionment of many formerly pro-Indonesian Papuan elites.

Furthermore, Papuan elites were shut out of the process of determining the fate of the territory. Following the appearance of Frans Kaisiepo at the Malino conference (see above), where he alienated the Dutch who sponsored his appearance by declaring that Papuans wished to tie their fate to Ambon, it was in the Dutch interest to make sure that Papuan voices were stymied. And on the Indonesian side, as Dutch development programs intensified following World War II (and given the treatment of Papuans at the hands of Indonesians during World War II and their association with the cruel Japanese), it was in Indonesia’s interest to exclude Papuans who could not be verified as pro-Jakarta. Both the Dutch and the Indonesian positions were bolstered by the prevalent racism of the day that viewed Papuans as inferior; this view also enabled both the Indonesians and the Dutch to convince others involved in the negotiations process (including the United States and Australia) that it would be best if the decision was made for the West Papuans, and not by the West Papuans, at least in the immediate future.

---


503 Penders, Debacle, 153-54. During negotiations over West Papua, President Kennedy justified the turn toward Indonesia as it simply regarded the fate of 700,000 “living in the Stone Age.” Whittaker, 27. Exemplary of the continuing racism in Papua today is the Papuan Provincial Governments’ own website entry for Silas Papare. It
West Papuan elites tend to appear and then fade in most accounts; often they assert their authority at a particular event, and then become marginalized by those in control of the dialogue who disagree with their position.

Complicating matters further, prior to 1962, some Papuan elites showed a remarkable elasticity in their positions, forming and breaking alliances with other Papuans, and switching positions with regard to the future of West Papua. Following the Indonesian assumption of control in 1963, many pro-Indonesian Papuans backpedaled on their support for Jakarta. Although one of the Suharto regime’s aims was to consolidate Indonesian rule in West Papua under a situation more conducive to support from the West, disaffection with Indonesian rule began almost immediately after 1963 and was given a more organized voice with the creation of the OPM in 1965. Pro-Indonesian elites began to criticize Jakarta.

One such elite is Silas Papare. Born in Serui in 1918, he was trained as a nurse by the Dutch. He fought against the Japanese and was awarded the Bronzen Leeuw (Bronze Lion) by the Dutch military. He worked as a nurse in Serui following the war. His wartime experiences engendered a deep hatred of the Japanese and the Amberies who blame the lingering “backwardness, poverty and stupidity” of West Papua on the struggle against Dutch rule. This rewriting of history ignores the fact that the Dutch were the first to educate the West Papuans and that their institutions were closed following the Indonesian takeover. It justifies calling Papuans stupid based on the actions of the Dutch. Pemerintah Propinsi Papua: Tokoh Papua, accessed 6 June 2008, available from http://www.papua.go.id/tokoh_det.php/id/11.

504 This vacillation in position continues, based on “personal interests, advancement or survival, or based on (elites’) appraisal of the prevailing political climate.” Bhakti, 229.

collaborated. It was this toxicity that caused the Dutch to bypass Papare and appoint Kaisiepo as a Papuan representative to the Malino Conference. Papare felt a sense of betrayal that, coupled with his perception of sluggish economic development at the hands of the Dutch, left him susceptible to Ratulangi’s nationalist rhetoric and pushed the foundation of the Partai Kemerdekaan Indonesia Irian (PKII) in 1946.

Following the founding of the PKII he was exiled by the Dutch to Biak. From there he sneaked out of the region and moved to Jogjakarta, Java, where he founded the Badan Perjuangan Irian (Body for the Struggle of Irian). There he helped form the Irian Company in the Indonesian military in preparation for armed conflict. He moved to Jakarta and worked in the office of the Ministry of Health from 1951-54. In 1954 he was appointed to the DPRS (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Sementara, Provisional People’s Representation Council) and in 1956 he was appointed as the representative for Irian Jaya to the DPR (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, Indonesia’s parliament) as well as being appointed a member of the MPRS (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara, Provisional People’s Consultative Council). He served until 1960.

Following the Indonesian assumption of control of the territory, Papare returned to Serui. Despite being named a national hero, biographical information for him

506 The official biography of Papare notes that even prior to the Revolution he struggled for his people as a member of the Indonesian nation, an account that clearly contradicts others. Biografi Pahlawan Nasional: Marthin Indey dan Silas Papare (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1997), 77.

507 Penders, 140-41.

508 Album Pahlawan Bangsa (Jakarta: PT. Mutiara Sumber Widaya, 2001), 192. The author acknowledges the obvious heavy bias toward the Indonesian governments’ view and the presence of some factual errors.
following 1963 is sparse in Indonesian sources. Osborne reported that following a crackdown on rebels in the Arfak region (encouraged by Frans Kaisiepo), Papare traveled back to Jakarta and appeared before parliament to complain of the massacre of Arfak residents.\textsuperscript{509} Papare died on 19 February 1979 in a Jakarta hospital; some anti-Indonesia Papuan groups label his death “mysterious.” Nevertheless, Papare was memorialized with a navy corvette named after him, as well as a school of social and political science in Jayapura. In 1993, he was named one of Indonesia’s National Heroes and awarded the \textit{Bintang Mahaputera Adipradana}, despite his early involvement with the Dutch and his later criticism of Papuans’ treatment.

The second (and most consistently pro-Indonesia) Papuan to be declared an Indonesian National Hero was Marthen Indey. There are very few references to him in the major works concerning West Papua. Most are brief mentions of his name and associations with pro-Indonesia groups. Born in 1912, he was educated in Makassar and Surabaya, and he attended the Police Academy in Sukabumi, West Java. On his return to West Papua, he was charged with guarding inmates at Boven Digul prison, where he met and was influenced by Indonesian nationalists. The Dutch discovered his involvement in a plot, and he was moved away from the prison. During World War II he was sent to Australia with others, but returned to fight against the Japanese and train other soldiers. The Dutch appointed him District Head of Arso following the war, but his involvement with pro-Indonesian groups and his role as co-founder of the Indonesian Independence Committee led to his imprisonment by the Dutch from 1946-50.\textsuperscript{510}

\textsuperscript{509} Osborne, \textit{Indonesia’s Secret War}, 36-7.
Following his release, he led a guerrilla force in opposition to the Dutch. With Bonay, he traveled to New York to speak in favor of West Papua’s inclusion into Indonesia. During the UNTEA period, he led militias that often skirmished with fellow Papuans, and once threw a grenade into a group of Papuans protesting in front of his house (he did not pull the grenade’s pin, however).  

From 1963-68 he was a member of the MPRS, and he died in 1986.

The third Indonesian National Hero is Frans (alt. Franz) Kaisiepo (alt. Kaisepo). He was born in the Biak Nomfor region on 10 October 1921, and educated through the institution set up by van Eechoud following World War II, and later became a teacher. Despite his statement at Malino that West Papua should be included in the territory of the Moluccas, or perhaps because of the reaction to it, he later stated that all Indonesians should be removed from the territory. While working for the Dutch as the head of the Warsa district in Biak, he founded the Partai Indonesia Merdeka (Free Indonesia Party) in 1946. In 1948 he became more active in resisting the Dutch in Biak, and was exiled for several years. Despite this early vacillation in position, he soon was swayed to the Indonesian side.

---

510 Penders, 401.

511 Saltford, 41, 50, 59.

512 As an Indonesian National Hero, there is a short biographical volume written about him. Although it gives an accounting of his education, it only names some of the Indonesian teachers he encountered and mentions nothing of the Dutch impetus to begin educating Papuans. See: Pahlawan Nasional Frans Kaisiepo (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 1996).

In 1961 he formed the *Irian Sebegai Indonesia* (Irian as Indonesia) party, and supported rebels fighting the Dutch. After Indonesian consolidation of control of the region, he was appointed as the governor of Irian Jaya following the ouster of the first governor Bonay (see below). As governor, he oversaw a vicious crackdown on rebels following the creation of the OPM, and oversaw the 1969 “Act of Free Choice.”514 After his term as governor (1964-1973) he moved to Jakarta and became a member of the *Dewan Pertimbangan Agung*. He died in 1979 and was buried in the Cendrawsih Heroes’ Cemetery in Biak. The airport in Biak is named after him.

Frans Kaisiepo’s cousin Markus Kaisiepo illustrates the differing positions among Papuans, including those from the same tribe, clan, or even family.515 Markus was also educated by the Dutch; he attended a Dutch Protestant Missionary school prior to World War II, and the School of Administration set up by van Eechoud. Yet in the debate over the future of West Papua, his path diverged sharply from that of his cousin.

Initially favoring Indonesia, after the Indonesian Revolution Markus Kaisiepo emerged in the pro-Dutch camp, attended the Round Table Conference, and was appointed to the West New Guinea Council in 1952.516 He participated in the Bunker Plan and Luns Plan discussions, but his input went unheeded, although he assented to a transition period overseen by Indonesia.517 As the UNTEA period approached, he fled to

514 Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 36.


Holland with Nicolaas Jouwe, where he declared himself president-in-exile and formed the Chamber of Representatives. Despite the falling out between Kaisiepo and Jouwe, they patched up their differences to create the Papuan National Front, and both maintained lines of communication with the OPM guerillas in West Papua.

One of the most intriguing West Papuan elites to emerge was Elias Bonay. Born in Serui in 1924, he received his primary education before World War II. Following the War, he attended van Eechoud’s institute. He was a founder of PARNA, and a member of the New Guinea Council. He was the only member of the council to support the Bunker Plan in the hopes of an eventual fair plebiscite on West Papua’s future. Despite his signing of the *Manifest Politik* proclaiming West Papua’s right to self-determination consistent with Resolution 1514 XV (1960) of the UN Assembly and establishing the West Papuan anthem (*Hai Tanahku Papua*), the flag, and the name of the land, Bonay was named as the first governor of West Papua, and installed by Soekarno on 4 May 1963 during the president’s visit to West Papua.

Jakarta quickly reversed course, however, after Bonay’s outspoken criticism of the treatment of Papuans following the Indonesian takeover, including the banning of political parties and the implementation of transmigration of Indonesians from more populated places such as Java and Bali, and his support of “Papuanization” with the goal of eventual separation from Indonesia. He was removed as governor and sent to Jakarta where he was appointed Vice-Minister for the Interior (the ministry that oversaw

---

517 Lagerberg, 80, 85

518 Chauvel, “Papuan Political Imaginings,” 50.
transmigration) before being jailed in 1967 for his continued criticisms.\footnote{Saltford, 77. One can only speculate as to why he was appointed to Ministry of the Interior; perhaps it was a face-saving measure on Jakarta’s part to make his appointment as governor seem less of a blunder.} Following Ortiz Sans’ demand for release of West Papuan political prisoners prior to the “Act of Free Choice,” he returned to West Papua but quickly fled to Papua New Guinea, eventually settling in Holland, and maintaining his opposition to Indonesian rule until his death, admitting that he was a “puppet” of the Indonesian state.\footnote{Osborne, \textit{Indonesia’s Secret War}, 33.}

Other West Papuans were more consistently pro-Dutch or pro-independence (positions that were often conflated). A key figure in the Papuan nationalist ranks, Johan Ariks was born as slave in Kebar, but freed later in Manokwari by a missionary. He was baptized and a missionary named van Hasselt became his mentor. He traveled throughout the archipelago, eventually enrolling in a theological school and being appointed a pastor in 1914 in Mansinam, and later moving to Miei. During discussions between Holland, Indonesia and the UN regarding Papua, he wrote a letter to the Chairman of UNCI asserting his role as spokesman for the Papuan people, and arguing that Indonesia had no role in determining West Papua’s future. He also argued that any discussion about the future of West Papua should include West Papuans, consistent with the understood principles of self-determination. In a subsequent letter he argued that the Dutch were not imperialist but through their policies were preparing the Papuans for eventual self-rule; he pointed to the Indonesians as having imperial ambitions in West Papua. He argued that illiteracy in West Papua was comparable to Indonesia, and that therefore rule by a small proportion of educated elite, as he characterized politics in Indonesia, was acceptable.
Ariks was dismissed by both the Indonesians and the Dutch, partly because of his humble origins. The Dutch also opposed bringing West Papua into the discussion, as they preferred the issue to be out of bounds in terms of Indonesia’s claims. Ariks’ later appeals began to influence the Dutch regarding their thoughts on self-government, but no Papuan representation resulted.\footnote{Penders, 154-57.} He went on to found the Papua Party prior to the Indonesian assumption of control of the territory. Following the Indonesian assumption of control of the region, Ariks founded the OPM, was captured, and died in prison.\footnote{Literature on Ariks is sparse, and often contradictory. Savage, for example, refers to him as “John Arikus” (Savage, 144). Some give the name of his political party as \textit{Partai Papua} (Penders), others as \textit{Partai Orang Nieuw Guinea} (Lagerberg), others as the New Guinea Unity Party (Osborne); some write that he was arrested in 1965 and died in 1965 (Anti Slavery Society), some that he was arrested in 1965 and died in 1967 (Penders, Nonie Sharp), others that he was arrested in 1967 and died in 1969 (Lagerberg, Osborne). Lagerberg, 72.}

Another key nationalist, Nicolas Jouwe was born in the Port Numbay region in 1921. During World War II, he fought with the Allies in Borneo and Papua. His experience during the war elevated him as a leader among the Port Numbay tribes. After the war, he attended the School of Administration founded by van Eechoud. Savage argues that Jouwe had sympathies toward the pro-Indonesian parties in West Papua but that he was soon wooed by the \textit{Gerakan Persatuan Niew Guinea} (New Guinea Unity Movement). Jouwe (with Ariks and Markus Kaisiepo) attended the Round Table Conference in The Hague as observers, and later became an advisor to the Dutch side after the Joint Committee on New Guinea was formed from May to August 1950. He was a member of the West New Guinea Council, formed in 1952 and dissolved upon Indonesia’s control of the territory. He helped write the Brazzaville Proposal in 1961, but
by that time he and Markus Kaisiepo had come to the realization that Papuan leadership lacked cohesion and that much of the population was marked by social isolation and distrust. He argued for the creation of a Dutch-educated elite and a transition to modernity, but his appeals failed to resonate among tradition-centered Papuans.523

Following Indonesia’s takeover, Jouwe fled to Holland in 1963 with Markus Kaisiepo where he continued to agitate for Papuan independence. He formed the Committee for the Freedom of West Papua and the National Liberation Council, but became increasingly marginalized by the mid 1970s as the nationalists split into two camps (the other led by Markus Kaisiepo) following infighting and as his own statements became increasingly radical, including, for example, advocating terrorism.524

As in the previous chapter, this brief list of prominent elites from 1945-1969 is not meant to be exhaustive but rather illustrative of the changing positions and outlooks of Papuan elites. The list of pro-independence elites following the “Act of Free Choice” is also extensive. Several of these figures, including some associated with the OPM, have been assassinated over the years, including the Cendrawasih University anthropologist Arnold Ap, a prominent member of Ap’s Mambesak group Edward Mofu, civil servant Thomas Wainggai who was killed in 1996 after raising a morning star flag, and most recently chief Theys Eluay.

Eluay was a figure whose loyalties also shifted dramatically. As a traditional leader, he was one of the 1,025 Papuans selected to vote in the “Act of Free Choice.” He

523 Pender, Debacle, 427; Saltford, 19-20.

524 The National Liberation Council was supported by the Dutch fundamentalist Christian organization Stichting Door de Euween Trouw. Savage, 146-47.
was a staunch supporter of the New Order, and sat in the DPRD (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, Regional parliament) as a member of Golkar, Suharto’s ruling party. He is suspected of reporting OPM members to the Indonesian military. Following Suharto’s abdication, he was arrested for his involvement in discussions about raising the Papuan flag. He became the head of the Papuan Presidium Council, which agitated openly for independence for West Papua. He was assassinated in November 2001 by members of KOPASSUS, the Indonesian military’s special forces, four of whom were sentenced to 42 months in jail for their crime. In the wake of the assassination, the Presidium Council’s momentum faltered, and no single figure has emerged to unite Papuans as Eluay did (despite his flaws); many think that the brief window of opportunity to revisit West Papua’s status has been firmly closed once again. Eluay’s life trajectory shows that Papuan elites continue to shift positions, and are liable to act on opportunism. Current elites who are outspoken in their criticism of Indonesian rule, such as the leader of the Baptist Church in West Papua Socratez Sofyan Yoman among others, continue to speak out but are aware of the dangers associated with their criticism, including death.

Following the “Act of Free Choice” West Papua was governed by Frans Kaisiepo until 1973. The next three governors appointed by Suharto, however, were Javanese:

---

525 King, 37. Seth Rumkorem is another prominent Papuan who worked for Indonesian intelligence, but later became an OPM guerilla leader. Osborne, Indonesia’s Secret War, 51-52.

526 Eluay used strong arm tactics and his connections from his years of being a loyalist to outmaneuver Tom Beanal and declare himself the head of the Presidium. He maintained unsavory connections to various groups until his killing. See, for example, International Crisis Group, “Ending Repression in Irian Jaya,” accessed 6 June 2006, available from www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/report_archive/-A400414_20092001.pdf; King, 37, 51-54.
Acub Zainal (1973-75); Soetran (1975-81); and Busiri Suryowinoto (1981-83). Fourteen years after the “Act of Free Choice,” Suharto appointed the loyalist Papuan Izaak Hindom to be governor. Pauans currently occupy positions in all levels of the bureaucracy and government, although the economy remains by and large in the hands of non-Pauans. Government service remains one of the few opportunities for West Papuan elites to advance, although it does not guarantee loyalty to the Indonesian state, just as some West Papuan supporters of the Dutch prior to 1963 may have been acting out of opportunism or careerism. As an International Crisis Group report states:

The leaders of Pauan society have grown up, been educated and developed careers often in circumstances that have demanded difficult decisions about access to education and employment opportunities, personal and family welfare, cultural identity and political values. Those in positions of responsibility have often been confronted with choices between the interests and values of the people they represent, on one side, and institutional, community and personal advancement and survival in the Indonesian State, on the other… The Pauan elite is a bureaucratic elite. In an economy dominated by Chinese and Indonesian settlers, there are few Pauan business figures of substance. Besides traditional (adat) legitimacy, status is based on educational achievement and occupation. The Pauan elite is in the senior and middle positions of the provincial and district government, the churches, institutes of higher education and NGOs.

Within the first ten years of Indonesian occupation, however, the Indonesians reversed the “Pauanization” of the civil service, and drastically reduced the proportion of Pauans in these positions.530

---

527 Bhakti, 227-8.
528 Lijphart, 32.
The banning of political organization by Soekarno after 1963 left West Papuans unable to politically organize legitimately, despite having shown the potential for a vibrant political consciousness. Van der Kroef estimates 50,000 Papuans were politically active in 1963, from running for office to being involved in parties. Van der Kroef, “The Papuans of Irian Jaya,” 239.

Van der Kroef, however, argues that a “special electoral process” was implemented in West Papua, different from the rest of Indonesia. His total number of voters is much lower (247,108) than the official report. He also notes that intimidation was widespread, including by the watchful eyes of civil servants and the military, in a manner similar to that during the “Act of Free Choice.” The results of the national and local elections ensured that those elected would be “‘safe’ for the Suharto regime.”

Van der Kroef, however, argues that a “special electoral process” was implemented in West Papua, different from the rest of Indonesia. His total number of voters is much lower (247,108) than the official report. He also notes that intimidation was widespread, including by the watchful eyes of civil servants and the military, in a manner similar to that during the “Act of Free Choice.” The results of the national and local elections ensured that those elected would be “‘safe’ for the Suharto regime.”


531 Van der Kroef estimates 50,000 Papuans were politically active in 1963, from running for office to being involved in parties. Van der Kroef, “The Papuans of Irian Jaya,” 239.

532 Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 71

The 1971 election took place just after the 1 July announcement of the declaration of Papuan independence by OPM leaders Jacob Prai and Seth Rumkorem (after the proposed 1970 referendum date had passed). Indonesia was still in the process of consolidating its rule in the region, battling the OPM, co-opting sympathetic (or opportunistic) elites and imprisoning, intimidating or killing non-cooperative elites, and continuing transmigration to the region despite widespread Papuan resentment toward the policy. Jakarta had also begun its “Operasi Koteka” (“Operation Penis Sheath”) that same year in an effort to “civilize” or “modernize” West Papuans by discouraging the use of traditional garb and encouraging the use of pants and dresses, but with the effect of denigrating and further alienating Papuans. In the national context, this was the first opportunity for Suharto to bolster his legitimacy following his seizure of power (legitimized on 11 March 1966) as well as demonstrate the strength of Golkar.

There were ten political parties vying for votes in the election, including two Christian parties (Parkindo and Partai Katolik) that could have been supported by the Christianized or Catholicized West Papuan elites. These elites would have been able to direct their networks of subordinates to favor these parties (or others, for example West Papuan Muslim elites could have chosen Muslim parties such as NU, Partai Muslimin Indonesia, Murba, or Partai Islam Perti). Yet Jakarta was aware that a lack of support for Suharto’s Golkar could be interpreted as a rejection of Indonesian rule in the territory. There is little doubt, bolstered by an auspicious lack of official data, that the election was rigged.

---

534 Bertrand argues that transmigration rather than other programs was the chief method for incorporating the West Papuans. Bertrand, 149.
Following a 1973 directive political parties were consolidated into three state-recognized parties: PDI, PPP and Golkar. In the 1977 elections in West Papua, Golkar again dominated, winning eight seats. But the PDI (a consolidation of nationalist and Christian parties) garnered enough votes to take one seat; the PPP did not. In the subsequent elections of 1982, 1987 and 1992 the pattern maintained, with Golkar winning eight seats, PDI one, and PPP none. In 1997, the final election of the New Order, West Papua was granted an additional seat, which subsequently went to Golkar.

Elections in West Papua during the New Order period were manipulated and this alienated Papuans. Golkar predominated the proceedings (as it did in other regions); for West Papuans with political aspirations, joining Golkar was viewed as the way to rise in prominence. Osborne reports that in the election of 1982, ballot boxes were returned full of Golkar votes prior to when the polling was to take place, and that West Papuan leaders were under pressure to promote Golkar. Furthermore, she noted that the imposition of New Order style elections on West Papuans caused resentment as they were an affront to traditional means of selecting leaders based on status. The especially tight connections between the military and the government further alienated West Papuans.

West Papuans never had the opportunity for high level national (Indonesian) political representation through the party system as did, for example, the Ambonese

---

535 Bhakti reports that Theys Eluay supported the PDI, but joined Golkar out of “political convenience.” Bhakti, 230.

536 Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, 136. For a fascinating explanation of traditional politics in West Papua, including comparisons between tribal groups and methods of rule, see: Mansoben, *Sistem Politik*.
through Parkindo and led by Leimena. The ban on political organization instituted by Soekarno as well as the implementation of “Guided Democracy” prevented it during the early period of Indonesian control. Suharto’s consolidation of political parties following the 1971 elections further prevented it. And it is clear from the results of the 1971 election that the West Papuan vote was manipulated in an effort to provide legitimacy to the New Order regime as well as the incorporation of West Papua.

The views of many of the elites up to and during the incorporation of West Papua, despite their vacillation, are known. The majority of West Papuans during this time could be said to be unaffected by these political machinations, apolitical, unaware, or simply not understanding the stakes and process by which West Papua was integrated. Rather, these uneducated West Papuans would most likely rely on their local elites at the village or clan level. These local elites would in turn have been reliant on elites one or two steps above them for information. The dissemination of information was top down, and therefore filtered through the disseminators’ views. As such, the dominant elites in West Papua played the most significant role in forging and shaping a more “modern” West Papuan identity. Furthermore, the actions of Indonesians toward West Papuans up to and after the region’s incorporation, in general, served to alienate West Papuans. This alienation was easy for Papuan elites to channel into support for separatism, or at the very least a lack of enthusiasm for Indonesian sovereignty. As Indonesia began developing West Papua, it had the opportunity to counter the negative perceptions of its rule. Its actions, however, have not had this effect.

Furthermore, ethnicity and chauvinism are undeniable factors when considering Indonesian treatment of West Papuans. Although traditional identities remain within
West Papua (clan, village, ethnic group), and it remains difficult to assess the strength of an overarching West Papuan ethnic identity, it is clear that there is a definite feeling of differentiation between Indonesians and West Papuans. These differences are manifest in a variety of ways, including physical, cultural, diet, religion and others. These differences often lead to disdain on the part of Indonesians toward Papuans; this disdain, often cloaked in the language of paternalism, further reinforces the idea that West Papuan identity is not subsumed under an Indonesian national identity, but rather stands in opposition to it. Attempts to enforce cultural assimilation and “modernization,” such as the koteka campaign, failed and spurred the opposite effect.

Finally, religion has played a significant role in the conflict over West Papua and its incorporation. Coastal Papuans had for centuries been exposed to the religions of the various traders who visited, aptly illustrated by the phrase “No tembaco (tobacco), no halleluyah.” As the Dutch moved to consolidate their dominion over the region in the early 20th century, missionaries slowly penetrated the interior and brought this faith with them. Similar to other regions in the Indies that had not been penetrated by the prior layers of religious conversion (Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam), which often retarded or prevented attempts to convert indigenes to Christianity, West Papuans converted to Protestantism and Catholicism, often associating the conversion with the presence of “cargo,” and often maintaining deeply held traditional beliefs below a veneer of newly

537 West Papuans commonly differentiate themselves from Javanese and other Indonesians by referring to their hair. Papuans refer to themselves as “Kribo” (“frizzy” or “afro”) and “Keriting” (“kinky”) and to others as “Lurus” (“straight”). Indonesians in casual conversation often refer to West Papuans as stupid, lazy or animals.

538 Lagerberg, 37.
found faith. Converting to Christianity was a way for Papuans to increase their status in the eyes of the Dutch, and it helped to consolidate the status of elites (as it did elsewhere in the Indies).

Religion does not play a decisive role in deciding where one’s political loyalties lay (it is not a “cumulative cleavage” but rather “cross-cutting”), however, just as it was in the case of Ambon. Being a Christian Papuan did not guarantee that one was pro-Dutch or pro-independence. The pro-Indonesian elites listed above, for example, were Christians. In many cases of pro-Indonesian, Christian Papuan elites, it was their education and early experiences that led them to favor Indonesia. Attempts to inculcate Dutch values through education did not always succeed, but sometimes had the opposite effect. Treatment at the hands of the Dutch was another factor, or early influence by Indonesian nationalists in West Papua among the colonial civil service or among those incarcerated at Boven Digul, for example. There are examples of high level Muslims among the West Papuan separatists, including Taha Alhamid, the Secretary General of the Papuan Presidium Council.\textsuperscript{539}

That being said, the pro-Dutch and pro-independence Papuans frequently made appeals to the Dutch and others by emphasizing threats to Christians from “Muslim occupiers.” These appeals often resonated, especially in the early period where conservative Dutch Catholics and Protestants supported holding on to West Papua. And the appeals continue: Socratez Sofyan Yoman, Chairman of the Alliance of Baptist Churches in West Papua, frequently couches his anti-Indonesia rhetoric in religious (and genocidal) terms. These appeals are bolstered by Indonesia’s transmigration program,

\textsuperscript{539} Bhakti, 230.
which sends mostly Muslim Indonesians, mainly from overpopulated Java, to West Papua, diluting the Christian majority. Muslim West Papuans, centered in coastal areas such as Fak Fak and Sorong among others, are less likely to be sympathetic to separatism than Christian West Papuans; the leadership of the various pro-independence groups tends to be Christian. Furthermore, the conversion of these Muslim West Papuans was almost exclusively at the hands of Muslims from elsewhere in Indonesia, which helped engender a sense of brotherhood absent among other West Papuans.

One of the major differences between West Papua and East Timor, however, is that West Papua has a history of religious competition between Protestant denominations and Catholics, dating to the Dutch colonial period. This is similar to the pattern one sees throughout Indonesia, but it has contributed to a lack of a unified voice among West Papuans, whereas Catholic East Timor was able to organize within one church and present a unified voice to the outside world.

**Economy, Resources, and Dependence**

One would be hard-pressed to argue that the initial impetus for the incorporation of West Papua was economic. Rather, Soekarno framed the issue as one of continued colonial domination over a portion of what should have rightly been (in his eyes) part of Indonesia; Lijphart (and others) argued that the Dutch desire to maintain a presence in West Papua was due to psychological factors. References to the economic potential of

540 Saltford, 97.

541 “The Netherlands had no objective economic or other interests in retaining control of New Guinea; in fact it was economically more advantageous to relinquish New Guinea.” Lijphart also argues that part of the motivation for the Dutch was to spite the
West Papua emphasized its lack of resources and inhospitable terrain well into the 1960s.\(^{542}\) Rather, discussion of the future of the territory in the period 1945-63 often revolved around the amount of money it would take to support West Papua in the near-term in order to continue the Dutch plans for education and movement toward self-government; West Papua was projected to be a significant drain on the resources of whomever emerged as its caretaker or sponsor.

One of the reasons for the failure of the Indonesia-oriented nation building program in West Papua is the drastic decline in funding to the territory following Soekarno’s withdrawal from the United Nations and the subsequent cessation of UN funding. The impact of this move was significant. It drastically reduced the ability of Indonesia to reshape the education system in West Papua from a Dutch-oriented one to an Indonesia-oriented one after closing Dutch education facilities, and it hindered the ability of the Indonesians to provide even basic education. The quality of education declined significantly. The number of Papuan students enrolled increased, however, during the consolidation period (1963-1970).\(^{543}\)

Indonesians following independence, and out of genuine concern for the future of West Papuans. Lijphart, 8-9, 127.

\(^{542}\) See, for example, Bone, 12; Lijphart, 43. Others, however, had speculated as to the potentially vast wealth of natural resources following Royal Dutch Shell’s discovery of oil in 1907.

\(^{543}\) Van der Kroef, “The Papuans of Irian Jaya,” 231-2. Van der Kroef links the enrollment of Papuans into primary, secondary and tertiary facilities as orienting Papuans toward Indonesia. This may be true to some degree, but it is not a universal given; one need only witness the liveliness of anti-Indonesian demonstrations often spurred by students at Cendrawasih University to see that educating West Papuans in the Indonesian system does not necessarily ensure patriotic West Papuan Indonesians.
When Indonesia took over the region, there was an already long tradition of the Dutch sending Indonesians to West Papua to help administer the territory, which caused resentment from the emergent Papuan elite. This resentment found voice in the pro-Dutch Papuan elite as well as in the West Papuan nationalists, who wanted to push out the Amberies and educate Papuans to fill these positions.

Yet when Indonesia took over the territory, it flooded the region with Indonesian administrators, civil servants, bureaucrats, officials, military, police, and others. Papuans were pushed out of these jobs or denied promotions. The Indonesian transmigration program was also a source of resentment. Migrants were often resettled by the Indonesian government on land owned or used by Papuans. They also received preferential treatment from administrators and officials who saw the West Papuans as backward, primitive, incapable or stupid. In the major cities and towns, Indonesian immigrants were able to carve an economic niche for themselves in the middle and upper tier of small businesses and trading networks. Over time, these positions calcified and the opportunities for West Papuans were limited. And despite Jakarta’s rhetoric of development for West Papua, outside of the major cities and regions of economic importance, schools and clinics remain out of reach for many Papuans living in the interior.

Suharto opened Indonesia to foreign investment in 1967, reversing Soekarno’s policy, and one of the first multinationals to invest was Freeport Sulfur (now Freeport

Bertrand cites a 2000 population figure of 2.6 million in West Papua, with an estimated one million immigrants. Bertrand, 152.

Yari Kristonen, interview by author, 7 August 2006, near Wamena, West Papua. This source is an active member of a prominent West Papuan NGO that already faces suspicion and persecution; she wished to remain anonymous in order to avoid potential repercussions so I have used a pseudonym.
McMoran). Freeport’s operation in West Papua is the world’s largest gold reserve, the
world’s second largest open-pit copper mine, and has yielded one billion metric tonnes of
ore and counting.\textsuperscript{546} Since Indonesia does not recognize traditional claims to land (\textit{adat})
in West Papua, it moves large populations off their land, without compensation, in order
to facilitate mining. Killings, tortures, searches, house burnings and church lootings occur
frequently around land claimed by Freeport.\textsuperscript{547} Although some early accounts argued that
claims of economic exploitation were false or exaggerated, more recent accounts paint a
portrait of exploitation that benefits Jakarta, the military, foreign investors, and local non-
Papuan elites.\textsuperscript{548} West Papuans have attempted to sabotage Freeport’s operations, by
cutting slurry pipelines, severing power lines, attacking mine trucks and openly
protesting. The OPM continues to fight a low-level guerrilla war that occasionally flares
into larger scale fighting.\textsuperscript{549}

\textsuperscript{546} John McBeth, “Treasure Island,” \textit{Far Eastern Economic Review}, March 10,

\textsuperscript{547} Lucia Withers, “Indonesia: Impunity and human rights violations in Papua,”
Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, accessed 20 July 2004, available from
http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGASA210162002; Amnesty International,
http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGASA210152002; Human Rights Watch Asia,
“Indonesia: Human Rights and Pro-independence Actions in Irian Jaya,” accessed 20 July
2004, available from http://www.hrw.org/reports98/biak/sorong.htm; Australia West
Papua Society.

\textsuperscript{548} Van der kroef, “The Papuans of Irian Jaya,” 236-7; cf. Drake, 57; King, 100-4;
Leith, \textit{passim}.

\textsuperscript{549} West Papua garnered US attention in August of 2002 when two American and
one Indonesian teacher were killed in the province. Indonesia attempted to deflect blame
to the OPM, but most concede that the Indonesian military was responsible, in retaliation
for the cutting of some informal benefits. The incident continues to affect Indonesia-US
Indonesian sovereignty in West Papua is far from consolidated. Widespread resistance to Indonesian rule continues. Efforts since the beginning of the democratization process in 1999, such as the granting of “special autonomy” and the dividing of the territory into multiple provinces, have had mixed results, but are generally condemned as ineffective. Although it appeared as though a united front against Indonesian rule appeared in the 1999-2001 period with the forming of the Papuan Presidium Council and the tolerant policies of Abdurrahman Wahid toward the expression of West Papuan discontent, the death of Theys Eluay has thrown the West Papuan leadership back into disarray.

Despite attempts by Indonesia to placate or intimidate West Papuans into acquiescence with Jakarta’s rule, the foreseeable future will remain chaotic and highly contested. With the economic importance of West Papua, one is hard pressed to imagine Jakarta simply letting the territory go with a referendum similar to that of East Timor, especially given the support for the region’s incorporation following the “Act of Free Choice.” If a window of opportunity was open during the chaotic days of reformasi in Indonesia, the period in which East Timor broke away, that window appears closed for now. Without a unified nationalist leadership and widespread international support (or at least support from influential states and NGOs), West Papua will most likely continue simmer with separatist conflict.

---

CHAPTER 5: EAST TIMOR: BLOODY SEIZURE, BLOODY RELEASE

East Timor is the only case of a region successfully separating from Indonesia.\textsuperscript{550} Compared to the other cases, East Timor is unique in many ways: it was colonized by the Portuguese, not the Dutch; this Portuguese colonialism created a distinct culture including the propensity to adopt Catholicism; and it was incorporated into Indonesia much later than the others. There are, however, some similarities. Like West Papua and Ambon, East Timor was secured through military means. Like West Papua and Ambon, external actors contributed to East Timor’s fate, namely the United States, Great Britain and Australia, all swayed by Indonesian arguments and international power politics. Like West Papua, the occupation of East Timor was brutal and bloody, and the Indonesian military acted with seeming impunity.

Early History

Although Portuguese traders visited Timor following the seizure of Malacca in 1511, the first permanent settlement came 55 years later. Portuguese Dominican friars came to the island in 1566, followed shortly thereafter by Portuguese soldiers and traders in search of sandalwood.\textsuperscript{551} After early conflict with the Dutch over the sandalwood and slave trades, as well as the loss of Malacca to the Dutch, the Portuguese focused their attention on retaining Timor. They did not, however, expend much effort; Hill notes that

\textsuperscript{550} Despite large numbers of separatist movements in the post-colonial era, success is extremely rare. Other examples include Bangladesh and Eritria, and, depending on one’s definition, could include Singapore. The fragmentation of the post-Soviet empire has led to many new states, but most of these can be viewed as returning to some form of statehood or autonomy that existed prior to Soviet consolidation.

the number of Portuguese in Timor during the first century of Portuguese occupation was between eight and fifty people; they hardly penetrated the interior of the island. The Topasses or “Black Portuguese,” the offspring of miscegenation between Portuguese soldiers, sailors and traders and Asian women from as far as Macau, served as a group of middlemen, aiding the Portuguese and manipulating the Timorese liurai (traditional leaders) in support of the sandalwood trade.552

In 1702 the Portuguese established a more significant military presence with the building of a fort in Lifau (in what is now the enclave of Oecusse).553 A failed attempt by the Portuguese to take Dutch territory in 1749 and subsequent series of Dutch incursions pushed the Portuguese east in 1769 and they founded the city of Dili on the north coast.554 The Portugal-oriented Topasses dominated the Lifau region; after their territory was surrounded by the Dutch, they chose to remain under Portuguese sovereignty, thereby establishing a small Portuguese-held enclave. As Portuguese power waned in the early 18th century, the Dutch encroached further into Timor, firmly establishing their hold on the western half of the island. In 1859 the two powers agreed to divide the territory, although neither had much contact with the interior regions.555 An uneasy peace existed


555 Hill, 5-6.
between the Dutch and Portuguese that included non-interference with occasional slaughters of rebellious Timorese. Dutch deserters, however, made their way to Lifau, which de Moraes described as “a kind of Alsatia, largely populated by vagabond European and Eurasian cutthroats (sic) with their native consorts.” The “moral laxity” among the Europeans and Eurasians included the Portuguese Dominican Friars, whose “scandalous and unclerical” conduct was blamed on the native women: “the native women were exceedingly lascivious and frequented the priests’ houses, principally the younger ones, both day and night.” Portuguese Timor first fell under the administration at Goa, and then in 1844 under the administration at Macão, and finally under its own administration in 1896.

Prior to the establishment of the Timor administration, there was very little economic development in the region. The Portuguese did not have the capacity to create large scale extractive or agricultural sectors, and the original stocks of sandalwood were soon exhausted and difficult to replenish; sandalwood takes decades to mature. The early 1890s saw the eruption of rebellion in many regions, partly spurred by increased economic demands on the part of the Portuguese as coffee production increased but also due to a decline in the governing capacity of the Portuguese. But during and after the pacification campaign of 1894 – 1912, coinciding with the reign of Governor José Celestino da Silva, the Portuguese began shaping a rudimentary infrastructure and an export economy based on coffee (and later copra). The subsequent governor, Eduardo Marques, introduced a head tax and instituted wage labor, mostly for government

---

556 A. Faria de Moraes, Subsidios para a Historia de Timor (Bastora, 1934), quoted in Boxer, 12.
projects. It was after the pacification period that Chinese in Portuguese Timor began infiltrating the interior and setting up shops, cementing their role as middlemen in the economy.\(^{557}\)

As the early 20\(^{th}\) century brought more intrusive Portuguese economic policies to East Timor, so did it bring more demands on the East Timorese. Coinciding with the collapse of the Portuguese monarchy and the establishment of the Republican government in Lisbon in 1910, as well as with the recently instituted head tax and more intensive forced labor, Dom Boaventura, an East Timorese liurai from Manufahi, led a revolt that required the import of African and Portuguese troops and two years to quell.\(^{558}\) This last major revolt is considered the “final stage” in the pacification of Portuguese Timor (and Boaventura is viewed as a forefather to modern East Timorese nationalism).

The Portuguese broke up the traditional domains of the liurai and created subdivisions called sucos. Many of the liurais who remained were not related to the traditional leaders but were chosen by the Portuguese, as were the chefs de suco.\(^{559}\) The Portuguese realized that the webs of kinship ties among the Timorese were the main impediments to exercising better control.\(^{560}\)


\(^{559}\) Hill, 11.

*Chefes de suco* became “intermediar(ies) between the (colonial) administration and the majority of the people.” Despite this change, however, anthropologist David Hicks noted an underlying social continuity: *chefes de suco* would take care of administrative tasks, but “immediate power” was retained by the traditional leaders.  

Taylor notes that despite the pacification campaign and the imposed political changes, the effects on Timorese social and political life were minor: “Although the kingdoms were formally abolished, the ideologies legitimizing the traditional political hierarchy and the rituals of exchange were perpetuated.” This continuity is also noted by James Dunn:

In 1974 many of the Timorese… were still under the direct rule of tribal chiefs and petty kings called liurais and regulos… Some of these kings maintained their own troops, though ill-equipped, and tended to rule their subjects autocratically. If anything, support for these petty rulers by the colonial administration bolstered their power and, at the same time, undermined democratic customs in the traditional selection of liurais and in the exercising of royal power.

The Timorese who occupied these new political appointments had to ensure the support of the traditional leaders in order to be effective; consequently “two political systems, the colonial and the indigenous, coexisted.” This duality continued through the colonial era, and had profound implications for the events of 1974-5 and the years that followed:

What, in other societies, might have produced fundamental structural changes resulted paradoxically in the strengthening of the basic aspects of Timorese society. This conclusion is of fundamental importance in understanding

---


contemporary Timorese society, since it indicates how its indigenous economic, social and cultural systems were able to reproduce themselves intact, despite being subject to foreign control… The history of this period is thus marked by the success of Timorese communities in restricting Topasse and European influence and control to the political sphere of princely kinship alliances.565

Timor was formally divided in half in 1915 with the signing of the *Senteca Arbitral*; the Dutch controlled the western half (closest to the rest of the Dutch East Indies) and the Portuguese controlled the eastern half along with the enclave of Oecusse (formerly Lifau).566 The Republican government in Lisbon began to break down and in 1926 it was replaced following a military coup. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, Finance Minister under the military regime, proved indispensible to the regime and assumed *de facto* control in 1930, ushering in the corporatist *Estado Novo* (he was inaugurated Prime Minister in 1932). 1930 also saw the declaration of the Colonial Act. Colonies came under direct control of Lisbon and corporatist councils that represented various sectors in society such as the church, labor, and businesses, were established in the colonies, including in Timor.567 Beginning in 1933, Timor was ruled by a governor appointed by Lisbon, but below him was a corporatist Legislative Council with 14 members that advised the governor, although its power was very limited. The assembly represented government, economic and cultural organizations.

The Colonial Act also formally divided colonial society into *indígenas* and *não indígenas*; the latter included Portuguese, *mestiços* and *assimilados*. *Assimilados* had to


566 The enclave was retained by the Portuguese for symbolic reasons; it was where the Portuguese first landed on Timor.

prove themselves worthy of the title by speaking fluent Portuguese and showing “good character,” in return they qualified for benefits that indígenas did not, such as the ability to travel without a pass, freedom from the head tax, and higher pay. Assimilados could also vote in local elections. The Estado Novo ushered in a new era of “paternalism, underpinned by the belief that Portugal’s role in the overseas (sic) was that of bringing ‘civilisation’ to ‘barbaric’ peoples.” The attempt to “civilize” was top down, starting with the nobility.\textsuperscript{568} The Catholic Church was an arm of this civilizing mission, its role made official in 1940 (see below).

As World War II loomed in the region, in December 1941 both Holland and Australia sent troops into Portuguese Timor in order to prevent the Japanese from reaching Australia, despite protestations from the Portuguese. The Japanese landed in East Timor in February 1942 and occupied the region until August 1945. Portuguese colonial officials who did not manage to escape to Australia were interned in Liquiça. Some 400 Australians commandoes harassed the 21,000-strong Japanese forces, killing around 1,500 and losing only 40. The Australians were aided by a sympathetic East Timorese population, who paid a heavy price; the total loss of East Timorese life during the war is estimated at 50,000, representing over one-tenth of the population (although some estimates are even higher).\textsuperscript{569}

Following the war, the Portuguese resumed control of the territory. Despite the waves of decolonization sweeping its Southeast Asian neighbors, East Timor remained

\textsuperscript{568} Hill, 14-15; 17.

\textsuperscript{569} Ibid., 19-20. Dunn cites census figures of 472,000 in 1930 and 403,000 in 1946, for an even greater loss of life. Dunn, The Timor Story, 4.
isolated and no independence movement broke out. Dunn cites the Portuguese control of the media coupled with repression as reasons for this; what little media there were in East Timor maligned Indonesia during its revolution (1945-49) for fear of Indonesian attempts to inculcate sympathy among the East Timorese or even to seize the territory.570 In 1951 a Portuguese decree changed the status of its colonies to “overseas provinces” in preparation for joining the United Nations. Later in the decade Portugal became the target of UN action, instigated by former colonial states, to clarify the status of Portugal’s colonies. A brief revolt in 1959, spurred by Indonesians who fled their homeland following the PRRI/Permesta revolts, was quickly quelled by the Portuguese but fueled speculation of Indonesian machinations to take the territory. In 1960 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution defining Portugal’s territories as non-self governing entities, which thereby required Portugal to provide information on them to the Assembly.571 Portugal’s status declined rapidly as the 1960s progressed; liberation movements in the African colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau broke out and faced a Portuguese military determined to put them down. Portugal lost its place in several international organizations and found itself increasingly marginalized and

570 Dunn, The Timor Story, 11.

571 Portugal’s status in the UN was so low that when India seized Portuguese Goa in 1961 there was virtually no outcry nor support for the Portuguese position. Hill, 23-24. The seizure of Goa led to increased Portuguese concern that Indonesia would try to seize Timor, especially given events over West Papua. The Indonesian diplomatic line was that it had no claims to Portuguese Timor; there were, however, government figures such as Roeslan Abdulgani who openly called for Timor’s integration with Indonesia. Portuguese insecurity over the fate of Timor was certainly fueled by outside speculation. In 1963, for example, Osmar White, an Australian journalist, visited Timor and noted the backward conditions of the territory. He also predicted that Indonesia would “swallow” East Timor much as it did West Papua, or India Goa. Jolliffe, 55.
isolated. The final decade of Portuguese rule brought an increase in primary education to the East Timorese, although these efforts were mostly superficial and confined to the larger towns. Job prospects for the newly educated, however, remained bleak. The few Timorese who pursued tertiary education went to Portugal.\textsuperscript{572}

The conflicts in Africa combined with Portugal’s weak agrarian-based economy led to a downward economic spiral. In 1971 Angola and Mozambique were given increased autonomy, but this autonomy was not extended to East Timor. The colony’s 14-member Legislative Council was expanded to 21 – with ten members being elected through very limited suffrage based on literacy and property – but it remained strictly an advisory body. Hill notes that in the election of 1973 only two percent of the population was eligible to vote, and only 1.8 percent did so.\textsuperscript{573} Although the top echelons of the colonial government and bureaucracy were filled by Portuguese, by 1975 more than half of the low-level positions were occupied by Timorese. This cadre of Timorese was progressive in orientation, and most of them went on to play significant political roles in subsequent years.\textsuperscript{574}

At this time the Polícia Internacional de Defesa do Estado (the International Police in Defense of the State, PIDE) was increasing its role in East Timor, monitoring and countering opposition groups and those it deemed as threats to Portuguese rule. And the Portuguese maintained a colonial army of 2000 Portuguese, 2000 Timorese, and 5000

\textsuperscript{572} Dunn, \textit{The Timor Story}, 5.

\textsuperscript{573} Hill, 28-29.

\textsuperscript{574} Dunn, \textit{The Timor Story}, 10.
Timorese *segunda linha* (second line) or reserve troops. These Timorese troops would subsequently put up unexpectedly fierce resistance to the Indonesian invasion.

**From the “Carnation Revolution” to the Indonesian Invasion**

On 25 April 1974, the Marcel Caetano regime in Lisbon was overthrown by left wing elements of the Portuguese military. Student demonstrators placed flowers in the rifle barrels of the soldiers in a successful attempt to keep violence to a minimum, hence the movement’s name: *Revolução dos Cravos*, “the Carnation Revolution.” Elements of the Portuguese military were displeased at the cost of the colonial wars that Portugal was fighting in Africa as well as the state’s economic backwardness (despite some recent growth in the economy). The movement enjoyed widespread popular support.

Events in Lisbon took the Timorese by surprise; uncertainty in East Timor reigned following the Carnation Revolution. It was unclear what the Portuguese authorities had planned for the territory; it was unclear which paths elites would pursue; and it was unclear how the East Timorese people would respond to the new situation. East Timor’s core group of elites was somewhat politically sophisticated (see below), but the vast majority of the Timorese was not.

The period from April 1974 to Indonesia’s invasion on 7 December 1975 was marked by swift political change in East Timor; this section provides a brief summary of

---

575 Hill, 30. James Dunn’s estimates are slightly higher: 2,500 Portuguese conscripts, nearly 3,000 (fully trained) Timorese, and around 7,000 Timorese as the *segunda linha*. James Dunn: *East Timor: A Rough Passage to Independence* (Double Bay, Australia: Longueville Books, 2003), 35-6.

576 Caetano had become the Portuguese head of state following an accident in 1968 in which Salazar was incapacitated. Although he favored some reforms, he did not implement them as his hold on power was precarious and he needed the support of the Salazarists.
significant events. Following an 8 May announcement by the Governor of the territory, Colonel Mário Lemos Pires – who had just replaced Fernando Alves Aldeia following the Carnation Revolution – political parties would be allowed to form. Despite the nascent stirrings of nationalism amongst the Dili-centered, seminary-educated, Portuguese-oriented assimilado elite, prior overt political party organization was banned with the exception of the arm of the Portuguese corporatist state, the Acção Nacional Popular, hence the names of the groups that became political parties: União Democrática Timorense (the Timorese Democratic Union, UDT, founded 11 May); Associação Social Democrática Timor (the Timorese Social Democrat Association, ASDT, founded 12 May), which later became the Frente Revolucionária do Timor Leste Independente (the Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor, Fretilin); and Associação Popular Democrática Timorense (the Timorese Popular Democratic Association, APODETI, founded 27 May).

APODETI favored integration with Indonesia, UDT originally favored ties with Portugal but later became pro-independence, and ASDT favored independence following a brief transitional period of decolonization. APODETI was by far the smallest of the three major parties, consisting of only a few hundred members, mostly landowners with

---


578 APODETI briefly used the name Associação Integração de Timor – Indonesia, Association for the Integration of Timor with Indonesia. Jolliffe, 61.
strong ties to the Indonesian government. \(^{579}\) Taylor argues that APODETI was “an Indonesian creation from its inception.”\(^{580}\) UDT and ASDT, both with larger and more diverse memberships, quickly joined forces and worked for independence upon realizing that their goals had become convergent and their differences were minor, but they were subsequently set against one another by Indonesian machinations (see below). Other minor organizations included Kilbur Oan Timor Aswain (Sons of the Mountain Warrior-Dogs [Tetum], KOTA), Partido Trabalhista (The Worker’s Party) and Associação Democrática Integração Timor-Leste-Australia (the Democratic Integration Association of East Timor-Australia, ADITLA). These three were not influential; members of KOTA were oriented toward APODETI; Trabalhista’s membership was estimated at no more than ten; and ADITLA dissolved after Australia made clear its rejection of the idea of Timorese integration with Australia.\(^{581}\)

Despite Indonesian MP John Naro’s having called for the integration of East Timor into Indonesia five days prior, on 17 June Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik met with ASDT representative José Ramos Horta in Jakarta and wrote a letter in support of East Timorese self-determination.\(^{582}\) This followed Ramos Horta’s earlier

\(^{579}\) Dunn, *A People Betrayed*, 71-77.


\(^{581}\) Jolliffe, 67-8.

\(^{582}\) José Ramos Horta, *Funu: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor* (Trenton: The Red Sea Press, 1987), 41-44; Hill, 80-81; Taylor, *The Indonesian Occupation*, 1. Following Indonesian independence, some leaders spoke in favor of annexing East Timor, but this was by far a minority viewpoint. During the struggle for West Papua, the Indonesian government made explicit statements against taking East Timor as reassurance that their only goal was to “retake” West Papua, and not expansionism.
contact with Indonesians such as the Indonesian Consul in Dili, in search of support for East Timorese independence, visits that began long before the Carnation Revolution.

Ramos Horta knew that Indonesia would follow events in East Timor closely, and, because of its own colonial history and war for independence, as well as its founding role in the Non-Aligned Movement, he thought that Indonesia would be supportive of the East Timorese independence movement.\textsuperscript{583} Malik’s statement in support of East Timorese self-determination was interpreted as the Indonesian government’s official position.\textsuperscript{584}

The leadership of both ASDT and UDT had much in common, including their backgrounds; they were almost entirely made up of Catholics who had been educated at the seminary at Dare. The differences in their platforms were minor, with the most significant being the timeline for decolonization and the role that Portugal would play in the process; their platforms became even closer following a shake up of the UDT leadership.\textsuperscript{585} In order to cooperate, both parties tried to rein in their radical elements; ASDT tried to control the few vocal communist sympathizers, and UDT tried to contain

Following Indonesia’s takeover, however, \textit{ex post facto} accounts justified the occupation with dubious claims that East Timor rightfully belonged to Indonesia because it fell under the Majapahit and Sri Vijaya empires (similar arguments were made for West Papua). See, for example: \textit{East Timor: Building for the Future} (Jakarta: Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, 1996), 11-12; \textit{The Province of East Timor} (Jakarta: Department of Information, Republic of Indonesia, ca. 1981), 7-8. Of course this kind of argument is undermined by the fact that the concept of Indonesia did not exist until the second decade of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.

\textsuperscript{583} Ramos Horta, 26-27.

\textsuperscript{584} Dunn, \textit{The Timor Story}, 29-30.

\textsuperscript{585} Ibid., 16.
its rightist Portuguese loyalists. APODETI, however, was scorned by the two parties for its perceived opportunism as well as its links to and support by the Indonesian government, although it was clear it was by far the numerically least supported (Dunn estimates its popular support at around five percent).

Indonesia embarked on a propaganda campaign to tar ASDT as communist, led by BAKIN (Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara, the State intelligence Coordinating Agency). BAKIN had cultivated contacts in East Timor in the prior decade, and supported APODETI. Berita Yudha, a military-owned newspaper, accused ASDT of “seeking communist support.” By this time, Indonesia had begun planning “Operasi Komodo” to seize the territory, and this campaign of disinformation was meant to garner domestic and international support for it. Meanwhile, in September Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam travelled to Indonesia where he met with senior Indonesian generals, including those associated with BAKIN such as Yoga Sugama, as well as with President Suharto. Whitlam’s remarks following the meeting emphasized regional stability; he stated that an independent East Timor would be “unviable” and that “voluntary integration with Indonesia” would be the most desirable outcome in terms of stability. Following Whitlam’s visit, Malik (and other important figures) openly declared

---

586 ASDT was by no means a communist organization, although a handful of members were sympathetic to communism. This association, insignificant as it was, was a key to how later events unfolded, as Indonesia garnered sympathy prior to and during its invasion by construing Fretilin as a communist organization (see below).

587 Ibid., 20.

their support for APODETI and integration.\textsuperscript{589}

On 12 September, ASDT formally changed its name to Fretilin, reflecting the influence of similar liberation movements in Africa such as Mozambique’s Frelimo (\textit{Frente de Liberação de Moçambique}). Ramos Horta had spent time in Mozambique and Fretilin’s Minister for Political Affairs Mari Alkatiri had spent time in Angola, and Timorese students in Portugal had some limited contacts with Africans there. The change came with an immediate demand for “\textit{de jure}” recognition of independence, but most significantly represented:

A move away from a party type structure (although the internal organization of the front was and is in many ways the style of a party rather than a united front), and a desire not to restrict the movement to a particular political philosophy of labour-oriented social democracy. The creation of the front was meant to open the way for all Timorese nationalists, of whatever shade the political spectrum, to participate around one common principle: national independence.\textsuperscript{590}

This call for immediate independence was the major source of antipathy from UDT members. Fretilin rejected both a referendum, arguing it was wrong in principle in this case (members’ responses were often “‘you don’t ask a slave if he wants to be free’”), and a UN role, given the events of West Papua just five years prior.\textsuperscript{591}

Indonesia’s diplomatic overtures increased. On 28 September, Malik flew to Lisbon on an unpublicized trip to meet with Portuguese Foreign Minister Mario Soares. The two concluded that there were only two acceptable outcomes for East Timor: remaining in some way under Portugal, or integration into Indonesia.

\textsuperscript{589} Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 32-33.

\textsuperscript{590} Jolliffe, 63-64.

\textsuperscript{591} Hill, 90-91.
independence was deemed out of the question. Soares’ view initially was to consider the wishes of the East Timorese themselves, although these considerations were quickly swept aside in subsequent meetings. Indonesian General Ali Murtopo, a confidant of Suharto and a leader of Operasi Komodo, visited Portugal the following month, where both Prime Minister Vasco dos Santos Gonçalves and President/General Francesco da Costa Gomez rejected outright independence and discounted the possibility of Portugal retaining some control of the region due to considerations of financial strain. The team of Portuguese from the Movimento das Forças Armadas (Armed Forces Movement, MFA) sent to East Timor to oversee the transition, however, had developed sympathy for Fretilin despite an attempt to remain impartial; they realized that they shared a left-leaning ideology, and many of the members of Fretilin were former soldiers. They also realized that the tide in East Timor had turned overwhelmingly and irreversibly toward support for complete independence. Furthermore, the Portuguese administrators strengthened their resolve in the face of increased Indonesian propaganda in late 1974 that claimed communist influence in East Timor and massive support for the integrationist APODETI.

Despite Whitlam’s earlier statements, the Australian position became tempered as its leaders’ understanding of the situation in East Timor improved. Yet although Whitlam had warned Indonesia about “certain practices which were used by the Jakarta Government in the integration of West Irian,” it was Whitlam who stymied attempts by

592 The MFA was the group of soldiers responsible for the coup d’état in Lisbon.

593 Dunn, A Rough Passage, 69-71.

594 Ibid., 72-3; Taylor, The Price, 37.
lower level Australians in the government and foreign service to act as a “referee” in the unfolding events.\footnote{Dunn, \textit{The Timor Story}, 20; Dunn, \textit{A Rough Passage}, 72.}

In January, Lemos Pires, appointed by Portugal as Administrator in November, began advancing his plan for eventual East Timorese independence following a period of development and education. He summoned the leadership of APODETI, UDT and Fretilin to a meeting (APODETI declined) and proposed a coalition. UDT, bargaining from a much weaker position following Fretilin’s successes at mobilizing support and implementing development and education programs outside of Dili, agreed, and on 20 January the two parties joined forces.\footnote{Dunn, \textit{The Timor Story}, 16.} The two parties were also concerned about perceived Indonesian meddling and support for APODETI. UDT conceded to most of Fretilin’s policies, and the coalition proposed eventual independence following a brief transition period overseen by Portugal. Despite the coalition’s popular support, the left wing of Fretilin and the right wing of UDT were both wary, a situation that would affect subsequent events.\footnote{Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 39.} The coalition sent a memorandum to Jakarta, stating its intentions for independence as well as its assurances of cooperation and stability.

Jakarta, however, was dismayed at the coalition and \textit{Operasi Komodo’s} activities intensified. A military exercise featuring a simulated landing was staged on 18 February 1975 in the South Sumatran city of Palembang, and its message was clear: Indonesia was prepared to invade East Timor should events not turn out in a way agreeable to Jakarta. The propaganda continued as well, including the first rumors of a Fretilin coup d’état.
against UDT. BAKIN operatives increased their activities in the West Timor regions bordering East Timor, including the recruitment and training of APODETI supporters.\(^{598}\) These activities further hardened Portuguese resolve, both in East Timor and in Portugal.

In March, a series of elections for suco chiefs began throughout the territory, as a way to socialize the Timorese to elections. Although the positions were non-partisan, those whose sympathies lay with Fretilin did well, and support for the Fretilin program was widespread.\(^{599}\) Members of UDT and Fretilin, again with APODETI refusing to attend, met with the Portuguese administrators and began to hammer out East Timor’s transition, including the founding of a constituent assembly in November 1976.

Through its agent Sugianto, BAKIN had attempted to split the Fretilin-UDT coalition since its inception. Some in UDT were displeased by the leftward shift of the coalition, including UDT founder Lopes da Cruz. Indonesia courted these leaders during trips to Jakarta, and by the end of March da Cruz and others switched their positions to favoring integration. Fretilin’s successes in the countryside threatened UDT members, and on 27 May UDT leaders announced their abrogation of the coalition.\(^{600}\)

Jakarta’s machinations had succeeded, and the activities of Operasi Komodo were ramped up. On 6 June, Indonesian troops entered the East Timorese enclave of Oecusse to “restore law and order” purportedly after the population was provoked by Fretilin and the MFA, with around 1500 fleeing the territory; the chaos Jakarta reported, however,

\(^{598}\) Ibid., 40. Dunn, \textit{A Rough Passage}, 85-101.

\(^{599}\) Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 42.

\(^{600}\) The phrasing of the announcement, including the term “Timor-Dili,” raised suspicion of BAKIN involvement. UDT or other East Timorese had not used the term prior, but it was used in BAKIN communiqués. Ibid., 46.
was the result of the Indonesian military entering the territory. Within a month, Suharto began declaring publicly that East Timor was not viable.\footnote{Ibid.; Dunn, \textit{A Rough Passage}, 139-40.}

On 26 June, Portugal convened a meeting in Macão to discuss the transition. In a move that would prove disastrous, Fretilin boycotted the meeting because both APODETI and representatives from the Indonesian armed forces were invited to attend. The influence of leftist elements in Fretilin grew following the abrogation of UDT from the coalition and Fretilin’s successes in the countryside; they returned to the party’s earlier position that Fretilin alone was the true voice of the Timorese, exacerbating tensions with other parties. Because of Fretilin’s absence, “APODETI was able to present itself internationally as a viable party; UDT was free to criticize Fretilin in an international press arena; and the Indonesians were able to make political capital out of Fretilin’s intransigence.”\footnote{Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 49.} The leadership of UDT – and also significantly the Bishop of Dili, José Joaquim Riberio – continued to fall under the sway of BAKIN operatives, who ratcheted up their misinformation campaign; they planted rumors of China sending arms to Fretilin; of North Vietnamese soldiers infiltrating the territory in order to train Fretilin soldiers; and of Fretilin’s alleged plans for a coup d’état, emphasizing that Jakarta would not tolerate an independent East Timor headed by Fretilin (although evidence shows that Indonesia was aware that Fretilin was not a communist movement).\footnote{Ibid., 49-50;} Riberio was so taken in by BAKIN’s rumors that he reported them back to the UDT leadership.\footnote{Ibid., \textit{A Rough Passage}, 139-40.}

\footnotetext[601]{Ibid.; Dunn, \textit{A Rough Passage}, 139-40.}
\footnotetext[602]{Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 49.}
\footnotetext[603]{Ibid., 49-50;
leaders João Carrascalão, Lopes da Cruz, and Domingos de Oliveira travelled to Jakarta on 28 July in order to ascertain Indonesia’s position; the following day Fretilin candidates received 55 percent of votes in elections for local councils. In a meeting with the East Timorese on 2 August, Generals Murtopo and Sugianto emphasized Fretilin’s plans for a coup d’état and told them that Indonesia would intervene were the coup to occur. Carrascalão and de Oliveira were unaware that da Cruz had shifted his allegiance to Indonesia and they apparently trusted the generals, not knowing that plans for an invasion were already under way. The UDT leaders’ trip to Jakarta increased tensions between the party and Fretilin and Dili became awash with rumors emanating from all sides.

Led by Carrascalão and de Oliveira, on 11 August the UDT launched a “show of force” in conjunction with anti-communist demonstrations and the founding of a group called Movimento Anti-Communist (MAC). Armed UDT supporters seized the Dili police headquarters and surrounded the governor’s building; with the help of armed police sympathizers they moved to seize Dili. UDT evidently hoped to force Fretilin into talks leading to the expulsion of its most leftist cadres, all in an attempt to reassure Indonesia that communist elements would not gain control. Carrascalão and de Oliveira also arrested and detained Lopes da Cruz, who was not told about the UDT actions because he was suspected (correctly) of collusion with the Indonesians. Da Cruz quickly escaped amidst the chaos surrounding the UDT coup, and fled to West Timor.

604 Dunn, A Rough Passage, 140.

605 Taylor, The Indonesian Occupation, 6.

606 Dunn, A Rough Passage, 141.

607 Ibid., 143-44.
Since rumors of the UDT coup had reached Fretilin leaders, many of them were able to flee Dili and plan their reaction. Prominent Fretilin members throughout the territory were arrested and imprisoned and in some cases shot (some regions saw killing of Fretilin cadres on a larger scale, including Same and Alas).\textsuperscript{608} Most of the Portuguese administration, reflecting the official policy of *apartidarismo*, attempted neutrality, but as events proceeded some were drawn to either side, the more conservative to UDT, and the more liberal to Fretilin. Despite this factionalization, and the state of civil war that erupted following the UDT coup, the Portuguese administrator Lemos Pires continued to try to get the two parties to settle their differences.\textsuperscript{609}

The coup failed to draw popular support away from Fretilin and to UDT. On 15 August, Fretilin issued a statement in response to UDT’s coup and began fighting back; around 3000 Fretilin backers in the colonial army left their barracks (where they had remained confined by the Portuguese) and ventured out in support of Fretilin.\textsuperscript{610} Although Portugal had sent a mediator, Major António Soares, from Lisbon, Indonesian immigration officials prevented him from entering the territory.\textsuperscript{611} Because of Fretilin’s widespread support, including from the Portuguese colonial army, and its superior force of arms, the tide quickly turned against UDT. By 20 August Fretilin had seized control of Taibesse, the source of Dili’s food, fuel and other goods, but the battles remained pitched.

\textsuperscript{608} Among those killed in Same was the brother of Nicolau Lobato, the Vice President of Fretilin. Dunn, *The Timor Story*, 47.

\textsuperscript{609} Taylor, *The Price*, 54.

\textsuperscript{610} Dunn, *The Timor Story*, 47.

\textsuperscript{611} Jolliffe, 125. Soares’ successor, Almeida Santos, arrived in Darwin on 20 August, after the conflict had escalated.
for one week for control of Dili. On 26 August, the Indonesian ship Monginsidi appeared in Dili harbor, purportedly to evacuate Indonesian consular staff. Indonesian soldiers landed on the beach, however, and made contact with representatives from both UDT and Fretilin, threatening retaliation if civilians were harmed. Jolliffe notes, however, that the fire directed at the harbor at that time came from neither UDT nor Fretilin strongholds, and surmises that this may have been the result of “a third force in Dili politics.”

On the 27th, the Portuguese administration fled to Atauro Island (from where it promptly radioed the Monginsidi and ordered it to withdraw from Portuguese waters), but by the 29th UDT had been routed and its Dili contingent fled to Liquiçá; most of the fighting was over. UDT still held Baucau, however, but soon negotiated a surrender, emphasizing its commitment to independence. From Dili to the east, Fretilin was firmly in control. To the west of Dili, however, sporadic fighting remained as Fretilin troops pushed stubborn UDT supporters toward the Indonesian border (the last UDT troops crossed the border on 24 September). Similar to its relationship with APODETI, Indonesia had overestimated popular support for UDT. As a result of its machinations and the brief civil war, it no longer had effective indigenous partisans in East Timorese territory. By 24 September, the fighting was over, and the casualties numbered between 2000 and 3000.

Although it was hampered by an 80 percent reduction in administrative personnel after the Portuguese fled and UDT was defeated, Fretilin wasted no time in asserting

612 Ibid., 139.

613 Dunn, The Timor Story, 48.

614 Ibid., 48.
control of the territory and implementing its development programs, winning over many former UDT supporters, gathering support in rural areas, and gaining the respect of foreign visitors during this period. Some remained critical of Fretilin, but these criticisms were leveled without resorting to violence. In Dili, organizational problems were compounded by the flight of ethnic Chinese, whose shops closed leading to food distribution problems.\(^615\) The Indonesian response to Fretilin’s announcement was a “declaration of integration” signed on the same day by members of APODETI and UDT in Atambua, West Timor, under compulsion from Sugianto and BAKIN agent Louis Taolin.\(^616\) Indonesia’s full-scale invasion, planned for early December, was postponed until 7 December, when US President Gerald Ford and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger departed Indonesian airspace.

According to CIA reports, beginning on 3 September, Indonesian troops had already begun entering East Timor “to engage Fretilin forces, encourage pro-Indonesian elements, and provoke incidents that would provide the Indonesians with an excuse to invade should they decide to do so.”\(^617\) BAKIN provided press reports of alleged Fretilin atrocities and border incursions that were carried in the Indonesian media and subsequently reported as fact internationally, and Jakarta bolstered its troop strength at the border. On 8 October, Indonesian soldiers disguised as UDT forces crossed the border

\(^{615}\) According to Dunn, the Chinese remained wary as they viewed any potential outcome as having serious ramifications for their control of the economy. Ibid., 54-56.

\(^{616}\) Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 55-56. The signing took place in the context of a dire humanitarian crisis for the UDT members who fled and the 5000 to 10,000 refugees who accompanied them, and after the East Timorese had appealed to the Indonesians for aid. Dunn, \textit{The Timor Story}, 51.

\(^{617}\) Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 58.
and seized Batugade, but their attempts to move eastward were thwarted by Fretilin. After reinforcements arrived, the Indonesians took the town of Balibo, where they killed five journalists – one Briton, two New Zealanders, and two Australians. Although the Australian government pleaded ignorance and accepted the Indonesian version of events – that they were communist sympathizers, or killed by Fretilin, or caught in a crossfire – this killing came to haunt Australia over the course of Indonesia’s occupation of East Timor.

With Australia and the United States unwilling to expose or acknowledge the Indonesian border incursions, Jakarta was emboldened. In mid-November, the town of Atabae was attacked from land, sea and air, and finally taken on the 26th. Lopes da Cruz continued to play his role, stating that “the combined anti-communist forces of UDT and APODETI are on the road to Dili.”

Although it had appealed to the UN on 24 November for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops during the battle for Atabae, no answer was forthcoming. Fretilin leaders unilaterally declared independence for East Timor on 28 November, in the naïve hope that the UN would recognize its declaration and act to stop the Indonesian invasion. Fretilin members also voiced the opinion that if they were going to die in battle, they would rather do so defending their own state.

The Invasion

---

618 Ibid., 63.
619 Ibid.
On 7 December 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor. Jakarta’s outward justification for the invasion was based in part on the 17 July 1975, Balibo Declaration (signed by members of the UDT and APODETI, who controlled a combined popular support of around 15-25 percent), which called for integration of East Timor with Indonesia. Approximately 60,000 East Timorese were killed within the first two months of fighting, followed over the next several years by another 140,000, representing one-third of East Timor’s population. The Indonesian government reported a figure of between 15,000 and 50,000 deaths resulting from the civil war and not the Indonesian invasion. While Jakarta still claims a death toll of 50,000, most independent analysts give that number little credibility, noting that the figure of 200,000 reflects more accurate church census data. The Commissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação (Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, CAVR), instituted during the

---

620 This section is not meant to be an exhaustive account of Indonesia’s invasion and occupation, but rather give the reader an idea of the conditions that existed under Indonesian rule.

621 A 1997 article in the TAPOL Bulletin reported that the document was actually signed in Bali, and at least two of the signatories, UDT leader João Carrascalão and APODETI figure Guilherme Maria Goncalves, have disassociated themselves from the treaty. At the first All-Inclusive Intra-East Timor Dialogue meeting in Austria in 1995 Goncalves declared that the Declaration was drafted by the Indonesians and the signatories were forced to sign. In an interview in the Indonesian daily Kompas, Sugianto, former agent for the military intelligence organization OPSUS, boasted of drafting and typing the Declaration TAPOL, “New Light on the Balibo Declaration,” TAPOL Bulletin, No. 142 (August 1997), 1.


623 Dunn, A People Betrayed, 320-23.

624 Ibid., 3-4.
United Nation’s transitional period (1999-2002) gave the total number of verified deaths at between 102,800 and 183,000.625

Fretilin was driven into the mountains. Indonesian military occupation ensued, creating a climate of terror that included intense aerial bombardments, the deployment of death squads, and the use of random killings and rape to terrorize and subdue the population. The Indonesian military created networks of East Timorese informers and militias to carry out kidnappings and assassinations.626 As part of the 1978-79 encirclement and annihilation campaign against Fretilin, in a tactic dubbed pagar bentis (fence of legs), the Indonesian military forced a reported 80,000 civilians between the ages of eight and 50 to walk in front of soldiers as human shields in an effort to ferret out guerrillas hiding in the forest and veldt. Hundreds were killed and “innumerable” others died of starvation.627 Hundreds and perhaps thousands were “disappeared,” while others


626 Douglas Kammen writes that the militias that were formed in the run-up to the 1999 referendum had a much longer history in East Timor. Without these militias, stated Aniceto Gutteres, the president of Yayasan Hak (the Rights Foundation) and current MP for Fretilin, “the Indonesian military could not remain in power… Abolish the militias and Indonesian domination over East Timor will end.” Douglas Kammen, “The Trouble with Normal: The Indonesian Military, Paramilitaries, and the Final Solution in East Timor,” in Violence and the State in Suharto’s Indonesia, ed. Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, 2001), 156-88. See also: Michael R. J. Vatikiotis, Indonesian Politics Under Suharto: The Rise and Fall of the New Order (New York: Routledge, 1998), 184.

received lengthy prison sentences handed down by kangaroo courts. In addition, military occupation resulted in widespread environmental degradation, the resettlement of large segments of the population without adequate provisions for employment, and the payment of sub-standard wages to East Timorese workers. The continuous nature of abuses was underscored in a report by the Conselho Nacional da Resistencia Maubere (National Council of Maubere Resistance, CNRM) that stated the human rights situation in early 1996 was the worst it had been since the Dili massacre at the Santa Cruz cemetery in late 1991, when up to 250 peaceful protestors were shot dead (up to 400 are thought to have been killed in the aftermath).

During the occupation the Indonesian government used its transmigration

---

628 Human Rights Watch Asia, *The Limits of Openness* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994), 21-35; Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Reports on Human Rights Violations in Indonesia & East Timor since 1991* (New York: Amnesty International, 1994), 29-31, 50-54, 69-71, 83-86). These “disappearances” were often preceded or followed by visits to the family of the victim, in which the representative of the police or military would tell the family that the young man had been sent to study in Jakarta (“*disekolahkan*”). A cliff between Ainaro and Suai that was the site for disposal of the area’s victims has been nicknamed “Jakarta” for this reason, and the term “*disekolahkan*” has gained acceptance as euphemism for “disappearances” in the military.

629 National Council of Maubere Resistance, “East Timor Update,” February 10, 1996. The term Maubere is from an East Timorese ethnic name, Mambae. It was used in a derogatory way by the Portuguese to describe East Timorese who lived outside of the cities and were considered “backward.” The term was adopted by the resistance and included all East Timorese. The CNRM was formed in 1988 as an umbrella group for East Timorese resistance factions. The Conselho Nacional Resistencia Timorense (National Council of Timorense Resistance, CNRT) replaced the CNRM in 1997, partly due to resistance to the use of the word “Maubere,” a formerly derogatory Portuguese term for East Timorese that the resistance embraced, and partly as a symbolic attempt to unite East Timorese factions. The Santa Cruz massacre was captured on film by foreign journalists and within days broadcast around the world. It proved to be a significant turning point in international solidarity movements focusing on East Timor, as well as the cause for many states to rethink their policies toward Jakarta.
program (*transmigrasi*) to move citizens from over-crowded islands such as Java to East Timor. This strategy diluted the East Timorese population. Transmigrants, however, were not the only people moving to East Timor. “Spontaneous” or “voluntary” migration took place as well, by people from all over Indonesia. An estimated 25,000 heads of families migrated to East Timor in 1989 alone, and in 1992 it was estimated that 100,000 Indonesians were living in East Timor, out of a total population of 750,000. Along with *transmigrasi*, the government implemented its five-tiered development plan, including agriculture, health, education, communications, and government apparatus.

For twenty-four years, Indonesia occupied East Timor and created a climate of terror. Foreign journalists were either barred from entry into East Timor, or closely monitored. A huge military presence was widely visible in East Timor, with a higher soldier-to-civilian ratio than anywhere else in Indonesia. The military leaders responsible for the invasion became the owners of industries and plantations and served as governors and other high officials, while the East Timorese themselves remained poor and powerless. The Indonesians uprooted traditional systems of culture and spirituality and forcefully attempted to replace them with Indonesian ones. On the few occasions that

---

630 Jardine, 64.


633 George J. Aditjondro, “After the Bamboo Curtain has been Pulled Out,” At the Dili Massacre Commemoration Rally, Perth, November 12, 1995, Forwarded by apakabar@clark.net.

diplomats or observers were let into East Timor during the Suharto era, soldiers disguised themselves as civilians, and coerced the indigenous population into showing approval of the occupation. Occasional acts of large-scale violence flared up throughout the occupation.

The United Nations never recognized Indonesia’s claim to East Timor and passed ten resolutions upholding the right of the East Timorese to self-determination. Yet very little was done, especially by the major powers, to alleviate the suffering inflicted on the East Timorese by the Indonesian occupation, as Indonesia was viewed as an anti-communist bulwark in Southeast Asia. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the American Representative to the United Nations under Gerald Ford and President of the UN Security Council in 1976, boasted in his memoirs of stymieing UN attempts to remove the Indonesian military from East Timor. Within five years, the Indonesian occupation was deemed “irreversible” and East Timor’s “Indonesianization” was well under way.

Jakarta, however, failed to inculcate a sense of Indonesian nationalism within the East Timorese population, save for a small number of supporters. Rather, East Timorese

---

635 Guillain.

636 Moynihan, 247.

637 Weatherbee, 5. The final report of the CAVR, a 2,500 page document, details the abuses of the entire 24-year Indonesian occupation, as well as the complicity of foreign governments in supporting the occupation politically and militarily. Chega! The Report. Benedict Anderson notes that the US role in the Indonesian invasion and occupation was “so central… that without it the invasion would probably not have happened.” Anderson, The Spectre, 133. Joseph Nevins points to the complicity of major states in Indonesia’s takeover as well as their refusal to encourage prosecution of those responsible for egregious human rights abuses during the Indonesian occupation. Joseph Nevins, A Not-So-Distant Horror: Mass Violence in East Timor (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).
nationalism thrived despite tremendous adversity and loss of life, and the region continued to be “a pimple on the face” and “a pebble in the shoe” for Jakarta.\textsuperscript{638} East Timor remained closed to foreigners until 1989 and was classified a military operations zone.

Quantifiable evidence for the failure of Jakarta’s occupation came on 30 August 1999, when 78.5 percent of registered East Timorese voters chose independence from Indonesia in a United Nations sanctioned referendum, despite widespread intimidation and violence and the threat of widespread destruction should the voters choose independence, a threat Jakarta carried out. A brief accounting of the referendum and its aftermath, including the transition to East Timor’s independence, is included in an epilogue.

**Manifestations of East Timorese nationalism**

Helen Hill argues that although the first legal manifestations of Timorese nationalism emerged following the April 1974 coup in Lisbon and the lifting of the ban on political organizing, there were some preceding events that she considers proto-nationalist in nature. These include various local rebellions, the most serious of which was the 1910-12 revolt centered in Manufahi (see above). Although the revolt was eventually quelled, it and others that preceded it are considered “primary resistance” that

\textsuperscript{638} Benedict Anderson notes that Suharto used the phrase “pimple on our face” regarding East Timor and Foreign Minister Ali Alatas referred to it as “a pebble in our shoe,” and argues that “they would never had used (the expressions) for any province which they genuinely felt to be Indonesian.” Anderson, \textit{The Spectre}, 137. Foreign Minister Ali Alatas gave his version of diplomatic events surrounding East Timor’s break with Indonesia the title \textit{The Pebble in the Shoe}, showing similar disdain. Ali Alatas, \textit{The Pebble in the Shoe: the Diplomatic Struggle for East Timor} (Jakarta: Aksara Karunia, 2006).
affected later manifestations of nationalism in East Timor: “Memories of suppression of primary resistance have a surprisingly long-lasting impact in the area in which the resistance took place… primary resistance movements were not wholly unsuccessful. Some of them succeeded in checking certain forms of colonial encroachment.”

Although Hill hedges her assertion by calling it “proto-nationalism,” it is important to remember that at the time East Timorese lacked the education that would have enabled them to articulate a modern nationalism; the date precedes, for example, the genesis of nationalism in neighboring Indonesia, which at the time had a much more highly developed and educated elite stratum that went on to “imagine” Indonesia.

World War II contributed to early notions of a distinct and common East Timorese community. East Timorese observed the various states fighting on their land – Portuguese, Japanese, Dutch and Australian – over their own interests, and realized that they, as Timorese, had their own distinct interests. Japanese cruelty toward the East Timorese, considered backward and primitive, pushed the Timorese to assist the Australians. As a result, the nationalism that was promoted (in limited ways) in other parts of Southeast Asia by the Japanese, including Indonesia, was absent. That fact, combined with the lack of education and lack of unity among East Timorese, resulted in the rapid and unchallenged return of the Portuguese to Timor following the war.

There was also a serious revolt in Viqueque in 1959, although many of the details

639 Hill, 42-3.

640 The notion that nationalist movements look back in time and transpose a “nationalist” interpretation of prior historical events, such as Prince Diponegoro in Java as an “Indonesian” hero, has been covered in earlier chapters of this dissertation.

641 Hill, 48.
remain hazy. It was spurred by twelve Indonesians, although their motivation remains unclear. In some accounts they are Soekarno loyalists attempting to break East Timor free from the Portuguese to join Indonesia; in others they are Soekarno’s enemies, possibly Permesta or RMS rebels, hoping to break East Timor away from the Portuguese to create an independent state.\(^{642}\) The revolt was quickly quelled, but Hill argues it led Portugal to reexamine its colonial policies and, later, to expand educational opportunities in the territory. Some of the East Timorese rebels who were captured were exiled to Portuguese colonies in Africa, and later, after their return, took a pro-Indonesia stance.\(^{643}\) In 1974, members of both APODETI and Fretilin claimed that the 1959 uprising was an initial manifestation of their party’s goals.\(^{644}\)

An essential element of the discussion of East Timorese nationalism is the role of the Catholic Church.\(^{645}\) During the period of Indonesian control of East Timor, the Catholic Church provided an environment for resistance and nationalism to flourish,

\(^{642}\) Taylor states that it was Indonesians from Sulawesi who spurred the revolt, thereby making the connection to Permesta more likely. Taylor, The Price, 21. This conclusion is seconded in Dunn. Dunn, The Timor Story, 11-12. Taylor cites one of the rebellion’s leaders as aspiring to join East and West Timor as an independent state.

\(^{643}\) Taylor cites Indonesian support for the rebels from the Indonesian consul in Dili and Indonesian West Timor, indicating “that there already existed an integrationist lobby which had the support at some level of the Indonesian government.” By 1962, the United Nations had noted a “Bureau of Liberation of the Timor Republic” in Jakarta. Taylor, The Price, 21-22.

\(^{644}\) Hill, 49-51.

\(^{645}\) For a more complete discussion of the role of the church with regard to East Timorese nationalism, see: Chris Lundry, “Peranan Gereja Katolik dalam Gerakan Nasionalisme di Timor L’este” (“The Role of the Catholic Church in East Timorese Nationalism”) in Waskita: Jurnal Agama dan Masyarakat (Waskita: Journal of Religion and Society), III, No. 2 (November 2006).
despite attempts by Indonesian authorities to co-opt or discredit it. But its role prior to the
Indonesian invasion set the stage for these later developments, with significant roles
played by progressive Timorese clergy such as Martinho da Costa Lopes and Carlos
Felipe Ximenes Belo, both of whom would go on to become appointed Apostolic
Administrators of the territory.  

In the early period of Portuguese coloniza tion the reach of Catholic missionaries
was limited. Schools were built by Salesian priests and Dominican and Claretian nuns,
but education was not widespread, and was confined mostly to suco chiefs and liurai
(village leaders) who were baptized and educated; an important byproduct of this process
was to consolidate the chiefs’ and liurai’s authority. From 1834 to 1875, missionaries
were banned in East Timor in conjunction with a state ban on their activities imposed by
the Liberals in Lisbon, and again for a decade starting in 1910 with the declaration of the
Republic.

In 1940 President Antonio Oliveira Salazar signed a concordat with Rome,

---

646 Following Indonesia’s invasion, da Costa Lopes was appointed Apostolic Administrator rather than bishop in order to maintain the separation between the East Timorese and the Indonesian Bishop’s Conference. This move was viewed as cautious on the part of the Vatican, and it allowed the Timorese Church to monitor Indonesian atrocities and disseminate information without hindrance from the Indonesian Church. Geoffrey Hull, *East Timor: Just a Political Question?* (North Sydney: Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, 1992), 12; Robert Archer, “The Catholic Church in East Timor,” in *East Timor at the Crossroads*, ed. Peter Carey and G. Carter Bentley (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1995), 126-7. Belo was later appointed Bishop of Lorium, “an ancient diocese in Italy no longer functioning.” He remained the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, and the move was interpreted as a show of confidence in the young bishop. It also showed a change in the stance of the Vatican. Arnold S. Kohen, *From the Place of the Dead: The Epic Struggles of Bishop Belo of East Timor* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 130-31.

647 Taylor, *Indonesia’s Forgotten War*, 152
signaling a closer link between the church and the Portuguese government. The Concordat declared the “imperial usefulness” and “civilizing influence” of the Catholic missions operated by the Portuguese. The Concordat established the Diocese of Dili, thereby ending the subordination of the church in East Timor to the See of Macao, and resulted in an increase of the conversion rate. Education in the Portuguese colonies was entrusted to the church under the tutelage of the state, and Timorese children were socialized with colonial values as a byproduct of their education. The Jesuit seminary of Nossa Senhora de Fatima was opened in Dare in 1958 to create a native clergy and to offer secondary education for young men not destined for the priesthood; its students would play a decisive role in the events to come. Thus, despite limited opportunities for education in East Timor, in the last several years of Portuguese rule there was a significant expansion of such opportunities, concurrent with the beginnings of East Timorese nationalism.

The Second Universal Council (Vatican II, 1962-65) recommended a re-examination of church-state alignments and enjoined priests and nuns everywhere to make social justice issues part of the “call to evangelization.” The impact of Vatican II, however, was limited in East Timor, at least initially. Education remained in the hands of what was essentially a conservative church, although there were signs that some Jesuits

---

648 Ibid., 13.

649 Hull, 5-6.

650 Hill, 34-40.

had already begun to teach about Asian nationalism and alternative methods of
development by the mid-1960s. The Jesuits also criticized Portuguese colonialism, not in
a revolutionary manner but based on the social teachings of the church. As Geoffrey Hull
notes: “discrepancies between Salazar’s corporatist state and the principles of a
corporative society set out by Pius XI in Quadragesimo Anno were... common subjects of
discussion in church circles in Portugal.”\textsuperscript{652} That the impact of Vatican II’s teachings was
hardly felt in East Timor is consistent with findings from Latin America, a region where
the Roman Catholic Church is generally considered to be more socially conscious and
politically active. For example, Anthony Gill notes that “if all Latin American bishops
were exposed to the progressive ideas of Vatican II... then change should have occurred
uniformly across the region. This was hardly the case.” Bishops predisposed to
denouncing injustice found that the reforms gave them leeway to pursue their goals;
bishops not so inclined “could simply drag their feet or ignore the Council's
recommendations altogether.”\textsuperscript{653}

Following Vatican II, the church in East Timor remained “at heart a foreign
church” and the clergy conservative. Before the 1975 invasion, priests were aloof and
disdainful of rural Timorese. The church was identified with the state and the clergy was
charged with implementing government policies.\textsuperscript{654} Even today, most East Timorese
priests and nuns “wear full religious dress, the traditional catechism is taught, people are

\textsuperscript{652} Hull, 7.

\textsuperscript{653} Anthony Gill, Rendering Unto Caesar: The Catholic Church and the State in

\textsuperscript{654} Taylor, Indonesia’s Forgotten War, 152.
trained to behave reverently in church, and such innovations as Communion in the hand, lay ministers of the Eucharist and general absolutions are unknown and unwanted.”

Despite liturgical conservatism, however, the social role of the clergy changed dramatically after Vatican II.

In the late 1960s, a Catholic newspaper emerged called Seara. Since it was a Church publication, it stood outside the normal censorship laws and gave voice to emerging Catholic and Muslim nationalists such as José Ramos Horta, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, Domingos de Oliveira, Manuel Carrascalão, Francisco Borja da Costa, Nicolau Lobatau, and Mari Alkatiri, all of whom were taught at the seminary in Dare. The paper, edited by (then) Father da Costa Lopes, regularly printed lessons in Tetum, the lingua franca of East Timor, ran articles about social concerns, and was “mildly critical” of the authorities. The Portuguese secret police closed the paper in 1973 when the articles turned increasingly political. Still, the paper had allowed a group of nationalists, some of whom had observed subversive movements in Portugal’s African colonies while in exile, to meet clandestinely and share ideas, all under the eyes of da Costa Lopes, who would later become the Church’s leader following the Indonesian invasion. Many of these nationalists went on to play prominent roles in the political

---

655 Hull, 13.

656 Rowena Lennox, *The Fighting Spirit of East Timor: The Life of Martinho da Costa Lopes* (New York: Zed Books, 200), 85-86. Lennox’s account notes the liberal approach that da Costa Lopes took with Seara, including allowing articles on politics and Marxism (although anonymously submitted articles were thrown away). The newsletter covered other topics as well, of course, including transportation and religious information. Kohen, 69.
organizations – later to become parties – that formed in the interregnum of 1974-75. As Hill notes: “It was not until there was a group of Western educated Timorese who had the ability to communicate through the written word, that nationalism could be said to have emerged in East Timor.”

The nationalism that emerged in the late sixties and manifest in the developments of the 1974-75 period persisted throughout the Indonesian occupation. Aside from the convictions held and expressed by the elites and party representatives who guided the parties prior to and after the Indonesian invasion (see below), nationalism deepened and broadened among the rest of the East Timorese population during Indonesia’s tenure, despite attempts to inculcate Indonesian values. Much of the credit for this goes to the Catholic Church in East Timor, which provided information and refuge after a fast-paced transformation from a conservative supporter of the state to a socially and politically

---

657 Jill Jolliffe, 55-57; Lennox, 85-6. Nationalists from other colonies (as well as criminals and corrupt or incompetent administrators) were sent to East Timor and known as deportados. Although the literature is unclear about any nationalist influence this might have had on East Timorese, it is certainly possible. Hill, 16.

658 Hill, 52.

engaged institution whose members identified with the East Timorese, all the more so after the Timorization of the clergy following the flight of some of the Portuguese clergy.\textsuperscript{660} After 1975, the church became known as “a place of resistance.”\textsuperscript{661}

**Elite and Party Representation**

East Timorese nationalism had already taken firm root in East Timor prior to the Indonesian invasion, and it proved impossible to reverse. Had Jakarta not committed the excesses it did during the occupation, could the East Timorese have been won over to the Indonesian side?\textsuperscript{662} In this section, I argue that the small cadre of modern East Timorese elites that had developed in the latter years of Portuguese colonialism played a significant role in the refusal of the population to accept Indonesian sovereignty, even following 24 years of occupation and intensive efforts to inculcate Indonesian values.

The Nossa Senhora de Fatima seminary at Dare played a critical role in the early development of nationalism in East Timor. Education – or at least literacy – is one of the

\begin{quote}

661 Franks, 163. For a more thorough accounting of the role of the church, as well as Indonesian attempts to thwart its influence, see: Lundry, “Peranan Gereja Katolik.”

662 Of course this counterfactual raises an obvious retort: would Indonesia have committed its deprivations in East Timor if it did not face significant resistance? Based on the behavior of Indonesian soldiers in the initial assault, the answer is most likely that it would have. Robert Cribb has asked the same question. Robert Cribb, “From Total People’s Defense to Massacre: Explaining Indonesian Military Violence in East Timor,” in *Roots of Violence in Indonesia*, ed. Freerk Columbijn and J. Thomas Lindblad (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002), 230. According to Dunn, Ramos Horta confided that had Indonesia supported self-determination Fretilin and perhaps UDT would have considered allowing Indonesia control over defense and a role in foreign affairs as a means to assuage their security fears. Dunn, *East Timor: A Rough Passage*, 54. This position is remarkably similar to the offer of autonomy made by the Indonesians as the alternative to independence during the referendum, although at that point it was soundly rejected, perhaps emphasizing the rejection of Indonesia after years of occupation.
\end{quote}
elemental necessities for the emergence of nationalism. Because East Timor was a small and isolated place, those who were able to pursue higher education were directed to one place, the seminary, with a few exceptions of those able to study in Portugal or elsewhere. With the support of the progressive Jesuit faculty at the seminary many of the East Timorese elites who attended the seminary formed their nationalist identities there and were allowed, for a short time, to express their ideas through Seara, until it was shut down.

These elites were few in number. Because of the lack of widespread education, Dunn argues that those who had attained literacy in the wake of the spread of educational opportunities could be called elite, if a characteristic of elite status is “including a high level of political consciousness together with a capacity to assume a measure of political leadership and administrative responsibilities. In these terms, the indigenous elite in Timor probably numbered less than 3,000 of whom less than one-third would be Timorese.” As described above, these elites were able to articulate their vision for an independent East Timor domestically and abroad – including seeking assurances from Indonesia that it would not intervene – as well as to mobilize support among the East Timorese masses for their programs.

While the few East Timorese elites who formed APODETI were oriented toward Indonesia in the 1974-75 period, such as Guilherme Gonçalves (a liurai), Arnaldo dos Reis Araujo (a wealthy cattle rancher) and Osorio Soares (a teacher and administrative official), the overwhelming majority chose to side with either UDT or ASDT/Fretilin and

---

663 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, esp. 67-82.

favored independence. Following Indonesia’s invasion, those who supported Indonesia were rewarded, as were some of the UDT supporters coerced into defection following the civil war. Lopes da Cruz, for example, was made head of the Council of the Provisional Government of East Timor.665 One of the first acts of the Council was to write a declaration of integration with Indonesia, which was presented in person by the council’s 40 members to Suharto. Despite this, when Jakarta formed a committee to oversee East Timor’s transition to an Indonesian province, no East Timorese were assigned to the committee (they were predominantly Javanese), and the committee worked without transparency or input from East Timorese.666

Dos Reis Araujo was made the first governor of East Timor, and became the leader of Suharto’s Golkar in East Timor.667 Following dos Reis Araujo’s criticism of

665 A chart of the make up of the transitional authority shows the bulk of positions staffed by APODETI and UDT cadres, with some members of KOTA and Trabalhista, and one “former Fretilin minister” José Gonçalves. Saldanha, in a book circumspectly critical of the Indonesian occupation (but not enough so to prevent the books publication in Indonesia), noted that the leaders were not chosen for their qualifications as “professional administrators” but rather “on their merits as fighters.” Saldanha, 97-8. As with many UDT members who sided with Indonesia, either by choice or by coercion, da Cruz later spoke out against Indonesian atrocities and the occupation. Just 32 days after being sworn in as the head of the provisional government, da Cruz criticized Indonesia and announced that between 50,000 and 80,000 East Timorese had already been killed. Taylor, *The Indonesian Occupation*, 9. He later decried the first elections held in the territory (1982) under Indonesia, commenting that “the only contest between the contestants was over who could decorate the polling booths most attractively.” Taylor, *The Price*, 132-33. Political parties, save those allowed under the New Order (the PPP, the PDI, and Golkar) had been banned in early 1976. James Dunn places Guilherme Gonçalves as the head of the provisional government. He also describes how the Indonesian military rounded up APODETI supporters and traditional elites to fill the positions in the provisional body, and the coercion of East Timorese to vote in support of its creation. Dunn, *A Rough Passage*, 257.

666 Saldanha, 99-100.
Indonesia, Guilherme Gonçalves was appointed the second governor of East Timor, and served from 1978-82. Mario Carrascalão, the brother of UDT leader João Carrascalão, served as governor from 1982-92. Osorio Soares served as governor from 1992-99. Thus, the three founders of APODETI each served as governor, with a UDT-affiliated elite serving two terms as well. In the initial years of the Indonesian occupation, known Fretilin members who were not imprisoned or killed were shut out from politics, and plum civil service positions that enabled their holders to participate in graft and corruption were appointed by dos Reis Araujo and Gonçalves as a reward for their loyalty. As the extreme violence of the first several years of occupation began to wane and more and more East Timorese began to come down from the mountains to resettle their villages (or be forced into resettlement areas), some Fretilin partisans were able to disguise their allegiances and assume positions in the Indonesian administration and bureaucracy, acting as double agents.

---

667 Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 116.

668 Budiardjo and Liong note a shift in policy on the part of the Indonesians away from supporting former APODETI members and toward support for former UDT members. The sacking of Governor Gonçalves occurred because of a dispute with Colonel Kalangi, the Sekwilda (Sekretaris Wialayah Daerah, Regional Secretary), over profits from coffee plantations in Atsabe which were to be used for political patronage. Because of APODETI’s low level of support among East Timorese, their usefulness to the Indonesians was limited, and former UDT members were courted. Carrascalão was chosen because of his elite status and diplomatic experience as part of Indonesia’s mission to the UN just after the invasion, and it was hoped he would be able to “sell” integration through Indonesia’s development plans. Budiardjo and Liong, The War, 99-102; Jolliffe, 266.


670 The life story of a personal acquaintance of the author is instructive of examples of this kind of maneuvering. Mario Mesquita was trained as a police officer
Despite the nominal inclusion of East Timorese in the civil administration, the region was run by the Indonesian military. Although the Indonesians had set up a political system that mirrored that of other provinces in Indonesia and filled some posts with East Timorese (hoping “to avoid the mistakes made in Irian Jaya”), it was the uniformed Indonesian military officers that actually ran the territory:

The paper identity between civil and military units in East Timor and their counterparts in other parts of Indonesian provincial settings does not include functional reality. In meaningful, substantive terms, civil administration does not exist below the governor’s office in other than a clerical sense. It is at the Kodim and the Koramils that the local policy and program implementation takes place.\(^{671}\)

The economic effects of the military’s control of East Timor are discussed below.

Although the three legal political parties under the New Order were allowed to contest elections in East Timor, it was clear from the 1982 election onward that anyone who desired a political career would have to work through Suharto’s Golkar party. In the

---

under the Portuguese, fought with Fretilin and Falantil in the early years of the Indonesian occupation, left his hiding place in the mountains in the early 1980s, and because of his prior status was coerced into becoming a police officer for the Indonesians, and then later was appointed a kepala desa (village head) of a nearby village (to refuse these appointments would have brought suspicion or imprisonment), all the while maintaining contact and providing information to Fretilin rebels who remained in hiding. He worked as a “double agent” through the referendum period. Although he was provided money and materials such as t-shirts and rice by the (Javanese) Indonesian bupati (regent) to distribute to voters in his village, he knew that the Indonesians suspected him, and most East Timorese knew that his sympathies lay with independence. Following the referendum, his family fled and he went into hiding, his house was destroyed while he watched from a hiding place across the street, and he subsequently joined Fretilin in the mountains. After returning, he became a police officer for the United Nations Transition Authority for East Timor, and later a police officer for independent East Timor.

\(^{671}\) Budiardjo and Liong, *The War*, 102; Weatherbee. Kodim is an acronym for Komando Distrik Militer (District Military Command, at the kabupaten level) and Koramil is an acronym for Komando Rayon Militer (Subdistrict Military Command, at the kecamatan level).
1982 elections, Golkar, led by dos Reis Araujo, won all four of the territory’s seats by obtaining 99.45 percent of the vote (311,325 are claimed to have voted). The PDI, the party assigned to represent Christians in Indonesia, received a scant .33 percent of the vote; the party’s local leader was Joseph Blasius Bapa, a Catholic from Jakarta. Because by 1982 most East Timorese identified themselves as Catholic, one would assume more widespread support for the PDI. The PPP leader Eang Bau Talib garnered only .22 percent of the vote for his predominantly Muslim party.672 The vote is widely perceived to be a sham, with voters compelled to choose GOLKAR.673 An official Indonesian government publication of the election results, *Pemilu Indonesia Dalam Angka dan Fakta Tahun 1955-1999*, for example, notes a voter turnout of 101.5 percent (311,325 votes cast, 306,602 eligible voters).674

Subsequent elections produced similar results. In 1987, for example, GOLKAR received 93.68 percent and all four seats, PDI 5.59 percent, and PPP .73 percent. Once again, voter turnout exceeded 100 percent (100.2 percent, with the district of Aileu reporting 327.6 percent turnout). Both PDI and GOLKAR leaders in East Timor were Javanese; the GOLKAR chief was Foreign Minister Mochtar.675 Again, the results were a sham. The small percentage allotted to PDI, although not enough to garner a seat, was designed to show the world that there was some competition, and hence the election was

---

672 Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 116. Without apparent irony, the entry for the 1982 East Timor elections in this volume notes the similarity of the results of the first East Timor election with those of the first election in West Papua.


674 Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 116.

675 Ibid., 139.
The 1992 election saw more realistic turnout figures (89 percent) and the loss of one seat by GOLKAR, which garnered 82.62 percent of the vote, awarded to PDI, which garnered 15.95 percent. The PPP remained without representation, with 1.43 percent. In 1997, the results were the same in terms of seats awarded, with a turnout of 86 percent. The 1999 elections, in the context of *reformasi* in Indonesia following the ouster of Suharto and the announcement of an independence referendum for East Timor occurred amid tremendous intimidation and violence aimed at cowing the East Timorese population into voting for integration in the upcoming referendum; GOLKAR (garnering 48.66 percent) lost another seat to PDI (which received 34.61 percent). Fourteen other parties vied for seats, but none received enough votes.

Electoral statistics from these elections reflect the intimidation of the East Timorese and manipulation of the results. After inflicting so much suffering to East Timorese in the early occupation campaign, it is remarkable that less than seven years

---


677 Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 161.

678 Ibid., 183.

679 Ibid., 245. This source notes the “very interesting” (*sangat menarik*) subsequent figure of 78.5 percent support for separating from Indonesia in the referendum, and asks “So what is the meaning of the 346,477 East Timorese votes in the 1999 election organized/executed by the Indonesian government?” (*Lalu apa arti pemberian suara oleh 346.477 rakyat Timor Timur pada Pemilu 1999 yang diselenggarakan pemerintah RI?*), perhaps questioning the validity of the referendum if so many East Timorese appeared as faithful Indonesians to cast their votes. The author has heard similar arguments from other Indonesians. Some Indonesian scholars affiliated with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore dealt with the problem by completely excising East Timor from their book-length analysis of the 1999 Indonesian elections. Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin and Leo Suryadinata, *Indonesian Electoral Behavior: A Statistical Perspective* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004).
later nearly 100 percent of the East Timorese population would choose Suharto’s party to represent them. Rather, it is an indication that except for a select few loyal East Timorese who were permitted to join the process, there was no meaningful political representation for East Timorese following the Indonesian invasion. Furthermore, the “shadow” military administration was the true wielder of power throughout the occupation.680

Following independence, the importance of the elites educated at Dare (as well as those who were able to flee East Timor and obtain education elsewhere) and who spearheaded the resistance to Indonesia became manifest once again; many of the significant players from the 1974-75 period rose to prominence once more, and are now serving East Timor.

Although many of the leaders from the pre-invasion period were eventually captured and killed by Indonesia (including Nicolau Lobato and Francisco Xavier do Amaral), others evaded capture. José Ramos Horta served as a spokesman for the ASDT and Fretilin in the 1974-75 period and secured assurances from Foreign Minister Adam Malik regarding Indonesia’s intentions on a trip to Jakarta; he is cited frequently in all accounts of the period. He was named Foreign Minister by Fretilin following its unilateral declaration of independence and was in New York when the territory was invaded by Indonesia, on a diplomatic mission to garner international support for the East Timorese cause in the United Nations. He spent the entire Indonesian occupation in exile, travelling extensively, authoring an autobiography (Funu: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor), and becoming the subject of a biographical film (The Diplomat) shot during the

680 Bertrand, 139.
referendum period. In 1996 he shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo.

Ramos Horta played a critical role in the discussions leading to the referendum, and cast his vote among East Timorese émigrés in Australia. Following independence, he led the East Timorese delegation in discussions with the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor (UNTAET) during the transition period. After independent East Timor’s first elections, Ramos Horta was named Foreign Minister. When Dili erupted in street violence in May and June 2006 leading to a crisis in the government, he became Defense Minister following the resignation of Roque Rodriguez. Ramos Horta resigned both positions just 22 days later in protest over Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri’s intransigence in the face of the street violence and amidst accusations of corruption (the latter accusations were never proven). When Alkatiri resigned on 26 June, Ramos Horta withdrew his resignation. On 8 July 2006 he was named Prime Minister.

Ramos Horta was considered a candidate for UN Secretary General prior to Ban Ki Moon’s selection. In the 2007 campaign in East Timor he ran for president, receiving the second highest number of votes in the first round, and then winning handily (with 69 percent of the vote) in the run-off to become East Timor’s second President. He survived an assassination attempt in February 2008, and remains president.

Another leader from the Dare cohort of early nationalists is José Alexandre “Xanana” Gusmão. He served as Fretilin’s Press Secretary after the 1975 civil war, and then fled to the hills following the invasion. He rose in ranks in Falantil to become the group’s commander, but was arrested and imprisoned by the Indonesians in 1993. Despite being sentenced to life, he helped lead the East Timorese resistance from prison.
He was released in late 1999, and played a significant role in UNTAET representing East Timorese (although he had given up his ties to Fretilin and was viewed as a non-partisan leader). He ran successfully for president in 2002, but did not run for re-election in 2007. Rather, he led his newly formed party the CNRT (Conselho Nacional Reconstrução Timorense, National Council for Timorese Reconstruction) to a second place finish (behind Fretilin).\footnote{The original CNRT (Conselho Nacional Resistencia Timorense) was formed in 1998, replacing the CNRM (Conselho Nacional da Resistencia Maubere), partly due to resistance to the use of the word “Maubere,” a formerly derogatory Portuguese term for East Timorese hat the resistance embraced, and partly as a symbolic attempt to unite East Timorese factions. The CNRM was formed in 1988 as an umbrella group for East Timorese resistance factions. Critics of the “new” CNRT, including many Fretilin supporters, argued that it was an attempt to exploit confusion and garner support from sympathizers of the old CNRT. Whether this was effective is not clear.} The CNRT created a governing coalition, and as first on the party’s list Gusmão became Prime Minister. Gusmão is the subject of a 2006 film documentary (A Hero’s Journey/Where the Sun Rises).

Mari Alkatiri is another high profile example of a Dare-educated elite (he is also East Timor’s most high profile Muslim). He served as Fretilin’s Minister for Political Affairs prior to the Indonesian invasion, and similar to Ramos Horta was overseas at the time of the invasion. He also played a significant role during Indonesia’s occupation, and was based in Moçambique. Following the referendum he served as Fretilin’s Secretary-General, and became Prime Minster following the first elections. Although he resigned in June 2006 (see above), he remained a minister. As Fretilin’s leader he was considered a frontrunner for Prime Minister in the election of 2007, but lost the position to Gusmão. He remains an MP.
Some of the East Timorese who became associated with the Indonesians during their occupation of East Timor have since rehabilitated their names and have played significant roles. Mario Carrascalão, for example, who served as governor from 1982 to 1992 (but who was ousted following criticisms of Indonesian rule), became the leader of the PSD (Partido Social Democrática, Social Democratic Party) following the referendum and was named the current Second Vice Prime Minister.

Indonesia’s long occupation of East Timor allowed for a new generation of resistance leaders to emerge alongside the Dare-educated elite. Many experienced formative years under Portugal, only to finish their education under Indonesian rule. Beside the military resistance provided by Falantil and the international political resistance led by Ramos Horta, Alkatiri, and others, a dense network of underground resistance was maintained by East Timorese students and activists. Some of these resistance figures have gone on to play significant roles following independence, including Constâncio Pinto and Fernando de Araujo. Pinto’s life, chronicled in an autobiography, details his resistance activities and his subsequent arrest, torture, and flight to the United States, where he completed a BA in International Relations at Brown University and an MA in International Development at Columbia University, while representing the CNRM. Pinto currently serves as the United Nations Representative for East Timor. De Araujo led a similar life of resistance during the Indonesian period. He studied in Bali and was imprisoned in Java’s Cipinang prison for leading Renetil (Resistência Nacional dos Estudantes de Timor-Leste, East Timorese Students National Resistance). Following independence, he founded the Democratic Party and was its
candidate for president; after losing he ran for parliament. He was elected and is the current President of the East Timorese National Parliament.

**Social Continuity**

Portuguese colonialism in East Timor has been characterized as benign neglect; soon after the Portuguese had established themselves in Asia, the country’s fortunes declined. As a result, their holdings were mostly entrepôts such as Macau, Malacca and Goa, with East Timor their only significant territorial holding in Asia. Although there were certainly periods of Portuguese brutality in East Timor, especially when faced with rebellion, the impact of Portuguese colonialism on East Timorese social life was minimal (see above). As long as the East Timorese were able to provide the marketable goods and labor as required by the Portuguese, they were essentially left alone, especially in the mountainous regions farther from Portuguese rule.

The influence of the Portuguese was most heavily felt among the small cadre of elites, who were enculturated with Portuguese language and values including religion; this buttressed their traditional roles as rulers. As described above, the most significant impact of Portuguese rule was the education of these elites at the seminary in Dare, creating in the eleventh hour a modern-oriented group of leaders that would lead East Timor in its move toward independence in 1974-75; in its resistance to the Indonesian occupation; in its transition to independence following the referendum of 1999; and as an independent state. Members of this group identified closely with East Timor as a distinctive cultural and political entity. Indeed it appears that one of the reasons that the Fretilin leadership appealed to so many rural East Timorese in the 1974-75 period was
because their plans for health care and education emphasized “regional autonomy and local culture.”

The initial stages of the Indonesian invasion brought tremendous disruption and death to the major population centers of East Timor, such as Dili and Baucau. These areas were also the first to come under Indonesian military rule. Yet because of the difficulty the Indonesians had in the face of the unforeseen ability and organization of the armed Timorese resistance, not to mention the logistical difficulties the Indonesians faced moving from place to place in East Timor – there were only 20-30 km of paved roads in 1975, centered in Dili – there was no effective Indonesian rule in most of East Timor in the early years of the occupation. Rather, Taylor notes that in the first two years of Indonesian rule, “traditional kinship alliances and political structures continued to be reproduced… just as they had been under Portuguese rule throughout the twentieth century.”

By 1979, however, the Indonesians had more completely asserted themselves in East Timor. During the encirclement and annihilation campaign the Indonesians dramatically increased troop levels and implemented campaigns of saturation bombing in mountainous regions. As Fretilin lost ground, East Timorese came under increasing control of Indonesians, who created resettlement camps. The militarized environment of the East Timorese cities had spread to the countryside, and East Timor’s importance had been established in the Indonesian military. According to Liem Soei Liong, every officer

---


683 Ibid.
of the elite KOSTRAD unit served at least one tour of duty in East Timor after 1975; a
tour in East Timor was considered a “stepping-stone” for advancement.\textsuperscript{684}

Following the occupation the Indonesian government used its transmigration
program (\textit{transmigrasi}) to move citizens from over-crowded islands such as Java to East
Timor. This strategy diluted the East Timorese population. Transmigrants, however, were
not the only people moving to East Timor. “Spontaneous” or “voluntary” migration took
place as well, by people from all over Indonesia. An estimated 25,000 heads of families
migrated to East Timor in 1989 alone, and in 1992 it was estimated that 100,000
Indonesians were living in East Timor, out of a total population of 750,000.\textsuperscript{685} Along
with \textit{transmigrasi}, the government implemented its five-tiered development plan,
including agriculture, health, education, communications, and government apparatus.\textsuperscript{686}

These changes in conjunction with the huge death toll represented a huge break
with social and political continuity among East Timorese. As aforementioned, some East
Timorese were able to position themselves as supporters of Indonesia and thereby to
work within the Indonesian administration, but most of these people were viewed by the
population as collaborators.

The strongest institution that allowed some degree of social continuity was the
Catholic Church. The church was viewed by the East Timorese as a protector and by the

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{684} Liem Soei Liong, “It’s the Military, Stupid!” in \textit{Roots of Violence in Indonesia},
\item \textsuperscript{685} Jardine, 64.
\item \textsuperscript{686} Saldanha, 121.
\end{itemize}
Indonesians as an obstacle to their successful integration of the territory. Furthermore, the traditionally conservative clergy began to speak out in favor of Fretilin following the Indonesian invasion.

Ironically, one of Indonesia’s official government policies actually helped to cement the social role of the Catholic Church following the invasion. According to Indonesian law, citizens must profess membership in one of five officially sanctioned faiths. The East Timorese overwhelmingly chose the Catholic Church, which also represented a rejection of Indonesia’s predominant religion, Islam.

While in the mountains with Fretilin, the clergy converted large numbers of Timorese. This was not Fretilin policy, but was not condemned either. Conversion to Roman Catholicism skyrocketed and membership is estimated at over 95 percent (at least nominally) today for several reasons. First, under Indonesian law, one must belong to one of five officially recognized religions – Christianity (Protestantism), Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism, or Islam – and thus the animists of East Timor, representing a

---

687 Hull, 11; Budiardjo and Liong, The War, 118. According to (then) Major Prabowo, a former officer in East Timor and son in law of former president Suharto, “The Church, the religious and the priests are the three factors which threaten East Timor's integration with Indonesia.” Prabowo went on to say that “the people must turn against” the Catholic Church if Indonesia is to succeed in East Timor. Taylor, Indonesia’s Forgotten War, 157.

688 Taylor, Indonesia’s Forgotten War, 153.

689 Pinto, 47.

690 The author wishes to acknowledge that the depth of personal religious conversion is another matter, i.e. the exact percentage of people who have completely given up their prior belief systems and converted wholeheartedly to Catholicism is unknown, and perhaps not possible to measure accurately. The significant point being made, however, is that the population who identify as Catholic accrue benefits by association with the institution of the church, as listed in this section.
vast majority of the population, were considered godless (atheism is often equated with communism in Indonesia). Second, under the severe persecution of the occupying Indonesian army, the Catholic Church was a place of refuge.691 Third, a certain prestige attached to being a member of the church. Fourth, the Catholic Church allowed the East Timorese to congregate in large numbers and to speak their native language; the iconography of Catholicism substituted for that of their animist beliefs.692 Finally, the church was viewed by East Timorese in the mountains “as a place of resistance.”693

The changes associated with the mass conversions to Catholicism represent, on the surface, a major social change. This social change came, however, as an explicit rejection of an alternative Indonesian identity. Yet despite the nominal conversion to Catholicism, the church was careful to avoid alienating East Timorese. Elements of East Timorese traditional beliefs (roughly what would be called “animism”) were left intact, such as ancestor veneration and some ceremonies. Others were incorporated into Catholicism, such as the creation of feast days. There were (and remain) varying degrees of adherence to strict Catholic orthodoxy practiced throughout East Timor. This pattern of adoption and adaptation of religious faith is consistent with that found throughout Southeast Asia and other regions where colonialism took hold, including the Philippines, the other predominantly Catholic state in Southeast Asia.


692 Aditjondro, In the Shadow, 69; Kohen, 29.

693 Franks, 163.
The younger generations of East Timorese who were either very young at the time of the invasion or born after it were raised in an Indonesian context. As such, they undertook education within the Indonesian system, and learned to speak and write the Indonesian language. They were subjected to Pancasila indoctrination sessions, as a way to reinforce the New Order’s ideology.\textsuperscript{694} Those who were able pursued tertiary education throughout Indonesia. Yet similar to the pattern of Indonesians and other Southeast Asians educated at the hands of their colonial masters in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many of the educated East Timorese used this education to further their rejection of Indonesian rule, through the student organization Renetil, for example:

Fluent in Indonesian, as the young Indonesian nationalists seventy years earlier had become in Dutch, these youngsters now knew their rulers intimately, and through the Indonesian language had varying access to the Indonesian intelligentsia and the Indonesian press, and through both to the outside world. Moreover they understood that they were being colonized, for all the Suharto regime’s vaunted success in promoting assimilation… In these ways, Jakarta vastly deepened and widened East Timorese nationalism.\textsuperscript{695}

Aside from Falantil’s military campaign against the Indonesian military and the international effort spearheaded by Ramos Horta and others, there was a widespread underground movement in East Timor, from civil servants to students.\textsuperscript{696} These

\textsuperscript{694} Pancasila is the official state ideology of Indonesia, incorporating “Five pillars:” monotheism; humanitarianism; Indonesian unity; representativeness; and social justice. Although the concept is Soekarno’s, Following Suharto’s rise the indoctrination of Pancasila became routinized through mandatory sessions for students, civil servants and others. In places resisting Indonesian sovereignty such as East Timor or West Papua, the indoctrination was even more fanatical, and people who resisted or failed to memorize its precepts faced harsh punishment and the suspicion of the authorities. Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 128-29.

\textsuperscript{695} Anderson, \textit{The Spirit}, 135.
movements were able to mobilize large numbers of protestors at key junctures, such as
the visit of Pope John Paul in 1989 or the protest that led to the Santa Cruz cemetery
massacre of 10 November 1991, an act captured on film and widely regarded as the
catalyst for a renewed international solidarity effort to push for East Timorese self-
determination.

Attempts to foster an Indonesian identity failed. These included co-opting or
discrediting the church, replacing Timorese priests with Indonesian ones, transmigration,
and Islamization. The coercive nature of some of these efforts as well as the overall
environment of violence doomed them to failure:

Whatever figure one chooses, the number of people killed in East Timor is at least
a little perplexing because it was so clearly counterproductive. Instead of
reconciling the East Timorese to Indonesian rule, military violence provoked the
resistance which made East Timor a running sore in the Indonesian body politic
and a constant international embarrassment to the New Order… (I)t is likely that
the hope of removing the perpetrators of violence was one of the most important
factors in the overwhelming vote for East Timorese independence in August
1999.697

Economy, Resources, and Dependence

Robert Cribb notes various “interrelated” rationales for the Indonesian invasion of
East Timor. These include the fear of a communist neighbor, the fear that an independent
East Timor might stoke separatist sentiment in West Papua and elsewhere, the potential
economic benefit (despite “dismal economic prospects”) and a “sense of meta-
geography… a feeling that Indonesia had natural geographic boundaries which were

696 As Jakarta’s military grip on East Timor tightened, resistance moved from
rural areas to urban. Liong, 202. Indications of this shift include well coordinated
demonstrations, such as that during the Pope John Paul’s visit in 1989 and the
demonstration that led to the Santa Cruz cemetery massacre in 1991.

697 Cribb, “From Total People’s Defense,” 230.
affronted by the presence of a foreign enclave. "Although there is no doubt that a fear of communism was an Indonesian concern, especially given developments in mainland Southeast Asia in this period, analysts have shown that not only was this a misplaced fear, but also that Indonesian authorities almost certainly knew this (as a result of their intelligence operations in East Timor). The argument that Indonesia feared an independent East Timor stoking separatism in West Papua is also spurious. There was no evidence of significant contact between the OPM and East Timorese; overtures made by Papua, such as they were, were rejected by the East Timorese; moreover, as we have noted in the previous chapter, East Timor was not an issue during the struggle for control of West Papua. An independent East Timor aiding a separatist West Papua and alienating its behemoth neighbor is not a plausible scenario, as recent developments have shown. And although it is certainly true that some Indonesians had pressed for a claim to East Timor since Independence, this idea was not accepted by the majority of Indonesians in the government. That there may have been some psychological affinity for the elimination of foreign territory close to Indonesia’s borders ignores the presence of states with territories in similar proximities, as well Indonesia’s own shared islands of Papua.

698 Ibid., 230.


700 Following the Indonesian invasion, however, there was limited contact between East Timorese and West Papuan, Acehnese and Ambonese separatists. Under Indonesian control, separatist movements shared the same goal: ousting Indonesia. Once East Timor achieved independence, however, it distanced itself from these prior contacts and officials have made very clear pronouncements that the government of independent East Timor does not support separatism in Indonesia. East Timor is behaving pragmatically in this regard.
and Kalimantan. These arguments are not compelling.

Economic concerns played a major role in the rationale behind the invasion.\textsuperscript{701} Indonesian academic Goerge Junus Aditjondro has traced the history of oil exploration in East Timor, showing that oil drilling occurred as early as 1893 and exploitation and exploration continued throughout the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Just prior to the Portuguese coup d’état, oil exploration and production increased, with activity by Australian Timor Oil, the American companies New Orleans Offshore Navigation Company and Western Geophysical, and the British company Burma Oil. Mineral concessions were also exploited at this time.\textsuperscript{702} Quickly following the invasion, Australia and Indonesia began discussing the potential for exploitation of oil in the Timor Gap, the sea between Australia and East Timor, although a formal agreement was not signed until 1989. Despite these concerns, Indonesia was not able to exploit oil resources. Nevertheless, Indonesians involved in the invasion and occupation did find ways to enrich themselves.

The low level of economic development in East Timor presented an immediate tactical challenge to the Indonesian military during its invasion. The absence of paved roads throughout the region made it difficult for the military to move troops and supplies, and allowed for the continued resistance of Falantil. It also made it difficult to remove

\textsuperscript{701} Stephen J. Hoadley, “Indonesia’s Annexation of East Timor: Political, Administrative, and Developmental Initiatives,” \textit{Southeast Asian Affairs}, 3 (1977), 133-42; Christopher Lundry, “Manufacture of Threat: A Critical Inquiry into the Rationale Behind Indonesia’s Invasion of East Timor,” unpublished paper, 1998. The author acknowledges that the invasion was made based on many contributing factors, but that economic concerns appear to have been decisive.

East Timor’s resources in order to sell them outside the region. Indonesia’s solution was exemplary of its actions in East Timor: the Indonesians began paving roads throughout the territory and portrayed this as an altruistic gesture of solidarity with its East Timorese “brothers and sisters,” even though it served to help consolidate Indonesian rule and to enrich a select few Indonesians with the proper connections.

Other infrastructure and development projects were similar. For example, following the consolidation of Indonesian rule, the government began to build schools in order to increase the level of education in East Timor. Although the Indonesians claimed that there were few schools in East Timor prior to 1975, Taylor shows that in 1973 the Portuguese were operating 463 primary schools compared to 400 Indonesian-run schools by 1984. An unstated goal of the Indonesian education system was the inculcation of Indonesian values. The medium of instruction was Indonesian. Portuguese and Tetum were banned and their use in school was a punishable offense. East Timorese children were taught Indonesian history and culture. Jakarta sent the bulk of the teaching staff, many of them initially from the military, to East Timor in an attempt to reorient the East Timorese youth.⁷⁰⁵ East Timorese were treated as unsophisticated and looked down upon; in the end, the attempt failed and helped to galvanize the resistance.⁷⁰⁴

Although the possibility of wealth from East Timor’s natural resources, including vast oil and natural gas in the Timor Sea, was discussed prior to the invasion, the value of

---


⁷⁰⁴ Pinto, 238
these resources was not known definitely.\textsuperscript{705} Once Indonesia occupied East Timor following the invasion, however, economic exploitation and the marginalization of East Timorese (with the exception of a few Jakarta loyalist elites) began.

Budiardjo and Liong note that economic plans for East Timor, spearheaded by PT Denok Hernandes Indonesia, began prior to the actual invasion. PT Denok is owned by a group of ethnic Chinese Indonesian businessmen working in conjunction with a group of high level generals (Taylor characterizes the Chinese owners as fronts, and argues that the company was owned by Catholic General Benny Murdani and two associates).\textsuperscript{706} Within the first year of East Timorese “integration,” PT Denok had made two shipments of coffee to Singapore, worth $3.1 million. Coffee plantations had been seized by the government following the invasion, and East Timorese farmers were paid a fraction of the market price for their coffee. Proceeds from the coffee revenue were used to help resupply the military in East Timor, as well as buy goods for resale in East Timorese towns. PT Denok expanded its reach into other sectors, such as sandalwood processing, marble extraction, entertainment and hotels, and other sectors. It operated outside of Jakarta’s control, and did not pay duties or taxes.\textsuperscript{707}

As Indonesian control was consolidated, Indonesian military figures with ties to Suharto opened more companies.\textsuperscript{708} As Damien Kingsbury shows, this fits the overall

\textsuperscript{705} Cribb, “From Total People’s Defense,” 230.

\textsuperscript{706} Taylor, \textit{The Price}, 125.

\textsuperscript{707} Budiardjo and Liong, \textit{The War}, 103-5; Aditjondro, \textit{In the Shadow}, 57-62. The Indonesian administration eventually relinquished control of some of the coffee plantations, handing them over to Indonesia loyalists such as Manuel Carrascalão.
pattern of the Indonesian military consolidating economic influence in various sectors and in regions throughout Indonesia, although in East Timor this was particularly egregious because the prior structure under the Portuguese was nearly completely uprooted and replaced with an Indonesian one; the military was working with a blank economic slate and mostly free from Jakarta’s control.\(^709\) Corruption by the military was also widespread; funds allocated for development projects and medical aid disappeared.\(^710\)

Transmigrants to East Timor also caused economic resentment. They were frequently given land that had been used or owned by East Timorese, as well as housing and resources beyond the reach of most East Timorese. Because most of the transmigrants were Javanese, their presence in East Timor was viewed as another element of Indonesia’s plans to takeover the territory. They were also able to entrench themselves in the economy, often acting as middlemen to the detriment of East Timorese merchants.\(^711\) Transmigration played a symbolic role in East Timor (and elsewhere) as a

\(^{708}\) Taylor, *The Price*, 127. The military has played a role in the Indonesian economy since independence, when units were instructed to supplement or cover their operating budgets through economic ventures. This activity increased following the nationalization of Dutch assets in the 1950s during the West Papua conflict.

\(^{709}\) Kingsbury, *Power Politics*, 188-221. On page 193, Kingsbury diagrams a chart showing the links (in 1998) between the owners of major businesses in East Timor and Suharto, his family, and a few East Timorese including figures such as Francisco Lopes da Cruz. See also: Hal Hill and João M. Saldanha, *East Timor: Development Challenges for the World’s Newest Nation* (Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, 2001), 7-8; Dunn, *East Timor: A Rough Passage*, 289-91; Crouch, 273-74.

\(^{710}\) Dunn, *East Timor: A Rough Passage*, 291.

\(^{711}\) Ibid., 300-1; Aditjondro, *In the Shadow*, 62-64; Mubyarto, et al., 53-57.
means for Indonesia to demonstrate its control. Despite all of the funds allocated to East Timor in the name of “development” during Indonesian rule, it remained among the poorest of Indonesia’s provinces.

Discussion

Indonesian rule in East Timor represents both a failure on the part of the Indonesian nation-building project as well as a success for East Timorese nationalists. Indonesia faced insurmountable obstacles in its decision to invade and occupy East Timor, although it was assisted in this mission by the United States and other Western powers who acquiesced to Jakarta’s goals. Had they not done so, the tragedy of East Timor might have been avoided.

The major obstacle facing Indonesia was the strength of the East Timorese nationalist movement, which had grown and developed rapidly since the 1960s, and with urgency in the 1974-75 period. A group of East Timorese elites who shared the common experiences of Portuguese colonialism, Catholic upbringing, higher education at the Dare seminary, and for the most part consistent ideas about and goals for an independent East Timor, had already established themselves as the true representatives of East Timorese politics. This is reflected in the overwhelming support for both Fretilin and UDT prior to the civil war, and support for Fretilin even among UDT cadres following the civil war.

The experience under Indonesia failed to inculcate Indonesian nationalism. Aside from the counterproductive nature of the extreme violence associated with the invasion

---

712 Although transmigration as a policy caused alienation and resentment, East Timorese differentiated transmigrants as people from transmigration as a policy. Following independence, the author has met many Javanese immigrants who decided to stay in East Timor, and they reported facing no discrimination from their East Timorese neighbors.
and the occupation, several other factors worked against Indonesia. Social and political continuity was broken, as the Indonesians tried to force Indonesian identity onto East Timorese, denigrated the East Timorese identity, and forced predominantly Javanese military control over the region. Economically, East Timor languished while the Indonesians who invaded became rich. The Catholic Church played a significant role in the development and maintenance of East Timorese nationalism, prior to and following the Indonesian invasion.

What allowed East Timor to gain its independence through a United Nations sponsored referendum remains a topic for further research. Without the tenacity of the East Timorese themselves in fighting the Indonesian occupation and maintaining the salience of the issue at international forums, there is no doubt that East Timor issue would have faded from the world’s concern. Yet other factors were also at play, including the economic and political crisis that led B. J. Habibie to the Indonesian presidency and his subsequent acquiescence to the referendum, as well as the role of international solidarity networks of activists who pressured their home governments to do something to solve the “Timor Problem.”

East Timor has gained its full independence following a violent break with Indonesia. How it will develop remains to be seen, but what is certain is that it will develop under its own leadership, and independent of Indonesia.

Epilogue:

The International Tide Turns: The Referendum, the UN Transition, and Independence
In the wake of the 1997 East Asian economic crisis, Indonesia’s long-standing dictator Suharto was forced out of power amidst increasing calls for justice and democratization in Indonesia. His successor, Vice President B.J. Habibie, under increasing pressure from the international community, assented to a UN-supervised referendum to be held in August 1999. Immediately after the announcement, the Indonesian military increased recruitment of militia members throughout East Timor, often forcefully.\textsuperscript{713} These militias – paid, supplied, and trained by the Indonesian military (and including members of the military and police) – threatened anyone suspected of being pro-independence, and they attempted to sway the vote for remaining integrated with Indonesia.

Their attempts found little success. Four days after the referendum the votes were tallied, with over 98 percent turnout of those registered amidst little attempted voter fraud, and over 78 percent had voted for independence from Indonesia. The militias, the military and the police, who had stepped up their intimidation in the days leading up to and directly following the referendum, began the implementation of a well-planned scorched earth policy.\textsuperscript{714} Pro-independence East Timorese became targets for public killings, houses were razed, and international monitors and media were threatened. By the second week of September most of the unarmed UN Assistance Mission in East Timor was withdrawn.

\textsuperscript{713} Militias made up of East Timorese had been used in East Timor since shortly after the invasion in order to cow the population and gather intelligence. After the announcement of the referendum, however, this recruitment campaign increased significantly in its scope and forcefulness. This mirrors other areas in Indonesia, including most recently West Papua, another Indonesian region agitating for independence. “Will W. Papua Become Indon’s Next East Timor?” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, 26 October, 2000, p 1.

\textsuperscript{714} Nevins, 3-4, 103-104, 108-110.
Timor had evacuated, leaving the territory defenseless against marauding militias and their Indonesian backers. Within three weeks, the time it took for the UN to receive approval for sending in an armed intervention force, East Timor lay in ruins. The militias and their backers had displaced over one-half of the population, and killings and rape were widespread. They destroyed between 70 and 80 percent of all buildings throughout the territory, including in the most rural areas, and the infrastructure lay in ruins. Over 200,000 people were forced at gunpoint into Indonesian territory, mostly West Timor, where some remain in deplorable conditions to this day, considered bargaining chips by militias desperate to retain any semblance of power.\textsuperscript{715}

As the militias and the Indonesians razed East Timor in the weeks following the referendum, the international community wrung its hands, unwilling to send assistance to the region without Indonesia’s permission. Since most of the UN staff and international observers had left the region soon after the results of the ballot were announced and the scorched earth campaign began, Indonesia was free to maintain the diplomatic position that outside help was not necessary and, that by sending more troops to the region, Indonesia had the situation under control. These official pronouncements were belied by accounts from those escaping the territory, as well as by foreign intelligence reports, that pointed to destruction on a remarkable scale.

\textsuperscript{715} Although at this point most who remain in West Timor are militia members and their families or those who wish to remain Indonesian citizens. Some militia members were sent to the restive province of West Papua, where they continue to intimidate the population there into accepting Indonesian rule. “Indonesia: Impunity persists in Papua as militias take root.” Amnesty International Press Release. AI Index ASA 21/048/2000 - News Service Nr. 183, accessed 27 September 2000, available from indonesia-act@igc.apc.org.
Finally bowing to pressure and UN Security Council Resolution 1264 authorizing a peacekeeping mission (and after enough time to destroy East Timor’s infrastructure almost completely), the Indonesians allowed an international force led by Australia to enter the territory on 20 September 1999. The United Nations established a transitional authority on 20 October called the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor (UNTAET), which oversaw East Timor’s transition to independence. UNTAET was forced to start from scratch in rebuilding East Timor, with a strained relationship between indigenous elites and the UN staff. Following the granting of complete independence on 20 May 2002, East Timor became a sovereign state, led by former Fretilin and Falantil leader Xanana Gusmão as president and Mari Alkitiri as Prime Minister. The 2007 election saw José Ramos Horta’s ascension to the presidency, and Gusmão’s occupation of the position of Prime Minister.

East Timor continues to struggle with its legacy of Indonesian occupation as well as the destruction wreaked in the weeks following the referendum. Poverty remains high, as does the jobless rate. Oil revenues from the Timor Gap, following a treaty signed with Australia to share the rights to the region, are beginning to trickle in. East Timor will remain a peripheral, developing state for the foreseeable future.
CHAPTER 6: EARLY SUMBANESE HISTORY

Academic literature on Sumba is generally limited to anthropology, and is primarily ethnographic. Outside of these ethnographies there are few other sources, among the most notable include Webb Keane’s *Signs of Recognition: Powers and Hazards of Representation in an Indonesian Society*, Rodney Needham’s “Sumba and the Slave Trade,” Jacqueline Vel’s *The Uma-Economy: Indigenous Economics and Development Work in Lawonda, Sumba* and Vel’s 2008 book *Uma Politics: An Ethnography of Democratization in West Sumba, Indonesia, 1986-2006*.716 Perhaps the most cited book is by a Sumbanese political and hereditary elite named Oemboe H. Kapita.717 His seminal work, *Sumba di Dalam Jangkuan Jaman (Sumba in the Scope of Time)*, is a compilation of essays written in the 1960s and 1970s, following Kapita’s long association with the Dutch anthropologist Louis Onvlee (Kapita’s – and most of Onvlee’s – work remains untranslated). The book is an in-depth sociological view of Sumbanese history, culture, religion, social hierarchy and politics, and it provides a fascinating view into the world of Sumba. The book’s major flaw is an absolute lack of citations. This flaw plagues his other serious works, such as *Masyarakat Sumba dan Adat-Istiadat*


717 “Oemboe” or “Umbu” is an honorific denoting status in the Maramba or royal class. The feminine is “Rambu.” Its near equivalent in Javanese could be “Raden Mas.”
(Sumbanese Society and Tradition), another compilation of essays that has much of the same content as Sumba Di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman. It is easily ascertained, however, that despite the lack of citations the book’s historical sections rely on Dutch colonial documents, which is not surprising considering his association with Onvlee and the availability of Dutch colonial records in Holland. Furthermore, since Kapita was an elite who grew up and was educated during the colonial period, it is safe to assume he had at least a working knowledge of Dutch, and his position and education allowed him access to this material. Despite the lack of citations, his books are widely considered authoritative by both Sumbanese and non-Sumbanese alike, and are widely cited in the literature.

Kapita’s role in Sumbanese society as an elite and representative of the government dates to the founding of the Indonesian state. Following its establishment, the Indonesian state disbanded the Negara Indonesia Timor (State of Eastern Indonesia, NIT – see chapter three) and the Sumbanese Dewan Raja (Council of Kings) in 1950. Jakarta directed the transformation of the DPRD (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, Regional parliament), formerly an advisory body, to become the DPRDS (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah – Sementara, provisional regional parliament), which became simply the DPRD when its status was made permanent. Kapita was one of four members of the Dewan Perwakilan Daerah – Sementara (Temporary Regional Representative Council) founded 2 November 1950 by the DPRD-S. Shortly thereafter, what was formerly the NIT was divided to become various provinces, and Sumba became a part of the Sunda Kecil (Lesser Sunda) province. In 1954, Sunda Kecil became Nusa Tenggara (the Southeastern Islands), which included Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa, Flores, West Timor and
Sumba. In 1956 the DPRD was changed to the DPRD-Peralihan (DPRD Transfer, DPRD-P), which then formed the Dewan Perwakilan Daerah (Regional Representative Council, DPD) on 2 November 1956. Kapita was chosen as the head of the DPD. Two years later he was chosen as the head of the DPRD-P, representing East Sumba.718

Kapita’s account, written in 1965, continues to describe the division of Sumba into two kabupaten (regencies) and several kecamatan (districts) in 1962, but there is no mention of his role in this process. He notes, however, that despite the dissolution of the Council of Kings in 1950, when Jakarta created the regencies and districts in Sumba in order to be consistent with the rest of Indonesia, the rajas maintained their control over the regions, and their helpers (raja-bantu) controlled politics at the village level.719 Despite the nominal “modernization” and rationalization of political representation, Sumba’s traditional elites remained in power.

On 23 January 1973, the Panitia Penerbit Naskah-Naskah Kebudayaan Daerah Sumba (the Publisher’s Committee for Sumbanese Cultural Documents) was formed in conjunction with the Dewan Penatua Layanan Gereja Kristen Sumba (The Council of Elders in the Service of the Sumba Christian Church), at the behest of Dutch researchers L. Onvlee and P. J. Luijendijk. Kapita was chosen as its secretary.720 It is this committee that published the works of Kapita, including the two aforementioned books, both in 1976 (and both with an identical illustration on the covers!).

718 Kapita, Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman, 69-72

719 Ibid., 73.

The similarities between Kapita’s work and those that follow is striking. Kapita’s work accentuates the solitary nature of Sumba in comparison to the islands surrounding it. Kapita begins with myths concerning the place origins of the Sumbanese people, which include nearly every major and minor island in the vicinity of Sumba and some far away (Malaka, Singapore, Riau, Java, Bali, Bima, Makassar, Ende, Manggarai, Roti, Dao, Sawu, and Raajua); Kapita also claims that a land bridge linking Sumbawa, Sumba and Flores also helps to explain Sumbanese origins.\(^{721}\) He then explains the division of Sumbanese society into kabihu or suku (roughly, ethnic groups) that inhabit distinct paraingu (regions).

Sumbanese fostered and maintained connections to the world outside of the island, and there was frequent exchange of people to nearby islands, both in the name of slavery and spousal exchange. Kapita cites the work of Mpu Prapanca in asserting that there was likely a tributary relationship between Sumba and Java in the Majapahit period, between 1357 and 1389.\(^{722}\) Although Sumba fell under the suzerainty of the king of Bima in the 15\(^{th}\) century, Kapita notes that kings in Sumba maintained their independence.\(^{723}\)

It was in the 16\(^{th}\) century that contact with groups of traders began, including Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Arabs, French and English, all of whom desired Sumba’s aromatic sandalwood. Kapita cites these outside influences as introducing firearms, and with them introducing internecine warfare and slave-taking practices. Although the


\(^{722}\) See prior chapters for discussion of the importance of claims of the extent of the Majapahit empire in relation to modern Indonesian nationalism.

\(^{723}\) Kapita, *Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman*, 16 -17.
likelihood that the introduction of firearms caused internecine warfare to break out is remote, firearms certainly could have exacerbated conflict. Makassarese in nearby Flores began frequent slave raiding, which had a profound effect on settlement patterns in Sumba. It was during this period of intensifying slave trading that the division of society into three castes – maramba (royalty), kabihu (freemen), and ata or hamba (slaves) – calcified, based on those who offered protection, those who sought protection, and those who were captured as slaves, respectively.  

**Why Sumba?**

In conducting research for this dissertation I was asked more than once by Indonesian academics why I had chosen Sumba island as the unit of analysis. Perhaps a more local level of analysis would be more appropriate, some asked, such as village, ethno-linguistic group, clan (kabihu), or another. Yet there is a logic to viewing Sumba as a single unit of analysis.

First, although there are some marked differences between West and East Sumba, the major political division at the level of district (kabupaten) of the island, the similarities between the two halves outweigh the differences. Both, for example, have a history of practicing the animist marapu belief system (although with some variations). Both sides of the island are mired in poverty, for the most part. Both sides of the island are similar in other attributes, such as the level of the practice of Christianity, education and literacy. Both sides of the island have low levels of development.

---

724 Ibid., 18-19.

725 The author would like to thank Dr. Marthen NDoen, Faculty of Economics, Satya Wacana Christian University, for his pointed questions in this regard, as well as Daniel Daud Kameo, Vice Rector and Professor of Economics.
Furthermore, Sumba has traditionally been treated as a single unit of analysis (or conquest), first by the Dutch, then by later administrations. Academics, including foreigners, Sumbanese, and other Indonesians, may concentrate on specific regions in Sumba and seek to differentiate them from others within Sumba, but generally they draw broader comparisons applicable to the rest of the island.\footnote{726} As noted by Istutiah Gunawan in 1981:

> As has been remarked by a number of writers (Nooteboom, 1940; Onvlee: 131; Needham 1980: 21), there is great variation among the different domains of Sumba, but also an underlying cultural unity all throughout the island. The Sumbanese themselves recognize a shared identity, contrasting themselves to the Savunese, Endenese and other peoples from adjacent islands. It is generally believed in Sumba that all Sumbanese are descended from a common group of ancestral figures, although each domain has its own version of the names and

\footnote{726} “The richness of the ethnographies of Sumba give lie to any understanding of a single Sumbanese ‘culture’ or of a ‘culture’ of West Sumba or even some kind of ‘culture’ distinctive and unique to Wanokaka, or Anakalang, or Kodi... From this perspective – however important West Sumba may prove to be as an ethnographic field of study – it cannot be adequately understood except within a wider field of study. Drawing on recent linguistic formulations... it is possible to regard all of Sumba as a single ‘linkage’ (or ‘linkage group’) or perhaps more pertinently, as two, or at most three, such linkages. For these purposes, a ‘linkage’ can be defined as a grouping of related languages comprised of once contiguous (or near contiguous) speech communities with dialects that have, over time, differentiated from one another. Such linkages can be distinguished as ‘chains’ or ‘networks,’ though in many instances, this distinction may prove to be arbitrary. A ‘chain’ may be loosely described as a grouping of adjacent, though distinct speech communities located over an extended area in which each speech community is able to maintain some modicum of intelligible communication with its neighbouring speech communities whereas a ‘network’ is more a complex grouping of speech communities in which communication is maintained in multiple ways. Sumba as a whole, and West Sumba in particular, has elements of both a chain and a network. Within this framework, which is based on a theory of networks, it is heuristically possible to adapt different strategies: treating all of Sumba as a whole, or distinguishing West Sumba from East Sumba, or distinguishing Kodi as its own linkage apart from the rest of Sumba.” James Fox, “Foreword,” in Istutiah Gunawan-Mitchell, \textit{Hierarchy and Balance: A Study of Wanokaka Social Organization}, (Canberra: Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, 2000), 6. See also, For example, Kapita, \textit{Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman}; Kapita, \textit{Masyarakat Sumba}.}
mythical adventures of these figures. The regional variations within Sumba are best understood by consideration of three factors: ecology, language and the systems of kinship and marriage.\textsuperscript{727}

Some of the smaller units suggested, such as clan (\textit{kabihu}) or ethno-linguistic group, do not make sense as a unit of analysis. One is hard pressed to imagine a single Sumbanese clan declaring independence from Indonesia and engaging in armed struggle to reach that goal. Furthermore, the separatist regions to which Sumba is compared are similarly structured. They all have various ethno-linguistic groups residing within their territory, which are united to some degree in struggle against Indonesia.\textsuperscript{728}

Another suggestion was made to examine the province of Nusa Tenggara Timor, which encompasses Sumba, Flores, West Timor, Sabu, Alor and some other smaller islands. Broadening the unit of analysis in this case to encompass a pre-existing political demarcation is appealing in some senses, and in conversation it was proposed by a former \textit{wakil bupati} (vice regent) of Kupang and others that should Shari’a or some other form of Islamization be imposed suddenly, all of NTT would declare independence and engage in armed conflict toward that goal.\textsuperscript{729} Yet despite this perceived feeling of solidarity


\textsuperscript{728} There success, continued struggle, or failure may be a function of the unity of these movements. This is an area for further research.

\textsuperscript{729} Djubida expressed worry over recent political developments, centered in Java and other areas, of creeping Islamization such as shari’a based bylaws and the increasing strength and perceived impunity if Islamicist groups, concerns that are mirrored in conversations with other Christians throughout the archipelago. NTT, and especially Kupang, was portrayed as the last stronghold of Christian faith, where even Catholics and Protestants forgive former animosity and work together to reject Islamization. “If Shari’a
among the Christian-majority region of NTT, there exist vast differences between its constituent regions, primarily cultural in nature, which could prevent unity. Furthermore, rifts between Catholics and Protestants have emerged in the past, especially in Kupang, West Timor, which could present an obstacle to a unified position. Flores is predominantly Catholic, while West Timor and Sumba are predominantly Protestant.

**Sumba as a Case**

Of the four cases examined in this dissertation, Sumba is the outlier with respect to the dependent variable, separatism. Despite similarities to the other four cases (minority ethnicity, minority religion, severe poverty, late incorporation into the Dutch East Indies or Indonesia, peripheral status within Indonesia) in Sumba there is no discernable separatist movement. It is an obvious case for testing and eliminating competing theories of separatism, and it supports the explanatory power of Gurr’s Relative Deprivation thesis. For despite Sumba’s similarity in the aforementioned indicators, the one aspect that separates Sumba from the others most clearly is its lack of natural resources or sources of wealth. Sumba is poor not because it is being exploited, rather it is poor because it has always been poor. Furthermore, in part because of its poverty, and in part because of its history as a source of slaves for the surrounding region, Sumba’s final incorporation into the Dutch East Indies – albeit through the violent pacification campaign – and later Indonesia, represented to Sumbanese not the beginning of conflict but rather the end of a long, dark chapter of slave trading. The incorporation of Sumba ended widespread violence, introduced social stability, and began an influx of aid...
and development money with very little expected in return, although Sumbanese acknowledge that these developments literally changed their world.

Sumba is a small island in the Nusa Tenggara Timor (Eastern Southeast Islands) province of Indonesia. It is approximately 750 kilometers from Java, south of Flores, southwest of Timor, and southeast of Sumbawa. Its population is approximately 500,000 with a landmass of 11,150 square kilometers. Its most famous resource was the aromatic sandalwood tree, but by the close of the nineteenth century stands of sandalwood had mostly disappeared due to overexploitation.\footnote{In fact, the Dutch included two other names for Sumba in the 1908 Encyclopedia of the Dutch East Indies: “Tjendana,” the Malay word for Sandalwood, and “Sandalwoedisland.” W. C. Muller, “Soemba, Tjendan of Sandelhou-Eiland,” in Encyclopaedia van Nederlandsche-Indie, S – Z, ed. Joh. F. Snelleman (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff – E. J. Brill, 1905), 3-9. The author thanks Professor Elly van Gelderen, Department of English, Arizona State University, for her assistance in translating this document.} Sumba’s other resources included horses and slaves. Slavers from nearby Flores began raiding Sumba in the 17th century, a trade that went mostly ignored by the Dutch until the latter part of the 19th century. This slave trade helped shape the settlement patterns of Sumbanese, who moved their villages several kilometers from the coastline, and warned their children as late as the mid-1950s that if they did not behave, men from the sea would come and take them away.\footnote{Rodney Needham found that this was a widely held belief as late as the 1960s, reflecting the late establishment of Dutch sovereignty and the end of the slave trade in the region. Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 41-2. Jacqueline Vel noted this in her research decades later, although she did not mention the roots for this belief. Vel, Uma-Economy.}
The Endenese and Early Dutch Contact

Early European sources portray Sumba prior to Dutch contact and consolidation as a region in turmoil, and part of the “politically fragmented and unstable” eastern part of the archipelago from the 16th to 19th centuries. Sumba lacked any vestiges of geographically widespread centralized power, and organization was principally at the clan or village level, which mirrored some of the regions immediately close to it, but certainly not more politically developed regions of the archipelago at this time, or centuries prior. It is this environment that made Sumba susceptible to exploitation by outsiders seeking both sandalwood and slaves.

It was in the 16th century that contact with traders including Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Arabs, French and English began, and all were after Sumba’s aromatic sandalwood. Kapita cites these outside influences as introducing firearms, and with them introducing internecine warfare and slave taking practices. Although the likelihood that the introduction of firearms caused internecine warfare to breakout is remote, firearms

732 Endeh is the old Dutch spelling of the capital of the nearby island of Flores. It is currently spelled Ende.

733 Needham, “the Slave Trade,” 19.

734 For example, the great trading state of Majapahit centered in East Java in the 14th century. Majapahit, as well as the much smaller 8th century maritime kingdom of Sri Vijaya, is considered one of the early geographic foundations of modern Indonesia, and cited as a reason why the diverse Indonesian archipelago should remain united and why East Timor and West Papua were destined to be incorporated into the nation-state. With regard to Sumba, Needham notes the lack of Buddhist or Hindu sites, but argues that it is not unreasonable to place Sumba within Majapahit’s sphere of influence. Rodney Needham, Mamboro: History and Structure in a Domain of Northwestern Sumba (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 20. Most authorities concur with this assessment, even arguing that despite Javanese cultural influence that dates back to Majapahit, the territory remained self-governed. Paulus Lete Boro, Pasola: Permainan Ketangkasan Berkuda Lelaki Sumba (Jakarta: Obor, 1995), 4-5.
could have exacerbated conflict. Slave raiding spread to nearby Flores, and began to have an effect on settlement patterns in Sumba. It was at this time that the division of society into the three castes occurred – *maramba* (royalty), *kabihu* (freemen), and *ata* or *hamba* – based on those who offered protection, those who sought protection, and those who were captured as slaves, respectively.735

Sumba had been raided for slaves in times past, and was claimed in 1662 by the Sultan of Bima from nearby Sumbawa.736 Endenese operating from the nearby island of Flores soon began taking slaves from Sumba. Most of these Endenese had shifted southward from Makassar (Unjung Padang) on Sulawesi (Celebes) as the Dutch encroached on their territory and consolidated their rule. When the Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, henceforth VOC) arrived in Sumba, it found two conditions that facilitated its participation in the slave trade: the “constitution of Sumbanese society” including the rigid hierarchy of class and status among Sumbanese, from slaves (*ata*) to aristocratic elites (*maramba*), and Sumbanese politics.737

As for the political situation on the island, this too was favourable to the slave trade. There was no centralized polity, the country was divided into numerous zones of fluctuating power, and perpetual conflict and insecurity were endemic to Sumbanese life… The first administrator, in 1866, reported that there was no law other than that of the strongest; in 1890 (Dutch researcher) ten Kate was told that it often happened that an isolated Sumbanese in strange territory was taken captive; in the early years of the present century the conditions of life were still ‘wild and disorderly;’ and it was not until 1933 that the military detachment in Western Sumba was replaced by civil police… In this respect Sumba was in much


737 Ibid., 13-14.
the same state as were other outer islands in Eastern Indonesia and the waters between them: no one was safe anywhere, and the price of weakness was, if not death, enslavement.738

As the Dutch consolidated their rule in the Indies, they paid closer attention to regions that were the most profitable, and to regions that were threatened by other European powers. Since Timor and Flores both had a Portuguese presence (dating to the early 16th century) the Dutch sent Commander Apollonius Scotte to Kupang in 1613, where he befriended the raja. This sparked over 40 years of conflict between the Dutch and Portuguese over Kupang, with the Dutch eventually winning control.739

Kapita notes a gap in information about Sumba during most of the 17th century, except for complaints from the Sultan of Bima over the Javanese missions to secure sandalwood, which were banned by the Dutch.740 The 18th century saw Sumba come into Dutch focus, although it remained peripheral. In 1750, Opperhoofd (Station Chief) D. J. van den Berg responded to a call for assistance from the Sumbanese Raja of Mbatakapidu, Umbu Joka Awangu. Van den Berg went to Sumba and created “oral contracts” (“kontrak secara lisan”) with the eight rajas of Mangili, Umalalu, Patawangu, Mbatakapidu, Kanatangu, Kapunduku, Napu, and Lewa. The agreements stipulated that “(the rajas) would acknowledge the sovereignty of the Company and promise not to transfer goods to Makassarese or other Europeans.”741 The visit was followed four years

---

738 Ibid., 14-15.


740 Ibid., 21.
later by gifts for the rajas, including guns, ammunition, and alcohol, among others, and in return each raja gave two slaves, a male and a female. Van den Berg later returned to Sumba and presented Dutch flags as symbols of authority.742

The mid-18th century proved to be conflict prone for Sumbanese: Makassarese who had moved from Celebes to Flores, and were consolidating their position there, frequently raided the region and turned their attention to Sumba in 1758. This is a direct result of actions of the VOC, whose efforts to monopolize the spice trade disrupted Makassar and started migrations to Ende, and later to Sumba.743 The VOC desired to retain Sumba as a region for slaves and to monopolize the sandalwood trade, and recommended measures to keep the Makassarese pirates out. In 1768 a representative of the VOC was assigned to Sumba, but by 1775 raiding groups of Makassarese were taking large numbers of slaves, and Sumba had become a slave trading rendezvous. In 1777 the VOC based the possible exploitation of Sumba’s resources on expelling the Makassarese.744 Yet according to Kapita, in the time of the VOC Sumba “was not really paid attention to because there was not enough potential for profit and it was not occupied in the meaning of colonized. There was just enough of an occasional connection

---

741 “Isi kontrak itu ialah, bahwa mereka mengakui kedaulatan Kompeni dan berjanji tidak akan menyerahkan hasilnya kepada orang Makasar apalagi kepada orang Eropa lain.” Ibid., 22.

742 Ibid., 22.


744 Ibid., 20-21.
to barely protect it, just enough so that other countries, such as Portugal or England,
could not snatch it away.\footnote{Kapita, \textit{Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman}, 23}

The beginning of the 19th century, including the British interregnum of 1812-1816, saw little increase in attention toward Sumba. The Java War (1825-1830) and the Padri War in Sumatra (1821-1837) contributed to this lack of attention.\footnote{Ibid., 24-25.} The 1824 Treaty of London formally recognized Sumba as within the Dutch sphere of control.\footnote{Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 22. The Treaty of London, also known as the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, established favorable trade conditions between the two countries, as well as delineating spheres of influence and territorial control. Holland gave up claims on the Malay Peninsula and Indian subcontinent, and Great Britain gave up claims in the Indies archipelago, including Sumatra. The treaty reflected recent political developments in the archipelago: the VOC had gone bankrupt in 1799, and the transition from private enterprise to Dutch rule was interrupted by the Napoleonic Wars in Europe. Great Britain occupied and administered the Indies through Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles from 1812-16.} Despite this treaty, Sumba still remained under \textit{de facto} control of the Makassarese/Endenese, who “murdered anyone who came to the island from elsewhere.”\footnote{Ibid., 23.}

In 1838 the Dutch made an expedition to Ende to demand the cessation of the slave trade. The Endenese refused and the Dutch destroyed 400 large houses and 50 \textit{perahu} (boats). The following year the Endenese signed a contract agreeing to halt slave trading, but commenced again shortly thereafter.\footnote{Ibid., 24.}

In 1839, Sharif Abdulrahman, born in Pontianak, Borneo (now Kalimantan) but banished to Batavia (now Jakarta) for manslaughter, befriended D. J. van den Dungen...
Gronovius, who was to become the Resident of Timor and thus responsible for Sumba.\textsuperscript{750} Gronovius brought Sharif to Kupang, and then set him up as a trading partner in Ende. Sharif visited Sumba to buy horses, and by 1841 the trade was turning a profit of more than fl.300,000.\textsuperscript{751} In 1843 he settled in the northeast and founded Waingapu, the “best harbor on the north coast” and since then the capital of the island, followed by a wave of Endenese migrants who settled along the coast. Needham notes that the Sumbanese were powerless to stop them even if they so wished, as the Endenese had firearms and the Sumbanese, for the most part, did not.\textsuperscript{752} Sharif set himself up as a raja and levied taxes on Waingapu’s residents. He was viewed as the representative of Dutch authority on Sumba, and he favored the Endenese residents of Sumba.\textsuperscript{753} In April 1845, Resident C. Sluyter, Gronovius’ replacement, was sent to Sumba to sign new contracts with Sumbanese rajas. Several signed this new contract and were rewarded with gifts for acknowledging Dutch sovereignty.\textsuperscript{754}

On January 1, 1860, slavery was officially abolished in the Dutch East Indies, yet despite the proclamation it continued unabated in Sumba. In June, Resident W. L. H. 

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{750} Or Syarif Abdurraman bin Abubakar Alkadri. Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 83. Other versions of his name exist and are used by different authors. A resident is equivalent to a provincial governor. Because of sailing times, in 1864 the Dutch East Indies government considered transferring responsibility for Sumba from the Resident of Timor to the Governor of Celebes, as Sumba was easier to reach by sailing from Makassar, ironic given the role of the Makassarese in their subjugation of the Sumbanese (Anderwerelt, 1906, quoted in Needham, “Slave Trade,” 19).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{752} Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 24.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{753} Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 88.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
Brocx, Sluyter’s replacement, went to Sumba and signed four contracts, with the rajas of Kambera (Umbu Tanga), Kadumbulu (Umbu Hiwa), Taimanu (Umbu Nggaba), and Mangili (Umbu Mangu). The same year was the first major clash of the Dutch on Sumba. Gronovius sailed to Sumba and sank ten Endenese slave ships, and then signed an agreement with four Sumbanese rajas hoping to end their conflict with the Endenese. Sharif advised Gronovius that in order to stop the slave trade, the Endenese would have to be expelled from Sumba. The following year, in 1861, it was reported that the Endenese had moved from the coast to the interior of the island, and had begun raiding inland villages, taking slaves and selling them to Sumbanese rajas in the coastal areas. Despite meager attempts by the Dutch to stem the slave trade, it continued through the late 19th century. By 1883, the Dutch had managed to stem somewhat the flow of slaves out of Sumba, but the slave trade within Sumba flourished.

The Dutch became more concerned with events on Sumba after a report reached Batavia of a British ship running aground in the mouth of the Hudu River in May 1863. The crew was assisted and brought to Waingapu to sail for Java on the orders of the Raja.

---

755 Ibid., 26.

756 Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 27-28. This account, however, is most certainly incorrect in some details. According to Kapita, there had already been at least two, and possibly three other Residents after Gronovius had retired in 1845. That being said, Gronovius did stay in the area in some capacity for some amount of time after he retired, including trips to Sumba. This report may have reflected the actions of Gronovius (albeit a very old Gronovius) or the resident of the time, most likely I. Esser.

757 The author heard anecdotal accounts of people being bought and sold during my time in Sumba, although these could not be independently verified. Dhani Makambombu, interview by author, 27 February, 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. The lasting social effects of the slave trade and division into castes is apparent, however.

of Lewa-Kambera. This was the first step toward pushing the Dutch toward a more active occupation of Sumba. In 1866 the Dutch sent Kontroleur S. Roos to Waingapu in order to monitor Sharif, who had fallen under suspicion, and to study the dynamics of Sumba to determine how best the Dutch could govern the region. He was the first Dutch official to become involved in Sumba’s internecine warfare, and after a smallpox epidemic decimated the population of nearby Savu Island in 1869, Roos “acted as vaccinator and saved many people from death,” although the epidemic killed nearly 50 percent of the population. Drought plagued all of Sumba that same year, and the following year the smallpox epidemic that ravaged Savu spread to Sumba, with Roos once again playing the role of vaccinator. He also explored agricultural possibilities such as the introduction of wet rice cultivation, and imported horses for breeding from Australia. Roos did not directly rule over the Sumbanese, but played the role of advisor to “show the rajas how to keep the population happy.” Kapita paints a glowing portrait of Roos as a man who was well regarded by Sumbanese, who respected Sumbanese tradition and language (and even wrote a Dutch-Sumbanese dictionary), and, despite the hardships and problems of Sumba, including the continuing slave trade, internecine war,

---


760 Ibid., 27.

761 Ibid., 29.

762 Ibid., 29.

763 Ibid., 28.
epidemics, and thievery, never treated the Sumbanese poorly. He was promoted to Assistant Resident of Ternate in 1873, and replaced by Kontroleur (L. P. C.? ) Roskott.\textsuperscript{764}

Political “troubles with the Sumbanese population – or more specifically with its leaders – started after Roos left.”\textsuperscript{765} The Dutch made attempts to bolster the horse trade between 1871 and 1876 with financial assistance, but the operation was halted due to “political reasons.”\textsuperscript{766} There was a “great internal war,” the \textit{perang Mbatakapi}d\textit{u}, in July and August 1874. The brother of the Raja of Seba, Ama Kuji Bire, stole 70 horses from Kambera, set a fire that destroyed 16 houses there, and declared war on Umbu Ndai Litiata, the Raja of Mbatakapi\textit{d}u, in reaction to the accusation that Umbu Yiwa Makabunggulu had stolen horses from the government and from Sawu. Ama Kuji Bire led an attack on Mbatakapi\textit{d}u, where he was killed, and his brother, the Raja of Seba Ama Doko Kaho, went to Kupang and asked for assistance from the Resident. The resident sent forces and weapons to stop the conflict, which was halted with few victims and resulted in a pact between the Resident and the Raja of Lewa-Kambera. Conflict continued to simmer, however, for another year.\textsuperscript{767}

Suspicions of Sharif culminated in his summons to Kupang in 1877 as his activities in the slave trade were deemed to stimulate internal warfare. He died there three months later, and as a result, groups sponsored by the raja of Lewa-Kambera surrounded the Dutch Kontroleur’s house and threatened him. A reward was offered to whomever

\textsuperscript{764} Ibid., 30.

\textsuperscript{765} Vel, \textit{Uma Economy}, 88.

\textsuperscript{766} Muller, 4.

\textsuperscript{767} Kapita, \textit{Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman}, 30-33.
brought in the raja of Lewa-Kambera, but perhaps reflecting the lack of Dutch influence, no one responded, and the raja died of old age in 1892.\footnote{Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 88-89.}

By 1877, firearms and equipment had become the chief currency in the slave trade, and contributed to the prosecution of internecine warfare, although the Endenese maintained the upper hand in terms of arms.\footnote{Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 25-26.} Gronovius noted that the depopulation of the northern coast “is caused by nothing other than the repeated and incessant trading in slaves, which has lasted for years and up till the present day has not come to an end.”\footnote{Ibid., 26.}

In 1879, the Dutch sent the first representatives to occupy a permanent position in the western half of the island, which had been long neglected. Similar to the pattern in the east, the Dutch representatives gave gifts to the local rajas in exchange for vows of loyalty.\footnote{Kapita, \textit{Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman}, 43-46.}

In 1890, the administrator of Sumba proposed that Endenese should be allowed to live only in particular areas, under headmen who would claim responsibility for them, and with limited travel to the interior, with the goal of stopping these marauding bands and limiting the within-Sumba slave trade. Slave trading continued, however, and was reported to be commonplace until 1906, when the Dutch placed the island under a firm military administration.\footnote{Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 34-35.}
Needham notes the long-term consequences of the early slave trade on the psyches of the Sumbanese:

We should not forget, either, the lasting effects of slave-raids on the consciousness of the Sumbanese. When I lived in Kodi, in the mid-fifties, the appearances of a strange vessel out at sea, or just the rumour of one, would provoke all the signs of a general panic; men looked fiercely serious, and screaming women dashed to pick up their children. The assertion that such apparitions were *penyuman*, robbers or marauders… was quite frequent, especially in the early months of the year. Contumacious children might be told that if they did not behave properly the marauders would get them… The strange craft, real or fearfully surmised, were seen as possible slave-raiders. It is understandable, then, that Kodi villages were located some miles back from the sea… What the recollection of the incidents mentioned above brings home is something of the justified terror into which the Sumbanese could be thrown, only two generations or so before, by the real and present danger of attack by slave-raiders. It reminds us that, for the people affected, the reality of the events that in the narrative are summarized with expository detachment meant in fact sudden death, separation of spouses, abduction of children, wholesale robbery, the burning of homes and possessions and means of livelihood.773

**Dutch Consolidation**

Prior to Dutch consolidation in the beginning of the 20th century, contact with the Dutch, and thus with colonial authority, was limited mainly to coastal areas; the hinterlands remained free for the most part from almost any Dutch presence, although Dutch missionary activity had increased in the middle of the century.774 Two wars, in quick succession, led to the consolidation of Dutch rule and the establishment of security on Sumba. The first was the War of Lambanapu in 1899, which is considered a “watershed event” in Sumbanese politics as the way Sumbanese referred to the island changed from *tana Sumba* (land of Sumba) to *tana Jawa* (land of foreigners).775

---

773 Ibid., 41-42.

774 Vel, *Uma-Economy*, 95; Gunawan-Mitchell, 4.
The successor to the raja of Lewa-Kambera started the second war in 1901, which led to increased Dutch military involvement after rumors circulated that he would seize Waingapu. After Waingapu was secured, the Dutch military began searching for the raja, but he was not found until 1907. He was exiled to Sumatra, and returned only in 1912 after pacification.\textsuperscript{776} Widespread respect for the Dutch in Sumba came only after they showed their prowess in battle.\textsuperscript{777} Slave trading on Sumba was considered commonplace until the Dutch began to consolidate their rule of the island in 1906.\textsuperscript{778}

As the Dutch expanded their influence in Sumba in the latter 19\textsuperscript{th} century, Protestant missions did so too. In 1880, the Dutch Reformed Church chose Sumba as its second area in which to work, after Central Java.\textsuperscript{779} Reverend D.K. Wielenga began working in the interior after 1881, and for the first time the Church began to focus on ethnic Sumbanese (there had been a Savunese Christian community since 1870, and two churches served the Savunese on Sumba). Wielenga began to service Sumbanese in the interior, and began to favor them in conflicts with other ethnic groups, including

\textsuperscript{775} Kapita, \textit{Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman}, 40-43, 46; Vel, \textit{Uma Economy}, 90. Reflecting the earliest contact between Javanese and Sumbanese, during the Majapahit period, all foreigners are referred to as “\textit{Orang Java}” (literally, “Javanese person”), as the earliest contact with outsiders was with Javanese. The term has lost its literal meaning, and now is a broad term that refers to all foreigners. Jack Adam, interview by author, 11 July 2006, Salatiga, Central Java. Adam is former journalist for the \textit{Kupang Post} and \textit{Sinar Harapan}.

\textsuperscript{776} Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 89.

\textsuperscript{777} Ibid., 89.

\textsuperscript{778} The 1905 edition of the \textit{Encyclopedia of the Dutch East Indies} notes with nonchalance the presence of slavery, 45 years after it had been banned in the Indies. See: Muller, 4.

\textsuperscript{779} Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 91.
Buginese and Endenese, whom he criticized as being slave traders and Muslims. By openly opposing the slave trading Endenese and Buginese, the church sowed the seeds for the subsequent eventual conversion to Christianity of the majority of the population.

Vel writes that the relationship between the government and the Church was “ambiguous:” “On the one hand, the missionaries were avid supporters of pacification, since their own work was not very manageable in the situation of continuous warfare and general insecurity. On the other hand, they did not want to be identified with the government or the military. They wanted to gain trust, not power.”

There was little conflict between the government and the missions. The Protestant church focused on:

- formal and informal education,
- medical care,
- socio-economic work,
- the study of language and culture for purposes of translating the Gospel. Because of this involvement in constructing welfare institutions, the people of Sumba generally have a positive attitude toward the Dutch, who are more associated with hospitals, churches and schools than with tanks, canons and warships.

A Jesuit mission was sent in 1889, but withdrew in 1898 due to a lack of staff and Article 123 of the Netherlands Indies Administration that forbade Protestant and Catholic missionaries competing in the same place, in the name of order. Dutch impressions of

---

780 Ibid., 91.

781 Ibid., 91. Vel’s evaluation of the benign effects of the Protestant church is most likely colored by her associations with it; she worked for several years for a Christian development agency in Sumba in the 1980s. Clerics in the Indies could accumulate great wealth and power, concurrent with proselytizing.

782 Ibid., 91-92.

the island in the late 19th century noted the near absence of law and order, and the prevalence of violence:

Van Alphen voiced a general and understandable impression when he stated, towards the end of the nineteenth century, that a total anarchy prevailed on Sumba (1884: 206); and indeed the indigenous polity was not centralized and it lacked most of the organs of government that a western visitor might have first looked for as the bases of such stability and civic order as existed. Roos reported that there was no law other than that of the strongest (1872: 9), neither was there any security of property or person (Wielenga, 1926: 18). By most accounts, before the Dutch intervened with a military administration, perpetual conflict and insecurity were endemic to Sumbanese life, and no one was safe anywhere.784

This violence, internecine and between Endenese and Sumbanese, coupled with a lack of easily identifiable economic incentives once slave trading was made illegal and sandalwood stands decimated, was the main reason why the Dutch did not press for control of Sumba earlier.785 The Dutch exhibited very little knowledge of the area as they began their consolidation, with population estimates ranging from 42,000 to one million.786 They did, however, note the presence of Arabs, Chinese, Endenese and Buginese in Waingapu, with the effect of these “industrious peoples” edging out native Sumbanese economically.787

784 Needham, Mamboro, 45.

785 Gregory L. Forth, Rindi: An Ethnographic Study of a Traditional Domain in Eastern Sumba (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), 7-8. Forth notes the low population density on the island as well, and attributes it to the slave trade. Vel notes that it was slave trading that introduced economic incentives for warfare. Vel, Uma-Economy, 86-87. Istutiah Gunawan-Mitchell argues that low population density could also be attributable to venereal disease and the sterility it causes, as well as abortion, in the regions she studied, Wanokaka. Gunawan-Mitchell, 35.

786 Muller, 4.

787 Ibid., 4.
Needham notes, however, that there was a recognizable kind of polity in Mamboru, the area where he did his field research, based on locality, descent, rank, and affinal alliance. Forth notes the reason for more developed polities in some coastal areas:

It was also because of slave raids and internal unrest that previously more dispersed populations assembled to found the present chief villages (*paraingui*) built on elevated sites and fortified with stone walls and cactus hedges. This accords with the fact that such large settlements, and hence the more unified political territories of which they form the centres, are more prevalent on the coast than in the interior.  

There were rajas, the recipients of Dutch gifts, as well as councils made up of representatives from clans. Where there were no easily identifiable or cooperative rajas through which to govern, such as in Anakalang, the Dutch created them, setting them up as *bupatis* (Regents). There was still not, however, any sort of widespread geographical unity in Sumba. To the astonishment of the Dutch, many Sumbanese did not have place names for mountains that were within eyesight, or even nearby villages that were in a different district. Geographical knowledge of the Sumbanese remained slight even after World War II. These indicators of the lack of social communication are to be explained “in part by the absence of a centralized government and by the perpetual conflict that was endemic to traditional Sumbanese society. Roos, a century ago, reported that on Sumba there was no law other than that of the strongest, and for a long time

---

788 Forth, 8.


790 Keane, “Knowing,” 42-43. Keane notes that this practice continued into the Indonesian period, thereby establishing families of elite heritage that continue their traditions of ruling through heredity, albeit through modern, bureaucratic channels. Hoskins writes that the Dutch created the aristocracy in West Sumba and invented royal genealogies to legitimize them. Janet Hoskins, *Biographical Objects; How Things Tell the Stories of People’s Lives* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 86-87.
thereafter the fear of strangers was a justified condition of life.”  

The extent of governance among elites in Sumba was unknown, although the Encyclopedia of the Indies portrays their rule as absolute, with the ability to take their subjects’ freedom or lives, and deriving income from tribute and fines levied for crimes.

The Dutch period of “pacification” began in 1906, with a military campaign aimed at subduing any remaining regions hostile to Dutch rule. Forth notes that the coastal regions did not resist, perhaps welcoming the Dutch as eliminating Endenese slave incursions, but that interior regions did resist, perhaps feeling as though their dominant position in the Sumbanese horse trade was threatened, and in response to Dutch taxation and demands for horses as payment. Kuipers notes that during the pacification of the island, rajas who rejected Dutch authority were rounded up and exiled, to be replaced by those who were sympathetic to the Dutch.

The pacification of Sumba held four goals: the release of slaves and end to the slave trade; prohibition of internal warfare, and the decree that all arms must be handed

---


792 Muller, 4. The term used to describe Sumbanese elites is vorstjes, which is the term for monarch but with a diminutive affix, connoting the disdain with which the Sumbanese were viewed. Later in the entry, ethnic Sumbanese are generalized to have beautiful physiques, taller than Javanese, martial characters, and to be hospitable, but “there are no other good characteristics.” They are deemed “unclean,” “cruel,” “heathens” and prone to thievery. “They are not lazy, but do not work more than they have to, as their rajas take any surplus” (5-6).

793 Forth, 12; Kapita, Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman, 46-50.

over to the government, “which in turn instituted its own monopoly of violence;”
obeisance of government orders, including corvee labor; and compliance with taxes.\textsuperscript{795}
Local government officials were appointed, but the only significant change was that the
rajas had one more layer added on top of their power, that of the colonial officials.
Taxation, rather than warfare, became their new suppressive tool.\textsuperscript{796} Despite the
consolidation of Dutch rule on the island, hostility and the slave trade were not
immediately eliminated in the interior, but as the authority of the Dutch slowly spread,
warfare was no longer an option for Sumbanese leaders to assert their authority, and they
began to look for other means, such as through taxation.\textsuperscript{797}

Echoing the “Ethical Period” of liberal colonial policy, including education for
the natives, the first private school opened in 1909, and the first government school in
1914.\textsuperscript{798} Religious conversion was tied to education during the Dutch period as it was
seen as a way to get access to “supernatural” power of literacy that the Dutch possessed,
yet religious conversion to either Islam or Protestantism was limited even after the
establishment of the Calvinist Church in 1933.\textsuperscript{799} According to Kapita (writing in the

\textsuperscript{795} Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 90

\textsuperscript{796} Ibid., 90.

\textsuperscript{797} Ibid., 95-96.

\textsuperscript{798} Keane, “Knowing,” 37. Kapita states that the school opened in early 1920.

\textsuperscript{799} Jill Forshew, \textit{Between the Folds} (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001),
20; Forth, 9; Keane, \textit{Signs}, 45. Religious conversion picked up rapidly in Sumba
following the communist purge of 1965-67, in which up to two millions suspected
communists and ethnic Chinese were murdered in Suharto’s ascent to power. Animists
were not recognized as being of one of five recognized faiths (including Protestantism,
mid-1970s), “it can almost be said that the leaders of Sumbanese society for the most part come from these schools, mostly those who are now at an advanced age.” The opening of a theological school in 1924 trained those who would become gospel teachers and preachers, but also rajas and other leaders. The church is also credited for establishing the first clinics in Sumba, beginning in 1894.

Sumba relied on the horse trade, which drove its political economy, although there was very little influx of the cash economy. In terms of the colonial experience, Sumba experienced a very light-handed Dutch presence. The only Dutch persons most Catholicism, Buddhist, Hinduism, and Islam) and were therefore equated with (godless) communism. Despite the rapid rise in religious conversion, many of course maintained their prior beliefs and converted in name only; on Indonesian identity cards to this day one’s religion is printed (as well as if one is tainted by association with the Communist Party) and so one has to list one of the recognized religions. That being said, some Sumbanese list “marapu” (ancestral spiritism) on their identity cards, including at least one local official. Keane, 44-45. Islam did not take hold during these waves of conversion, with the main reasons being the importance of pigs in the sumbanese diet and rituals, and the pre-existing status accorded to Christianity introduced by the Dutch. Drs Lukas Mb. Kaborang, interview by author, 19 January 2007, Waingapu, Sumba; Yonathan Tunggu Djama, interview by author, 19 January, 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. Kaborang is a former bupati of East Sumba, Djama was the former Chair (1992-94) of the DPRD.

800 Kapita, *Sumba di Dalam Jangkauan Jaman*, 63. This remains true, for the most part, to this day.

801 Ibid., 63.

802 Ibid., 64.

803 Forth, 8-9. By 1905, there was some insignificant export of corn, but Sumba was exporting an average of 2000 horses per year through the capital Waingapu. Muller, 5.

804 Forshee, 43; Djama.
Sumbanese in the interior saw were preachers. Political divisions based on geography and pre-existing political orders, however, were introduced:

In 1912, the Dutch divided what is now the East Sumba regency into nine ‘sub-departments’ (Du. *Onderafdeelingen*), later called in Indonesian *swapraja*, ‘autonomous regions.’ Each was governed by the headman of a local noble clan appointed to the most hereditary position of ‘independent administrator’ (Du. *zelfbestuurder*) or ‘raja,’ and most comprised two or more formerly independent traditional domains. This system continued under Indonesian rule until 1962, when East Sumba was divided into (eventually) six ‘sub-districts’ (Ind. *kecamatan*), each administered by an official, or *camat*, appointed by the government.

Contrary to Forth, however, Kapita notes the division of Sumba into four *onderafdeling*:

East Sumba, Central Sumba, Northwest Sumba, and Southwest Sumba. All of these *onderafdeling* were divided into five sections overseen by rajas, except for East Sumba, which was divided into four. In 1922, these four *onderafdeling* were consolidated into two, East and West Sumba, with Waingapu and Waikabubak as capitols, respectively.

These political divisions were not entirely unproblematic, as Needham notes:

The boundaries were artificial and disputable, and within them there were in some instances more numerous territorial subdivisions, which had their own traditional claims to recognition as political entities. This segmentary (sic) and unstable organization of indigenous Sumbanese society was accompanied by considerable linguistic variety, especially in the western part of the island… In addition, there are many other kinds of cultural variation throughout the island: for example, in patterns of woven cloths, in house styles, in the incidence of *pasola* (an annual

---

805 “Swapraja” is better translated as self-administering regions.

806 Forth, 12-13. This division, however, was mandated in 1959 with the founding of the Nusa Tenggara Province, and the Kebupaten of East and West Sumba. The year 1959 is commemorated and displayed on plaques and shields on government offices, but it would be understandable if the policy towards rationalization took three years to fully implement.


808 Ibid., 61-62.
mounted combat held formerly in Mamboru and still in Kodi), and in such aspects of personal bearing as demeanor and gait.  

**The Transition to Indonesian Rule**

Similar to all regions of the Dutch East Indies, Sumba fell easily to Japan’s invading forces in early 1942, with a Japanese garrison established on the island shortly thereafter, and all Dutch on the island taken prisoner.  

Despite Sumba’s similar proximity to Australia, Portuguese East Timor was chosen by the Japanese as their base for planning attacks on Australia, and by Australia as its last line of defense against the invading Japanese. The Japanese presence in Sumba, similar to elsewhere in the Indies, had the effect of delegitimizing Dutch authority based on white supremacy. The Japanese built airstrips on Sumba which required enlisting Sumbanese in forced labor, but the fierce fighting between Australians and Japanese that occurred in East Timor was absent from Sumba.  

As Sumba remained both economically and politically peripheral to the Japanese and the Allies during World War II, the overall pattern of Japanese occupation fit that of other peripheral regions of the Dutch East Indies. There was little contact between the Japanese and the Sumbanese in the interior of the island, but around 8,000 Japanese soldiers occupied the island, with concentrations in the large cities, and demanded the obedience of the natives, enlisted some in forced labor projects and mobilized even fewer to grow crops for the war effort.  

---

809 Needham, “Principles and Variations,” 22. Despite the aforementioned variation, Needham also found various elements of similarity throughout Sumba.

810 Vel, *Uma-Economy*, 92

taken for forced labor projects elsewhere, and some women were most likely taken as
“comfort women.” As the war turned against the Japanese, the Japanese turned against
the natives of the Indies, creating resentment and spurring the nationalist movement.

Kapita notes that the period of Japanese occupation was one of suffering and
horror. All Dutch were rounded up and sent as prisoners to Makassar. The Japanese
began work building three airstrips, in Kawangu (near Waingapu), Tulikadu (near
Melolo) and Kererobo (near Weetobula). Forced labor for these projects included
Sumbanese and imported Javanese, many of whom were tortured and killed, and who
died of sickness and starvation.813 In 1944 and 1945 Japanese troops on Sumba numbered
between eight and ten thousand, gathered to prepare for an invasion of Australia.814

Former Chair of the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (People’s Regional
Representative Council, or DPRD) Yonathan Tunggu Djama remembers seeing very few
Japanese in his village in the interior, but he remembers that the popular perception of the
Japanese was that they were cruel and inflicted arbitrary beatings and even murder. Their
presence was more extensive in the cities.815 Joel Kuipers notes that the cruelty of the

Yoas Restianti is a former civil servant in the office of the Waingapu Bupati’s office. Jill
Forshee notes that the Kampung Raja of Wandi, in the East Sumbanese capital of
Waingapu, suffered bombardment at the onset of the Japanese occupation and its
inhabitants were required to provide food and labor to a much greater degree than village
further from the city. Forshee, 56, 57.


814 Ibid., 67.

815 Djama.
Japanese and the sense of despair among Sumbanese were reflected in ritual speech. In Anakalang, Webb Keane notes that the Japanese occupation caused the disappearance of woven cloth among other hardships in Anakalang.

After the Japanese surrender, retaliation toward the Japanese was tempered by calls for order from the Sumbanese elites. The Japanese founded councils to govern the eastern and western halves of Sumba. Australian forces landed in east Sumba on the 8th of November, and reached the west the following day, as the Japanese gathered in the west to leave the island. The Dutch began returning at the same time, and the Australian forces quickly exited. Kapten Klas, Plaatselijk Militair Comandant XX, announced in Waingapu and Waikabubak that the situation would return to what it was before, and that the East Indies government would return to govern all of the Indies.

The surrender of the Japanese on August 15, 1945 brought the Indonesian Declaration of Independence two days later, signed by nationalist leaders Soekarno and Mohammed Hatta. The Dutch refused to recognize the Declaration, and a four-year war for independence broke out. Sumba remained peripheral during the revolution and was not the site of any major battles, although there were a few figures who emerged in support of independence. Vel notes:

After the war, the state of affairs was different. Roads, buildings, churches and hospitals had not been maintained and were thus in bad shape. In the absence of

---

816 Kuipers, Language, Identity, Marginality, 80-82

817 Webb Keane, Signs of Recognition, 46. He also notes that the Japanese occupation may have led to an increase in the number of animals sacrificed in Anakalang, as residents decided that gaining status through animal sacrifice was better than losing livestock to the Japanese without any such gain (Ibid., fn., 249).

818 Restianti.
the Dutch, many organizations of the church had collapsed. The most important thing, however, was the emergence of nationalism and anti-colonialism. Although nationalistic feelings were much stronger on other islands of Indonesia, and the Sumbanese population was not typically antagonistic toward the Dutch, general events in Indonesia substantially affected the situation on Sumba with regard to the government and the church. In 1945, Indonesian independence was declared by its leader Sukarno. In 1946, the Protestant Church of Sumba (Gereja Kristen Sumba) declared itself independent from the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, GKN).819

Part of this move was strategizing on the part of the church, including Dutch church officials on Sumba, who feared that they might be expelled and along with them the church as an institution: “In light of this, the missionaries officially adopted the new charge of simply being advisors.”820

Following the cessation of hostilities and granting of sovereignty to the Republic of Indonesia, two significant issues affected the immediate development of the newly independent state and its mission of consolidation and nation building. The first was the issue of West Papua and Dutch claims to the region, discussion of which was tabled and to be resolved later.821 The second issue was the tremendous debt imposed by the Dutch on Indonesia.

Holland was in economic tatters following World War II, which is one of the reasons that American pressure in the form of threats of cancellation of Marshall Plan support was so effective as a leverage to resolve the question of the Indies.822 The

819 Vel, Uma-Economy, 92.

820 Ibid., 92

821 The question of West Papua is covered in chapter four.

822 Dutch behavior during the 1945-49 Revolution was a significant factor in shifting official opinions away from support of the Netherlands to support of the
agreement signed between Holland and Indonesia saddled Indonesia with a debt of nearly $1 billion, essentially the cost for Holland prosecuting the four-year conflict, an agreement unheard of in the decolonization process of the rest of Southeast Asia.\textsuperscript{823}

As Indonesia began consolidating its territory and sovereignty in the 1950s, the central government in Jakarta faced rebellion in several provinces, including Aceh, the Moluccas, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, as well as external threats such as that from the United States, which felt threatened by Soekarno’s tolerance of the Indonesian Communist Party as American involvement in the Vietnam conflict escalated.\textsuperscript{824} As the national project was a new concept to most Indonesians, many of whom in the peripheral areas had lived with allegiances that went no higher than clan, and had remained, for the most part, out of the sphere of Dutch influence, the central government had its work cut out for it. Peripheral regions such as Sumba were not high on the government’s list of priorities as they were not in active rebellion, nor did they provide resources. Yet some manifestations Republicans. The Dutch habitually broke agreements against aggression signed during the conflict, and well publicized atrocities led to a further decline of support.

\textsuperscript{823} The Financial-Economic Agreement between the two countries stipulated that Holland retained a great degree of control of “sovereign” Indonesia’s economy and finances, such as oversight on measures that may have impacted Dutch interests, and allowed for Dutch firms to stay in Dutch hands and remit profits back to Holland. Dick notes: “No other ex-colony in Asia had to shoulder such a burden, which was a drain on both the state budget and the balance of payments… Had the debt of almost $1 billion been released for development, the economic situation in the mid-1950s would have been much brighter… The fact remains that the Netherlands was able to liquidate its colonial establishment largely at Indonesia’s expense.” Howard Dick, “Formation of the Nation-State, 1930s – 1960,” in The Emergence of a National Economy: An Economic History of Indonesia, 1800-2000, ed. Howard Dick, et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 170-71.

\textsuperscript{824} Kahin and Kahin.
of state power were necessary if the nation building process was to be completed and territory consolidated.

In Sumba, there were few if any significant social changes in the early period of Indonesian consolidation (1949 – 1965), although in 1950 the Council of Kings, formed during the Revolution and the establishment of the State of Eastern Indonesian by the Dutch, was dissolved, viewed as a colonial-era institution.\textsuperscript{825} The three-tiered class system remained, and village heads and traditional elites lost, \textit{de jure}, their political control based on heredity and class, but retained, \textit{de facto}, “considerable social control.”\textsuperscript{826} Some local elites, faced with Indonesian assertions of power, began to reassert their own, but this was always on a local level, and never led to the forging of a pan-Sumbanese identity, and certainly nothing resembling an anti-Indonesian movement.\textsuperscript{827} If anything, Sumba became ethnically more heterogeneous as people from outside of the region moved in. Elites continued to profit from the horse trade but economic parity or prosperity was far from realized.\textsuperscript{828} Government positions on Sumba were filled by children of elites who had taken advantage of early opportunities for education.\textsuperscript{829} Vel notes:

\begin{flushright}
825 Welem Julius Tedju, interview by author, 23 January 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. Tedju is a civil servant in the \textit{Seksi Sarana Prasarana} (Infrastructure Section) in the East Sumba government.

826 Forshee, 16.


828 Ibid., 22.

829 Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 96.
\end{flushright}
The public sector appeared to be more open to ethnical (sic) Sumbanese. Outside interventions by the government and the missions created opportunities for some of the Sumbanese to become incorporated as members of new kinds of services… Also because its population is very small compared to the total number of Indonesian citizens, government programs for Sumba do not yield an important contribution to political support on a national level. From a slightly negative and opportunistic view on national policy, one could say the only national importance of this island is its strategic, geographic location, at the southern border of the archipelago.830

Following independence, the church in Sumba experienced a lack of funds and a lack of experienced personnel with organizational skills. The Dutch stopped “serving as reverends connected to particular congregations” and started teaching local Sumbanese church officials and continued to translate the bible into Sumbanese languages. Two Sumbanese foundations assumed control of medical care, education, and the ownership of church buildings.831 The GKN continued providing financial support, and urged more attention be devoted to socio-economic development work as the situation in Sumba had deteriorated over the course of the war. The church played a significant role in the early years of Indonesian independence, as “the authority of the colonial government had ceased to exist, and had not yet been taken over by the new Indonesian government.”832

The transition to the New Order period (1965-1998) signified an increase in the attempt of the central government, now led by General Suharto, to bring peripheral regions into the fold, and increase the welfare of marginalized regions through massive state sponsored programs. As the transition to the New Order was instigated through a counter coup and a seizure of power, state legitimacy was not based on popular consent

830 Ibid., 5-6.
831 Ibid., 92.
832 Ibid., 93.
but rather initially on the necessity of eradicating a perceived immediate communist
threat (1965-67). Once that was achieved (at the loss of a million or more lives),
legitimacy was based on development, financed through massive foreign investment, and
reinforced through violence and suppression.833 The wave of violence that swept through
Indonesia in 1965-67 influenced developments in Sumba, as communists were targeted
there too. Vel notes that accused and alleged communists were not the only victims, but
that the purge was used as a reason to settle other kinds of grudges as well.834 Sumbanese
sources I spoke with recounted number between zero and 100 as the total of all victims of
the PKI pogroms.835

During the New Order, the government’s role in Sumba gradually increased and
was felt in various ways. The effects of the government reached down to the remote
village level “through officials such as the agricultural extension officer (PPL),” the
family planning program, and the process of what Vel calls “Golkarization,” including
Panca Sila indoctrination.836 As this process continued the Protestant Church began to
withdraw as the government assumed some of its roles. Conversion increased in the
1970s, concurrent with the New Order’s demands that citizens must profess a faith in one

833 Suharto realized the importance of fostering this kind of legitimacy in
Indonesia, and gave himself the nickname Bapak Pembangunan (Father of
Development).

834 Vel, Uma-Economy, 93. Also see: Sulistyo, passim.

835 Kaborang; Djama; Djoeroemana, 25 February 2006; Ngguli Hungga, interview
by author, 10 January 2007, Waingapu, Sumba; Hungga is a civil servant in the office of
the bupati in Waingapu, East Sumba.

836 Vel refers to the consolidation of political parties after the 1971 elections.
Golkar, Suharto’s party, dominated. See Vel, Uma-Economy, chapter two.
of five recognized religions. Because of the church’s preexisting prestige, and the inroads already made in converting Sumbanese, a large segment of the vast majority of the population who had not done so already converted to Christianity. As the consolidation of the New Order’s power increased following Suhartos’ ascension, so too did the effects of the state, including the decline in general conflict.

The influence of the church also grew:

The emergence of the church and the incorporation of Lawonda (Vel’s case-study) into the Indonesian nation state have created alternative lines of social organization… School children learn to see themselves as Indonesian citizens and not only as members of a certain lineate in this small area of West Sumba… The normative and organizational frameworks of the State and the Church interfere with traditional social organization. They not only blur distinctions based on kinship, but also those of traditional stratification. Converting was seen as modernizing, but not universal or complete; it initiated “a situation where alternative options of legitimizing behavior with reference to either Christian values or to the traditional values… People who have abandoned this belief completely are, to a certain extent, no longer tied to the traditional rules.” Aside from religion, government sponsored organizations such as farmer’s organizations also created new avenues for expression of self-identity, and also conveyed with them tangible benefits to members, such as seed-credit. For example, traditionally, according to Marapu, one had to sacrifice buffalo upon the death of a relative. These practices are still

---

837 Ibid., 93-94.
838 Ibid., 100.
839 Ibid., 100
840 Ibid., 103
respected, but government regulations and church exhortations against animal sacrifice can be cited if a person wishes to maintain his animals and not make a big sacrifice.\footnote{Ibid., 158; Piet Lende Bora, interview by author, 20 February 2007, Wewewa Timur, Sumba. Bora is the \textit{camat} of Wewewa Timur. Lexi Kristian Henuk, interview by author, 9 February 2007, Lewa, Sumba. Henuk is the \textit{camat} of Lewa. Ndoy Milaara, interview by author, 27 January 2007, Rindi, Sumba. Milaara is the \textit{camat} of Rindi. Large scale sacrifices, however, are still associated with prestige, and are considered mandatory for someone of elite status or upbringing. This practice occurred in the political context during the 2005 local elections in East Sumba, when the main candidates held feasts for their supporters (as well as anyone else who would attend), partly to win support, and partly to show what support they had. The candidates who were successful in both drawing a large number of people and holding a feast that was traditional in nature fared well (Umbu Mehang won, Lukas Kaborang got the second largest number of votes). Those who were not able to draw large crowds and provided non-traditional feasting food fared poorly. Jacqueline Vel, “Pilkada in East Sumba: An Old Rivalry in a New Democratic Setting,” \textit{Indonesia}, no. 80 (October 2005).}

Keane notes the difference in perception of local and national governments, not as legitimate versus illegitimate, but rather based on “force of arms and technocratic rationality versus efficacious speech and the moral authority of ancestral procedures;” Sumbanese retain their clan identities.\footnote{Webb Keane, “Knowing One’s Place: National Language and the Idea of the Local in Eastern Indonesia,” \textit{Cultural Anthropology}, 12, No 1 (February 1997), 37-63.} Despite being nominally and legally incorporated into the Indonesian state (and, as a consequence, becoming subjects of the nation building process), Sumbanese feel very little connection to the center. Keane notes the difficulties and inherent paradox of the Indonesian nation building process:

One the one hand, nationalisms commonly seek to lay claim to rich cultural heritages with deep histories. On the other hand, the prototypes for these heritages are often identified with the sort of local particularities that seem most to threaten the nation with divisiveness. In Indonesia, one way of dealing with this problem has been to attempt to construct local identity in such a way that it can be encompassed by national culture. How this works out in practice is not pre-determined – to represent a national culture to several million Javanese is quite a
different matter than doing so to Islamic separatists in Aceh, Dutch Calvinists in Ambon, or shamans in the tiny Wana settlements of Sulawesi. \footnote{Ibid., 38.}

And, of course, one could add the animists, pseudo-Christians, and Christians of Sumba. Keane notes that the formation of Sumbanese identity in contrast to “others” is much shorter than that of other areas in what is now Indonesia: “Sumba lacked an early involvement with nationalism and has not felt the massive economic effects of multinational enterprise… There are thus far no significant Sumbanese communities in Indonesian cities, and few returnees bring a sense of distinctiveness back home.” \footnote{Ibid., 39.}

Contact with outsiders remains rare as well, as tourism to Sumba is infrequent, especially outside of the February-March Pasola festivals in West Sumba. As Vel notes: “In the rural areas, there was, and still is, no sign of the establishment of a separate, capitalistic (sic) sector in the economy, consisting of plantations and industries like those found in other parts of Indonesia.” \footnote{Vel, \textit{Uma-Economy}, 5.}

Furthermore, “regarding the private sector of Sumba’s economy, there is a sharp contrast between the agricultural economy of the (ethnical)[sic] Sumbanese in the rural areas, and the urban commercial services economy, dominated by other ethnical [sic] groups.” \footnote{Ibid., 5.}

Linguistically, Sumbanese differentiate (as do most ethnic groups in Indonesia) their language from that of the national language. Keane writes:

Institutions and economics may shape the conditions for linguistic hierarchies, but it is language ideology that makes sense of those hierarchies. Speakers of
Anakkalangese, one of Sumba’s half-dozen languages, refer to Indonesian as ‘the foreign language’ (*na hilu jiawa*), but many seem to accept its dominance, as they also accept the legitimacy (if not always the actions) of the state.\(^{847}\)

Indonesian is the language of schools, government, and churches in Sumba, “in short, of political power, modernity, and literacy.”\(^{848}\)

Economically, Sumba has remained peripheral. There were very few resources to be extracted from the region and it was geographically far from major trade routes, therefore there was very little reason for the central government to impose itself locally. Similarly, because Sumba was not a significant national contributor, it received very little by way of development funds. Markets remained underdeveloped, and there remained little need for government-supplied infrastructure outside of schools and development projects, which frequently ended in failure. According to Keane, the Indonesian state is felt most directly through the transition to a rationalized and modernized local government.\(^{849}\) In one Sumbanese region, for example, Keane notes:

> In much of Indonesia, the state is an overwhelming presence, but from the local perspective in Anakalang, it appears most prominently in the form of partially enforceable directives, less effective exhortations, and a trickle of development funds that flow as patronage through the hands of local officials. This allows many people to experience the state either as a distant, potentially benign patron or as a distinct language and discursive style… In addition, the heavily centralized structure of government contributes to the perceived autonomy of local politics… Because local government serves primarily to transmit directives from the top down, it can seem to be more a sinecure than a field for independent action.

\(^{847}\) Keane, “Knowing,” 38.


\(^{849}\) Keane, “Knowing,” 46-7. As part of this rationalization, attempts were made by the state to eliminate the practice of appointing traditional elites into state roles, but this attempt largely failed. See: Kuipers, *Power in Performance*, 30.
Anakalangese eager to exert power are likely to direct their efforts into the local politics of exchange.\textsuperscript{850}

Although MacAndrews argues that discontent expressed by the outer regions of Indonesia in the period 1950-57 was caused by two major factors (the inability of the center to provide economic goods to the regions and the influx of “outsider” elites appointed to governing positions), this appears not to have caused the same kind of resentment in Sumba, as Sumba was not a producer of economic goods, and local elites maintained themselves in positions of authority.\textsuperscript{851} The shift to “Guided Democracy” in 1957-59 promoted national consolidation, but did little to prevent regional discontent. Rather, it was during the New Order period that followed that established new relationships between the center and the regions, and contributed to the overall stability of the state, albeit at tremendous social and human rights costs. The two factors in this process were the final recognition of the authority of the central government (and the victory of the military from among competing axes of power), and the “gradual delegation of authority to local provincial governments,” a result of the emphasis on development as well as a recognition of the desires of the provinces, and funded by the prosperity of the early 1970s oil boom.\textsuperscript{852}

Kuipers notes the decline in Sumbanese ritual speech in favor of Indonesian during the New Order, and continued indoctrination. Incentives and directives to convert to Catholicism or Protestantism led to skyrocketing conversion rates, from five percent

\textsuperscript{850} Keane, “Knowing,” 39-41.


\textsuperscript{852} Ibid., 6, 11.
Christian in 1955 to 20 percent in 1978 to 47 percent in 1986. Once converted
Sumbanese are discouraged from partaking in traditional feasting rituals by church
officials, although most do as the events are also social and not simply spiritual. Many
Christians, however, forego significant roles in these ceremonies and act as an audience
as opposed to participants. Kuipers also notes that government sponsored projects, such
as an irrigation system in the 1960s, usurped traditional authority, multiplying the amount
of land that became arable, leading to land redistribution at a cost to traditional elites and
benefit to commoners. That disputes over these new claims were the sole propriety of
government officials, and not traditional leaders, cemented these changes. As Kuipers
notes in a Weyewa couplet: “Wulla eka ounda, lodo eka tama (the moon rises differently,
the sun sets in a different pace), i.e., there has been a drastic, cosmic reorientation of their
world.”

In 1974, the authority of the central government began to be relaxed through the
Government of Indonesia Law No. 44, Jakarta, with a resultant devolution of power in
the form of autonomy. This policy allowed for more local decision-making but retained
overall central government control, viewed by the New Order government as crucial to
ensuring both the central government’s authority but also allowing for the successful
implementation of development projects.

Discussion

In exploring the background and social history of Sumba, an overall picture of
Sumbanese politics, especially vis-à-vis “others” who have usurped and shifted the nature

---


of power, emerges. Sumba remained outside of the purview of Europeans until the mid-nineteenth century, with the exceptions of sandalwood extraction and slave raiding. More earnest Dutch control of Sumba began following the banning of the slave trade in 1860, although this was a slow process and never fully realized. During this period (1860 – 1906), the Dutch pushed out or marginalized the Endehnese and Makassarese, and religious conversion began, albeit slowly and with the result of consolidating some Sumbanese leaders’ power under the Dutch administration.

The pacification campaign of 1906-12 was the last step for the Dutch to eradicate internal resistance from the Sumbanese, and allowed the Dutch to consolidate control of Sumba through the establishment of civilian authority. Yet despite this consolidation and the elimination of competitors, Sumba remained extremely peripheral in the Indies, especially since sandalwood had been virtually eliminated and the slave trade abolished. The horse trade became the primary economic sector in Sumba, and the amount of arable land increased due to the introduction of irrigation systems. For the vast majority of Sumbanese, especially those living outside of Waingapu and Waikabubak, life continued mostly unchanged; continuity far outweighed change. The Marapu belief system remained, as did the caste system (including slavery, which was becoming hereditary indentured servitude), education was extremely rare, most forms of development were missing, and Sumba remained outside of the overall Indies economy.

The Japanese invasion brought suffering to the Sumbanese, and with the importation of Javanese labor, perhaps created the stirrings of nationalism and common experience that had emerged decades earlier elsewhere in the Indies. That being said,
Sumba remained peripheral in terms of the Japanese political administration, as well as in the nationalist movement based out of Java and Sumatra that had begun to gain steam.

Sumba played no significant role during the national revolution, but instead languished as part of the state of Eastern Indonesia. When the revolution was won, however, Sumbanese elites recognized Indonesia’s authority. Despite the lack of attention paid to Sumba in the early years of national consolidation under Soekarno, there were no rebellious movements challenging the authority of the central state as occurred elsewhere. Rationalization and bureaucratization of the civil service began, but was essentially a continuation of and consolidation of traditional elites’ power.

It was during the New Order period that Sumba was more aggressively brought into the Indonesian fold, through various programs of a Suharto administration focused on development and completing the task of national consolidation. Education became more widespread, as well as better health care. Politically, Sumbanese elites were integrated into the national scheme through what Vel calls “Golkarization.” Golkar became, for Sumbanese elites, their opportunity to advance in position and consolidate their local control.
CHAPTER 7: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTINUITY IN SUMBA

This chapter explains the current political context in Sumba with attention to continuity and change. It explains Sumbanese willingness to be part of the Indonesian state, as opposed to harboring separatist sentiment, anti-state movements, or even widespread dissatisfaction with the political order. The preceding chapter laid out the historical development of Sumba with an emphasis on political and social change. The subsequent chapter compares Sumba with the other cases in the study (the Moluccas, West Papua, East Timor) that have experienced various levels of anti-state sentiment and violence over time, as well as Indonesia’s differing levels of success for overcoming these threats.

In conducting political research in Sumba, there are several challenges. Perhaps the most significant is the incomplete nature of the historical record of Sumba. Because Sumba was so peripheral prior to and during the Dutch colonial period (and remains so to this day), there is very little by way of a written record on Sumba, especially when compared to more significant regions of Indonesia. Academic literature on Sumba has almost exclusively been done by anthropologists (see previous chapter). As such, the corpus of work on Sumba is rich in ethnographic detail, but also somewhat parochial. These ethnographies generally say very little, outside of brief introductory statements, about Sumba and its history as a whole, but rather generally present focused, in-depth research on one ethno-linguistic region in particular.

---

Several trips to the National Archives in Jakarta revealed a handful of references to Sumba, almost exclusively in Dutch, and almost exclusively dealing with Sumba in a tangential way.
One of the themes in much of these works is change that could broadly be described as “modernization” in conjunction with the incorporation of Sumba into the Indonesian nation, or prior to that, into the Dutch East Indies. Joel Kuipers writes of the gradual decline in the use of ritual language in Wejewa (Wewewa) and elsewhere in Sumba. Janet Hoskins writes about the encroaching modernity that begins to displace traditional notions of time in Kodi, including, for example, the cash economy and taxation displacing the barter economy, and the increase of conversion to Christianity, at least nominally. Danielle Geirnaert-Martín notes the increase of mobility provided with modern transportation, which allows for increased marketization of peripheral areas in West Sumba. Jacqueline Vel also documents the rise of religious conversions and the penetration of market forces in Lawonda. Jill Forshee documents changes in the marketing of weaving with increases in tourism and the broadening of the market for Sumbanese textiles in Bali and elsewhere, which affect the processes of creating the weavings and lead to social changes. Istutiah Gunawan-Mitchell writes of the decline

---

856 Kuipers, Power in Performance; Kuipers, Language, Identity and Marginality.


859 Vel, Uma Economy.

860 Forshee.
in recruits for traditional ceremonial roles such as village priests as a result of the penetration of market forces.\(^{861}\)

As modernity and its attendant processes – such as capitalization, a decline in the marapu belief system in favor of Christianity (spurred by Suharto’s New Order and its Panca Sila ideology), the penetration of elements of the state and government in the forms of taxation, new rituals and authority, the decline of ritual language and the use of the national language, Indonesian, among others – encroaches, Sumbanese social life continues to shift and change. Yet, despite the lack of long-term historical data on Sumba, these changes are relatively new if cultural habit can be considered to have evolved over a long period of time, with most occurring in the 60 or so years since Indonesian independence, and others dating to the late colonial period. As such, deeper roots of tradition persist. Furthermore, despite these shifts, in comparison to the other regions under study in this project, Sumbanese social life has exhibited significant continuity. And while the anthropological work cited above often emphasizes changes as a break with the past, it also describes this deeper continuity.

This chapter explains the overall cohesion of Indonesian rule in Sumba, both among elites and commoners, which is absent in the other cases under study, despite similarity with other variables.\(^{862}\) Sumba has many of the same social indicators of the other regions, including dire poverty, underdevelopment, minority religious status, and minority ethno-linguistic status, yet there has never been a serious movement against the

\(^{861}\) Gunawan-Mitchell.

\(^{862}\) As chapter three shows, however, the state was able to overcome he threat of separatism and establish cohesive rule in Ambon after the fall of the RMS.
central government, nor has Sumba been wracked with the separatist violence that afflicts the other regions. This chapter explains the absence of anti-state sentiment in the context of social and political continuity and change in Sumba.

Background

Sumba is among the most peripheral regions in Indonesia. Its peripheral status is easily explained by its lack of strategic or economic importance to Indonesia, and prior, to the Dutch East Indies. It is almost completely lacking in natural resources, has a very small population (and low population density), and remains mired in destitute poverty when compared to the rest of Indonesia.

The preceding chapter examines Sumbanese history as related to political and social development and change. The major changes outlined in the preceding chapter that had deep social impacts include: changes occurring during the introduction of slavery and

---

863 Indonesia is the world’s most populous Muslim state, where approximately 85 percent of the population adheres to some branch of Islam. Indonesia is dominated politically, socially, and economically by the island of Java, especially the capital Jakarta and Java’s major cities (Bandung, Surabaya, Jogjakarta, Surakarta). Java itself is comprised of two major ethno-linguistic groups, the Javanese and the Sundanese (in the western portion of the island), as well as several other groups (Betawi, Madurese). That being said, Java does not make up a majority of the Indonesian population, but rather is considered the heart of Indonesia.

864 In 2006, East Sumba’s population was 205,717, and its population density was 29 people per km². *Sumba Timor Dalam Angka (East Sumba in Figures) 2005/2006.* (Waingapu: Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2006), 23. For West Sumba, the total population was and the population density was 86 people per km². *Sumba Barat Dalam Angka (West Sumba in Figures) 2005/2006.* (Waikabubak: Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Barat, 2006), 31. Nationally the figure is 134 people per km². Gross Regional Product per capita in Nusa Tenggara Province, for example, is the lowest in Indonesia at 361,000 rupiah in 1990. Hal Hill, *The Indonesian Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 222-23. Data is only available at the provincial level from this source, and not the kabupaten level. In East Nusa Tenggara, the whole of Sumba, along with some peripheral regions of West Timor, is considered the poorest.
the caste system; the long process of outlawing and stopping slavery; the pacification period and the establishment of Dutch rule; the establishment of churches and Christianization; the establishment of Indonesian sovereignty and the move to incorporate Sumba into this new political entity; and the impositions of the New Order.

In terms of political continuity, one can see a slow transition from traditional rule towards a modern, bureaucratic rule. Yet this chapter shows that this process is far from complete, and is one of the factors inherent in assessing the successful integration of Sumba into the Indonesian state and the absence of separatism. Although the carving of Sumba into territorial divisions occurred during the Dutch period, occasionally creating borders between groups from the same clan, there was little effort to modernize Sumba. And during the Soekarno period, this benign neglect continued for the most part, although Sumbanese elites were now becoming “Indonesian” politicians, bureaucrats, and civil servants.  

From the Old Order to the New Order: The Institutionalization of Golkar

It was during the New Order period that serious political and economic changes occurred in Sumba, spurring Sumba’s political awakening. The New Order regime demanded absolute and unwavering loyalty to the state from its subjects, and established consistent patterns of political control from the center to the regions throughout the entire archipelago, including peripheral regions such as Sumba. This drive was consistent and concurrent with Suharto’s desire for order and the cessation of any organizing deemed threatening to the state. In fact, it was in those regions where anti-Indonesian

---

organization existed that Suharto tried the hardest, almost exclusively by brute force, to rein in dissidents. Under this environment, therefore, one can understand the consolidation of Sumbanese “Indonesian” politics: the discourse of the state demanded inclusion of all of the regions, yet in a region without strong opposition to the state a *laissez-faire* attitude prevailed. As long as the Sumbanese were not actively rebelling, they could be left alone to act within certain confines of what it means to be “Indonesian.” Part of the shift from the Old Order to the New Order was the emphasis on top down politics, as well as on developmental and social aid. Civil servants, including school teachers, were required to become members of Golkar. In Sumba, functions undertaken by the Protestant Church, including medical care, education, and road construction, were taken over by the government.866

It was also during this New Order period that party politics in Indonesia were consolidated. Beginning in 1975 and throughout the rest of the New Order period Suharto consolidated the various political parties in Indonesia, allowing only three parties to compete: Golkar (*Golongan Karya*, Functional Groups), the party of Suharto, the military and the bureaucracy and civil service; the PPP (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, or the Unity Development Party), a party toward which Muslim aspirations were directed; and the PDI (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia*, Indonesian Democratic Party), a party for secular nationalists, Christians, and others not included by the other two parties.

Prior to the New Order, in the national elections of 1955, the province of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) overwhelmingly supported the two Christian parties; Protestant

866 Vel, *Uma-Economy*, 93-95.
Parkindo garnered 18 percent and *Partai Katolik* received 42 percent.\(^{867}\) Nationally, these parties received a small proportion of the vote, only 2.6 percent and two percent, respectively.\(^{868}\) Following the establishment of the New Order and Suharto’s commandeering of the party, elections in Sumba (and NTT) follow the pattern extant throughout Indonesia, with Golkar winning a vast majority of support, and the other parties dividing up the remainder and presenting themselves as token opposition. One would expect the Christian-backed PDI to receive the bulk of support in predominantly Christian enclaves such as the East Nusa Tenggara province. Yet Golkar repeatedly trounced the PDI in the province.

In the next elections, held in 1971, the “Golkarization” of Indonesian electoral politics under Suharto had begun.\(^{869}\) In the province, Golkar received 61.5 percent of the votes, *Partai Katolik* received 18.3 percent, Parkindo received 13.45 percent, and the remaining votes were scattered among other parties.\(^{870}\) Nationally, Golkar took 62.8 percent, *Partai Katolik* took 1.1 percent, and Parkindo took 1.3 percent. NU received 18.7 percent of the vote for a second place finish, but no other party received more than ten percent of the vote.

The 1976 election was postponed for one year because of the 1975 consolidation of political parties, discussed in chapter two. In 1977 in NTT, Golkar received 90.3

---

\(^{867}\) Statistics for this election were found only for the provincial level. The success of *Partai Katolik* can be attributed to the population of Flores, which is more populous and predominantly Catholic.


\(^{869}\) Vel, *Uma-Economy*, 93-94.

\(^{870}\) Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 70.
percent of the vote, the PDI 7.8 percent, and the PPP 1.9 percent. This represents the electoral domination of Golkar in NTT, and the near complete marginalization of the other two official parties, including the marginalization of the nominally Christian party in a province dominated by Protestants and Catholics. Nationally, Golkar received 62.8 percent, the PPP 27.1 percent, and the PDI 10.1 percent, the latter faring better nationally than locally in NTT. In 1982, the results were strikingly similar, with Golkar taking 62.1 percent of the national vote, the PPP 29.3 percent, and the PDI 8.6 percent. In NTT in 1982 Golkar took 96.3 percent of the vote, trailed by the PDI with 2.3 percent, and the PPP with 1.3 percent. In 1987, Golkar took 73.1 percent of the national vote, the PPP took 16, and the PDI took 11. In NTT, Golkar took 94.7 percent, the PDI took four percent, and the PPP took 1.3 percent. In 1992, Golkar took 68.1 percent of the national vote, the PPP 17 percent, and the PDI 14.9 percent, whereas in NTT the proportions were 91.2 percent, 1.8 percent, and seven percent, respectively. In 1997, Golkar took 74.5 percent, the PPP 22.4 and the PDI three percent nationally, and in NTT the figures were 94.9 percent, 1.5 percent, and 3.5 percent, respectively, representing the only year that the PDI fared better in NTT than nationally.871

871 Ibid., 70, 74, 92, 96, 114, 119, 137, 142, 158, 164, 180. The low level of support for the PDI reflects the events of 27 July 1996, during which the police and military stormed the headquarters of the party in Jakarta to oust Megawati Soekarnputri and replace her with Suharto loyalist Suryadi; leaders of the Megawati branch of the PDI were tried for subversion. The move triggered riots in the capital, and is seen as the first stage in the reform movement that would force Suharto’s abdication in May 1998. It also resulted in widespread alienation of PDI supporters and a drastic reduction in support for the party during the 1997 election; many Megawati supporters became golongan putih (white group) or non-participants in the election. See: Institut Studi Arus Informasi and Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, Peristiwa 27 Juli (Jakarta: Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, 1997).
In the 1999 elections, despite Suharto’s abdication, the electoral rules remained the same, although the party system opened up and 48 parties contested the election, including Christian and Catholic parties. The PDI-P, buoyed by Megawati Soekarnoputri’s image as a victim of Suharto and a reformer, received 33.7 percent of the votes, a plurality, followed by Golkar with 22.4 percent, the PKB (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, National Awakening Party) with 12.6 percent, and the PPP with 10.7 percent (all other parties received less than ten percent). The most prominent Christian party, the PDKB (*Partai Demokrasi Kasih Bangsa*, the Democratic National Love Party), formed and led by Manase Malo, a Sumbanese, received only .5 percent nationally. The other two Christian parties, KRISNA (*Partai Kristen Nasional*, National Christian Party) and the PKD (*Partai Katolik Demokrat*, Catholic Democratic Party) received only .35 percent and .2 percent, respectively. Nationally, Golkar had been unseated. In NTT, however, Golkar received a plurality of votes, with 40.8 percent, trailed by the PDI-P (38.4 percent), the PDKB (four percent) and the PPP (2.3 percent). In Sumba, loyalty to Golkar held in the face of new religious or reformist parties.

Sumba has historically had very little by way of political representation on a national or provincial scale. Perhaps the most significant actor on the national scale was Oemboe Hina Kapita (see chapter six). Kapita’s political role, however, was mostly local, as a member of the provincial parliament, although he was elected as a member of the regional representational parliament in Jakarta in 1956.

---

872 Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 191.

873 Ibid., 241.
Others who represented Sumba on a national scale included Julius Bobo, Umbu Jima, Menasse Malo, Umbu Tipuk Marisi, Umbu Remu Samapati, and Melki Umbu Nggangu, all members of the national parliament in Jakarta at one time. Umbu Remu Samapati was also the former *Bupati* of West Sumba, a career path that echoes the current *Bupati* of East Sumba, Umbu Mehang Kunda, who, as member of the national parliament from Golkar, was also the head of the Komisi III, *pertanian* (farming).

Menasse Malo was also quite prominent. He taught in the Faculty of Social Science and Politics at the University of Indonesia, and was a founder of the *Partai Demokrasi Kasih Bangsa* (Love the Nation Democratic Party) in 1998, under which he served as a member of the national parliament from 1999-2004. There are currently no Sumbanese as members of the DPD (*Dewan Perwakilan Daerah*, Regional Representative Council), the national stage for local politics and politicians that acts as an advisory board to the national parliament; no Sumbanese were even nominated. Siliwoloe Djoeroemana, the Head of the General Elections Commission in East Sumba stated that the rules concerning how a candidate must sign up were too complicated, and there were no Sumbanese capable or interested in serving in that position.

---


875 This list was compiled through discussions with various sources, including at the government offices of both East and West Sumba. Nevertheless, that people involved personally in Sumbanese and national politics could not name more than a few people with national political prominence is indicative of a lack of significant political representation on a national scale. Yet this lack of representation does not seem to frustrate or anger Sumbanese.

What, then, explains this insularity on the part of the Sumbanese to avoid seeking these positions? Several factors are pertinent. Many of the potential candidates for higher office are traditional local elites. Staying in Sumba assures their position at the top of the hierarchy, whereas representing Sumba in Jakarta does not carry much status in the capital; the idiom going from a “big fish in a small pond to a small fish in a big pond” is apt. Sumbanese civil servants and politicians also expressed their uncertainty about fellow Sumbanese and their abilities. The low level of education among Sumbanese has given some a potent inferiority complex. Finally, because Sumba is such a small place in terms of population and national status, the chances for mobilizing support outside of Sumba for Sumbanese candidates are slim. Rather, most Sumbanese elites seek positions of authority in Sumba, which allows them to become conduits to Jakarta as well as distribute patronage flowing from Jakarta in the form of central government funds. The next section examines the highest office in Sumba, bupati.

Bupati

Sumba was divided into two administrative regions called kabupaten, each led by a bupati.\textsuperscript{877} Until 2004, the bupati was chosen by the kabupaten (district) level parliament but they are now elected through direct popular vote. The first such popular vote was in 2004. Elections for bupati are partisan, and candidates run with affiliations and support from parties. During the New Order, Golkar held a firm grip on the position, and anyone hoping for appointment had to align with the party. This section analyzes the 2004 bupati

\textsuperscript{877} In 2007 West Sumba was divided into three kabupaten, Central, West and Northwest.
elections in both East and West Sumba as an example of the continuity of Sumbanese political and social life.

The 2004 bupati election in East Sumba was charged with the history of the prior two elections. Two main candidates emerged from the field: Lukas Mbili Kaborang and Umbu Mehang Kunda, both of noble descent. Two minor candidates also entered the race, Landu Pindingara and Alphonsius Anapaku.

The rivalry between the two frontrunners was apparent. Lukas was chosen as bupati in 1994 in a highly contentious decision; since it was still the New Order period, only candidates representing Golkar had any chance of election, and the choice came down to Lukas or Umbu Mehang. Party leaders in Jakarta instructed the council to choose Umbu Mehang because of his close connections to Jakarta (he had served in the national parliament from 1987 and continued to do so until 2000, and prior to that in the provincial government in Kupang, from 1977 to 1987). Yet in a close decision, Lukas was chosen as bupati by the district parliament. As a result, the Chair of the district parliament, Yonathan Tunggu Djama, who had helped lead the drive to support Lukas

---

878 That Umbu Mehang is of noble descent is not debatable; his family and their massive graves reside in the royal village of Karera. Lukas Kaborang, however, downplays his royal status, for example by insisting that he not be called “Umbu,” formerly a traditional title denoting noble descent but now used commonly as a greeting to Sumbanese of all backgrounds. His lineage was confirmed in several meetings, including with the Head of the Governance Division of the Office of the Bupati: “Of course Lukas is maramba! Look at all of his hamba (slaves)!” Domingus Bandi, interview by author, 26 February 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. c.f. Vel, “Pilkada.”

879 Vel, “Pilkada.”
over Umbu Mehang, was recalled by Golkar and was forced out of office the same year.\textsuperscript{880}

Lukas’ tenure was marked by a populist “tough love” approach: “beni muhang/hanya opang” (E. Sumbanese dialect, “Angry/Because of love”).\textsuperscript{881} He was known for driving out into the sub-distRICTS and upon seeing villagers idle in their homes or fields would take out a stick and beat them, ordering them to work; during his tenure food production increased dramatically.\textsuperscript{882} He was also known as a populist, and used a “cultural” approach to appeal to villagers, not the “modern management” favored by Umbu Mehang. “He goes to adat ceremonies, he pushes people to work, he is well known because he contacts people at the village level. People in the village like his policies because he uses a cultural approach.”\textsuperscript{883} Lukas represented Golkar through the 1999 election, but after losing that election to Umbu Mehang by one vote, he claimed to retire from politics. In the run up to the 2004 elections he was courted by several parties, and came out of “retirement.” He chose to run for the PPDk (\textit{Partai Persatuan Demokrasi Kebangsaan}, Democratic Nationalist Unity Party), a party run by his former teacher and the former Minister of Regional Autonomy and Administrative Reform, Ryaas Rasyid, as he was allowed to run as the first candidate on the rolls and act as chair.

\textsuperscript{880} Djama; Kaborang.

\textsuperscript{881} Djoeroemana.

\textsuperscript{882} This assertion was made by former \textit{bupati} Lukas Kaborang himself, and verified by many others through interviews and conversations. After Kaborang told me this about himself, in English he (mis)quoted John F. Kennedy: “Don’t ask what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” Kaborang.

\textsuperscript{883} Djoeroemana, 31 January 2007.
but he was also granted the power to choose who else would complete the list of candidates.\footnote{Vel, “Pilkada,” 11.} Lukas’ support allowed the PPDK to come in second in both the provincial and district level parliamentary elections, although Golkar won pluralities in both of those races.

Facing Lukas was Umbu Mehang. His style was “modern management,” he emphasized his noble background, and he emphasized development in the city of Waingapu as a priority, as opposed to focusing on the districts.\footnote{Djoeroemana, 31 January 2007.} He also emphasized his political connections in Jakarta, which were viewed by many as an asset, and as he remained a Golkar member, he had a considerable political machine behind him. He was widely accused of corruption, but at the same time he decried corrupt “money politics.”\footnote{Vel, “Pilkada,” 11.} Despite his reputation as a modernizer, Umbu Mehang also recognized the importance of attending ceremonies and acting as a patron, so he did both.

The other two candidates had their own appeals. Alphonsius and his running mate were considered newcomers who would focus on agriculture and healthcare concerns, and Pindingara and his running mate were considered outsiders who would appeal to the Muslim Savunese community, the largest non-Sumbanese ethnic group on Sumba.\footnote{Ibid., 8.}

Jacqueline Vel’s analysis of the campaign leading up to the election provides a detailed account of how Sumbanese politics continue to work in much the same way as they always have, even in the newly democratic setting. To briefly summarize her
findings, Lukas and Umbu Mehang were both adept at portraying themselves as traditional “big men” of Sumba, complete with providing the right kind of feasts and using the right kind of speech and rhetoric, with Lukas acting as a strong, “angry man,” and Umbu Mehang emphasizing his connections and his desire for continuity based on his administration’s success. 888 Both also made appearances at adat ceremonies and acted as patrons, whereas the other two candidates fell far short in this regard.889 Umbu Mehang and Pindingara also tried to demonstrate their influence through advertising the support they received (or alleged to receive) from rajas, whereas Lukas emphasized his connections to the grassroots and the Protestant church.890

In the end, the race between Lukas and Umbu Mehang was close, with the latter winning by a total of 39.74 percent to 33.63 percent. The city of Waingapu was a key in the election; of the 28,166 votes from the capital, Umbu Mehang captured 12,364 and Lukas 8,065; 4,299 of the 6,640 votes, or 65 percent, by which Lukas lost came from Waingapu. Both Pindingara and Alphonsius pulled significant amounts of votes in the capital, 4414 and 3323 respectively. Outside of the capital, however, results were predictably based on primordial ties to specific regions. Umbu Mehang’s ancestral realm


890 Ibid., 14-15.
of Rindi and its surrounding regions provided overwhelming support, whereas Lukas’ ancestral domain of the southeast coast provided him overwhelming support, where he was able to co-opt local maramba to be Team Success leaders (see below).\textsuperscript{891} Pindingara captured a plurality in his home district of Nggaha Ori Angu, and nearly matched Umbu Mehang in the neighboring district of Lewa.

In West Sumba, illness, time constraints, and the unwillingness or inability of the Bupati and some of his staff to meet all contribute to a much less nuanced understanding of the Bupati elections. The winning duo, Julianus Pote Leba (Bupati) and Kornelius Kodi Mete (Wakil Bupati), representing Golkar, received 33.3 percent of the vote. The remaining 66.6 percent of the vote was split almost evenly by the other four candidates.\textsuperscript{892}

The winning duo’s success can be attributed to three factors: sentiment in support of Golkar as a capable party; Julianus’ status as wakil bupati, and the duo’s ties to ancestral domains.\textsuperscript{893} Julianus lives in Waikabubak, and he carried the vote there. His ancestral domain is Loli, and he carried the vote there as well. Much of his success must also be attributed to his candidate for wakil bupati, Kornelius Kodi Mete. The duo carried the vote in the Kodinese ancestral realm, including Kodi, which has the largest number of voters in any kecamatan, and Kodi Bangedo, part of the Kodi ancestral realm. Another

\textsuperscript{891} Benyamin Padji, interview by author, 27 January 2007, Omalulu, Sumba. Padji is the Sekretaris Camat (camat secretary) for Omalulu.


\textsuperscript{893} The electoral success of Golkar must also be attributed to the sophistication of their party apparatus in terms of mobilizing voters and providing patronage.
candidate, Umbu Satti Pateduk, received majorities in his ancestral domain, the 
*kecamatan* Katikutana and Umbu Ratu Nggay, and trailed just behind Julianus in 
Wanokaka, where he also has relatives.894

Golkar’s reputation suffered following the *Kamis Berdarah* (Bloody Thursday) 
incident in November 1998, when the *bupati*, Rudolf Malo, representing Golkar and from 
the Wewewa clan, was held responsible for several days of violence following clear 
favoritism toward members of his own clan in the results of the civil service exam.
Malo’s reputation prior to the event was questionable as well.895 Although Golkar was 
pushed out of the top slot in 1999, it still remained popular and viewed as the surest path 
to success. Julianus won the 2005 election for *bupati* representing Golkar; in 1999 he 
represented PDI-D as vice-*bupati*. Although Vel portrays the victory as one of “clean” 
politics (Pote Leba was viewed as having avoided the taint of corruption of the New 
Order), it is also clear that he made a strategic choice to realign with Golkar in this 
election as the party’s machinery remained strong in West Sumba and the memory of 
“Bloody Thursday” had faded.896

Golkar retains its prestige in Sumba (except in the electoral cycle following the 
“Bloody Thursday” incident in West Sumba) because it is viewed as the party of 
development, and because few of the negative consequences of Golkar’s rule were felt in

894 Umbu R. Anabuni, interview by author, 24 February 2007, Umbu Ratu Nggay, 
Sumba. Anabuni is the *camat* of Umbu Ratu Nggay. Rewa Engge, interview by author, 
19 February 2007, Wanokaka, Sumba. Engge is the *camat* of Wanokaka.

895 Jacqueline Vel, “Tribal Battle in a Remote Island: Crisis and Violence in 
Sumba (Eastern Indonesia),” *Indonesia*, 72 (October 2001), 141-158. In the succeeding 
*bupati* election, Timotius Langgar, representing a coalition of smaller parties, won.

896 Vel, *Uma Politics*, 227-35.
Sumba as they were in other peripheral regions, including those under study. In interviews, Golkar was consistently linked to the development that occurred in Sumba since the onset of the New Order, with new schools, roads, clinics and bridges frequently cited as examples. Because there was no significant Communist Party presence in Sumba in 1965, Sumbanese escaped the violence of that era. And when Sumbanese viewed the protests and riots that rocked Jakarta and other major cities of Indonesia in 1998-99, they feared that instability in the context of political competition would disrupt the process of development in Sumba. This fealty to Golkar, along with Golkar’s strategies for remaining dominant in local politics in Sumba, have led to its continued electoral successes despite the presence of popular “reformist” parties such as the PDI-P and Christian parties, such as the PDS.

Local Politics

Indonesia’s political system also has legislative bodies at the province and kabupaten level, called Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah - Propinsi (Regional People’s Representative Council, Provincial level, or DPRD-I) and Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah – Kabupaten (Regional People’s Representative Council, Kabupaten level, or DPRD-II). It is in these races that Sumbanese participate and are represented in larger

---

897 They watched the events of 1998-99 on television sets, items that are viewed and cited as benefits or results of development as well.

numbers. For the DPRD, voters select either a party or candidate affiliated with a party on their ballot. At the provincial level there were 24 parties competing, although not all of the parties fielded candidates (and subsequently received no votes).

These local elections in Sumba are a combination of personality-driven and Golkar-driven politics, although the two frequently align. In West Sumba, the grasp of Golkar has been somewhat loosened because of “Bloody Thursday” but also because there are fewer “big men” in West Sumba, where elites are spread around and more horizontally organized, as opposed to East Sumba, where strong traditions of vertical ties predominate among a smaller number of “big men.” As such, competition for loyalty is much more widespread, allowing for parties other than Golkar to find support. The PDI-P took advantage of this opening in 1999 and with its sophisticated political machinery it toppled Golkar and its smaller competitors in some West Sumbanese elections, including for bupati.

In East Sumba, the PPDK found tremendous electoral success for a new political party. Its success was due to two men, Umbu Tamu Ama Kaborang and Ridolf Sinatra. Both of these men are connected to Lukas Kaborang; the former is his son, the latter an entrepreneur who supported Lukas and in exchange was rewarded with contracts for various projects. Lukas Mbili Kaborang is the leader of the party (and was selected as a

---

899 Jacqueline Vel, in writing about the East Sumbanese Bupati elections, argues that because of the vested interests supporting Golkar and its support networks, Golkar can generally count on about 40 percent of the vote, enabling a plurality. Vel, “Pilkada,” 99. This analysis, however, seems flawed, as it discounts any personal appeal brought by Umbu Mehang Kunda such as his high caste lineage, which certainly accounts for some of the support for him – and Golkar – in this election cycle. Rather, Golkar chooses well-connected and socially prominent candidates as a strategy.
representative in the DPRD-K). The electoral results for these candidates was particularly strong in Lukas’ ancestral domain and those close to it.

The remainder of the votes in both districts were scattered between the smaller parties. Once again, the Christian PDS did poorly in East Sumba, receiving only two percent of the vote, and just slightly better in the West, receiving 3.7 percent of the vote. Muslim based parties, such as the PBB, PKB, and PAN, received most of their support in the capital cities of Waikabubak and Waingapu, where the bulk of Muslim residents of Sumba (many of them non-Sumbanese residents or immigrants) live, as well as regions in West Sumba with significant Muslim populations such as Kodi or Wewewa Barat. With regard to the results of other smaller parties, a few garnered some widespread support that was localized to a particular kecamatan. This kind of success is the result of either familial connections when there was an ethnic Sumbanese running for office, or the co-option of a Success Team leader (see below) able to mobilize support on a local level.

What most stands out from the election data in East Sumba is what can only be categorized as a failure of the PDS to capture votes. As Indonesia’s major Christian party, the explanation for the failure of the PDS in a predominantly Christian area is in the entrenched nature of Golkar and to a much lesser extent the PDI-P, and to the support for the PPDK, granted because of Lukas Kaborang’s role. The PDS’ party machine had little presence on Sumba, and did not accrue many votes from any of the regions, meaning they were unable to co-opt an effective Success Team leader (see below).

---

900 Stepanus Makambombu, email communication with author, 19 September 2007. Makambombu is the Director of the Stimulant Institute, an NGO devoted to the promotion of civil society in East Sumba.
Finally, a few words about elections on a much smaller scale, village heads (kepala desa). Village heads are chosen through direct election by the members of the village. The position is one that conveys or reflects status, as village heads receive no salary for their position. It is on this level that continuity is most apparent in Sumbanese politics; in numerous interviews, it was repeatedly emphasized that the position of kepala desa is almost exclusively occupied by a local figure from the maramba caste, and that lower caste kepala desa are almost unheard of. Despite that fact, I did find a few instances of kepala desa from the kabihu and hamba castes, although these were exceptional cases. Several camat argued that education was becoming increasingly important and would become a factor in the future, and that personal wealth has become a factor that can be demonstrated by those outside of the maramba caste (although education is still tied to caste, see below).

In interviews with camat in both West and East Sumba, all cited the importance of status and influence in the choice for a village head, and only one stated that status and influence from acquired wealth could trump social status. Many acknowledged that all of their kepala desa were maramba or from what was considered the upper caste of society. Attributes necessary to be a good kepala desa are those affiliated with high

---

901 Desa is most directly translated as “village,” but in Sumba (and some other regions of Indonesia) the definition of desa has been expanded to encompass many traditional villages in areas up to 100km². Forth, 13.

902 Ndoy Mili Ada, interview by author, 27 January 2007, Rindi, Sumba. Ada is the camat of Rindi. In this kecamatan, there were two instances recounted of kepala desa being from the hamba class, see below.

903 Some regions in West Sumba use different terminology to denote caste distinctions.
caste: the ability to speak forcefully, the ability to rally community support, the ability to have your words listened to and your plans implemented.

*Kepala desa* not from the upper caste can encounter problems. For example, the *camat* of Paberiwai in East Sumba recounted that a *kepala desa* who was not *maramba* could not play his role as mediator over a disagreement between two *maramba*; they did not listen to him since he was of a lower caste. He also stated that this *kepala desa* had trouble encouraging everyone to participate in *gotong royong* or mutual self-help projects for the same reason. These problems were overcome, however, when the *camat* stepped in. “The *maramba* listen to me as I am also *maramba,*” he stated.⁹⁰⁴ In Omalulu there was a case of the *kepala desa* of Hina Kartika named Hapu Mbay coming from the *hamba* caste, from 1995-2005. This anomaly was explained by the *Kecamatan* Secretary: “He lived with the raja, so he was supported (and chosen) by the raja. Without that support, he would not have been acceptable.”⁹⁰⁵ Similar situations were reported in the villages Haiketapu and Leilanjang in the Rindi *kecamatan*. In both villages *hamba* (Kabubu Hunggu Andong and Hina Kerimajangga, respectively) had become *kepala desa*, but only with the express support of the *maramba* figures from their villages (Uma Jangga and Uma Penji, respectively).⁹⁰⁶ In Haiketapu, however, villagers who had been relocated from the hard to reach mountain village of Watupuda complained of Kabubu’s favoritism, inefficacy and illiteracy, and vowed that he would be voted out of office in

---

⁹⁰⁴ Umbu Katu Kapita, interview by author, 7 February 2007, Paberiwai, Sumba. Kapita is the *camat* of Paberiwai, and a relative of Oemboe Hina Kapita as is Andumila Baru Kapita, the *camat* from Wulla Waijilu.

⁹⁰⁵ Padji.

⁹⁰⁶ Ada.
the next election. While the camat of Wewewa Timur in West Sumba agreed with the importance of status for choosing kepala desa, he also stated that kepala desa from the middle caste (kabihu) can be easier to work with as they are more willing to compromise, and that maramba can be too stubborn or arrogant.

In an MA thesis written by Bartholomeus Nggamma Landumeha in 2004, he recounts the trouble with the selection of kepala desa at the village of Hambapraing. He concluded: “Social factors, economic status and the quality candidate are still very dominant in influencing the choice for kepala desa, while formal education as a factor is not yet an important factor for those choosing a kepala desa.”

Tim Sukses

In analyzing elections from the presidential level to the kepala desa level, one theme was constantly reiterated by all interviewees: the necessity of a strong tim sukses (success team) for elections. Success teams are the aggregators of grassroots support at the village and kelurahan level, and are therefore the most importance piece of the electoral puzzle.

When mobilizing a success team, the first qualification must be that the leader has the ability to sway local voters. In Sumba, this qualification is first and foremost ascribed to those of the maramba caste, who, through their traditional roles as elites and decision
makers (and very often as kepala desa) they already greatly influence if not outright control social life on the village level in Sumba. Although social status and influence tied to social standing was the most frequently cited attribute for a success team leader, other factors were cited as well, including economic status, education, and speaking ability.\textsuperscript{910}

The mobilization of a success team trumps party affiliation, and at the village level, the party machine does not play a role.\textsuperscript{911} Leaders of success teams are tasked with distributing patronage during a campaign, including rice and food, sirih pinang (betel), and sometimes money. The latter is formally banned but frequently occurs.\textsuperscript{912} The giving of gifts such as rice and sirih pinang traditionally establish a relationship of obligation to the giver from the receiver, and in this case the obligation is political fealty reinforced orally through promises of support.\textsuperscript{913}

The success of particular candidates in some regions is explicitly attributed to their ability to co-opt a success team leader who is influential. In Omalulu, for example, Lukas Kaborang received support from Oemboe Nggikoe, the Raja of Pau, and Watuhading, a maramba from Omalulu. In that district, Lukas received 80 percent of the votes, and his success was credited to his relationships with members of the maramba

\textsuperscript{910} All of these attributes, however, are usually interwoven with one’s identity as maramba.

\textsuperscript{911} Kunda, 22 February 2007; Ada.

\textsuperscript{912} Bora.

\textsuperscript{913} Kuipers, “Citizens as Spectators,” 184-89. In this case, voters were mobilized on behalf of Golkar in the 1982 national election. The success of rituals entailing political obligations in the city of Waingapu is questioned by Vel, however. See: Vel, “Pilkada,” 15-23.
caste in that region. And Umbu Mehang Kunda received an overwhelming majority, around 80 percent, from Praijawong in Rindi, his ancestral domain. Because it was his ancestral domain, his success team for that region was led by maramba figures.

Results such as these were explained universally as the result of Tim Sukses or Success Teams, organized by each candidate in each area, to sway voters. Leaders of Success Teams are hand picked by candidates or their campaign organizations, and are “influential” members of society (generally referred to as “tokoh masyarakat” or, roughly, society figures). Bringing aboard one of these figures as the leader of a Success Team ensures that a majority, if not all, of their followers will vote as they are instructed by their traditional leader.

_Camat and Lurah_

The final group examined in this analysis of political and social continuity are _camat_ and _lurah_. _Camat_ are not politicians but bureaucratic civil servants, as they are

---

914 Padji; Umbu Ngganja Rawambaku, interview by author, 27 January 2007, Omalulu, Sumba. Rawambaku is a staff member of the Seksi Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, Kantor (Society Empowerment Section, Office of the Kecamatan) Omalulu.

915 Ada.

technically non-partisan and selected for their position by the bupati, not elected.\textsuperscript{917}

Camat are in charge of kecamatan (sub-district), one step below the kabupaten (district) level. In East Sumba there are 15 kecamatan, in West Sumba there are 17. Because camat are appointed by the bupati, they are seen as middle men (“jabatan antara”) tasked with the implementation of his policy on a local level. They also coordinate among kepala desa, and may be called in to reconcile parties involved in disputes at the desa level (see above), including land disputes and arguments over appropriate bride prices.\textsuperscript{918}

According to Umbu Mehang, the Bupati of East Sumba, there are several factors that are included in his decision for camat. The two most important attributes are influence and education. Influence is based on their position (within the civil service hierarchy), education and ability, but also based on their social position and their local connections to their assigned region: “We can’t give them a camat that they won’t like… If they are from a lower status, it is not good for them to be there. People want to know who they are. Those with low social status are not liked by society. And if they are sent to another area, they can be found out.”\textsuperscript{919} Of the nineteen camat that I interviewed, 13 of

\textsuperscript{917} Although the position is not party affiliated, the selection of the camat by the bupati, based on recommendations of a committee, at a minimum reflects the bupati’s vision for policy

\textsuperscript{918} Tondo. Disagreements over land and bride price were the responsibility of maramba prior to the efforts at bureaucratization, which is one reason why status I important for camat. It also represents continuity in practice.

\textsuperscript{919} Umbu Mehang Kunda, Interview by author, 22 February 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. Camat are required to have a minimum civil service ranking of 3C. To achieve this ranking, a civil servant could have the equivalent of a Bachelor’s degree and eight years of good service, a Master’s degree and four years of good service, or a Doctorate. Amos Mbakundima, interview by author, 26 February 2007, Waingapu, Sumba.
them had fathers, grandfathers or uncles who were civil servants or politicians. One was unknown, and one came from a family of protestant pastors. All of the camat I interviewed in East and West Sumba had university or technical college degrees, although I was told that here were three in West Sumba who were not educated.

Many admitted to or were confirmed by others as maramba, although one camat in East Sumba, Lexi Kristian Henuk, Camat of Lewu, is Rotinese (West Timor) and raised outside of Sumba, and another, Simon Laba Gaja, Camat of Umalulu, is Sabunese, although he was raised in Sumba and is considered Sumbanese. Lexi Kristian Henuk was chosen for camat of Lewu because it is the second largest kecamatan in East Sumba in terms of population (it is in a very fertile region bordering West Sumba and a national park), and it also has the widest variety of ethnicities outside of Waingapu. The influence of marapu in Lewa is much less compared to other districts, and Lewa is more developed.920

Lurah are in charge of administrative districts called kelurahan. Kelurahan are subdivisions of urban kecamatan, similar in position to kepala desa, but appointed by the bupati, not elected. In East Sumba, there are 12 kelurahan in the city of Waingapu, in West Sumba there are six kelurahan in the city of Waikabubak.

Lurah are civil servants and are paid a salary, which also sets them apart from kepala desa. They are not as autonomous, however, as kepala desa, and are expected to be representatives of the bupati at the lowest level. Because they oversee urban areas,

---

Mbakundima is the Kepala Kantor Pegawai Negeri (Head of the Civil Servant Office) in Waingapu.

920 Bandi; Kunda, 22 February 2007; Henuk.
there is not as much of an emphasis on social status, although it can play a role in the choice of lurah, depending on the kelurahan. Other factors include ability, education, and “economic ability” or personal wealth.921

**Civil Servants**

In camat offices one finds the support staff number from about 10 to over 20 depending on the size of the kecamatan, and all are civil servants, including officers responsible for various sectors, a secretary, etc. Often the camat’s office was near to the local police station. While I was most concerned with interviewing camat as the senior civil servant at a given office, I also interviewed secretaries and other civil servants. In East Sumba there are 1,243 civil servants (with a plan to add 409 in 2007), and in West Sumba there are 4,534; the civil service employs about one out of every 112 people in East Sumba, and a remarkable one out of every 66 people in West Sumba.922 Besides camat offices, there are large numbers of civil servants working in the offices of the kabupaten-level administration in Waingapu and Waikabubak.

The support staff at a camat’s office deals both with the day to day running of the local government and administration, as well as annual projects such as gathering statistics for annual reports. Despite these tasks, work in a civil servants’ office seems not

---

921 Bandi. With regard to the skills necessary to be a lurah, in this interview (and in others regarding different civil service and elected positions) the term “kemampuan ekonomi” was often used by interviewees. Its direct translation would be economic ability, but its meaning is generally twofold: it was used to convey the idea that the person or position being talked about had the “economic ability” to acquire wealth and therefore serve as an example, but also the ability to manage finances for the position.

922 Mbakundima; Anton Umbu Sappi, interview by author, 21 February 2007, Waikabubak, Sumba. Sappi is a staff member of the Kantor Pemerintah Desa (Office of Village Government), Waikabubak.
too taxing. In visits to camat offices and to the central administration buildings in Waingapu and Waikabubak, I always encountered rooms of civil servants where most of them were playing cards, smoking and drinking coffee, reading the paper, or, where available, playing video games on their computers. One or two people would offer to help me, but there was no attempt on the part of the others to try to look busy or at work. The civil service is tantamount to a sinecure in many cases, and, as is often the case in bureaucracies, once entrenched it is difficult to release people from their position. On the contrary, every two to four years civil servants go up a pay grade. Civil servants pay in Sumba is far above the per capita wage, and a civil service position can allow the holder access to graft to increase the wages. Expenditures for civil servants are by far the largest part of the budgets of both East and West Sumba.

With a system as dense and broad as the civil service in Sumba, it is difficult to make exact statements about its make up. In camat offices, the majority of civil servants were Sumbanese and usually from the immediate area. Others included Sumbanese from different areas, Savunese, Rotinese, Timorese or Florese who had been raised in Sumba, as well as some who had moved to Sumba for their job in the civil service, although this last category was by far the minority. Among Sumbanese who work in the civil service, it was difficult to estimate a proportion that is from the maramba caste, although the likelihood that a good size proportion of them are from that caste is strong considering the education requirements and the connections between higher education and status,
especially among older civil servants.\textsuperscript{923} In rural camat offices, this proportion certainly goes up.

**The Legacy of Golkar: Services and Infrastructure**

Sumba’s status as a peripheral region during the Dutch colonial period, and then as military operations zone, meant that the Dutch did not pay it much attention in terms of creating infrastructure or focusing on development. These tasks fell on the Protestant Church, which added to the Church’s status and prestige. This role continued through the Japanese occupation (although the Dutch on Sumba were rounded up and detained), the revolution (which led to the founding of the *Gereja Kristen Sumba*, or Sumbanese Christian Church, run by Sumbanese) and on through the Soekarno period, which was marked by an economy nearing failure or collapse. It was not until the New Order had been consolidated that welfare, development and infrastructure became the responsibility of the central government.\textsuperscript{924} As Golkar dominated the government, the slow but steady development of Sumba was viewed as being facilitated by Golkar.

By all accounts, Sumba at the dawn of the New Order remained peripheral, and hardly penetrated by the market economy. Rather, the majority of its population survived as subsistence agriculturalists with an economy centered on barter. After the consolidation of the New Order was well under way, by the elections of 1971 (and finished, perhaps, by the elections of 1977 in an institutional sense), Sumba came into

\textsuperscript{923} Arianti Ina Restianti Hunga, interview by author, 5 March 2006, Salatiga, Central Java. Hunga is a Lecturer and Researcher for the Center for Gender Studies, Satya Wacana Christian University. “Maramba are the most educated ones now. They are the ones who first had the money to become educated.” Engge.

\textsuperscript{924} Vel, *Uma-Economy*, 93-95.
focus as an area targeted for development. This was reinforced through a series of INPRES (*Instruksi Presiden*, Presidential Instructions) that came from the center, many of which had to do with the budget and allocations for peripheral regions, including money set aside for supporting local government, roads, schools, clinics, agriculture projects, and water and irrigation.

Because of the low starting point for these projects, much of the initial funding channeled to Sumba (and the rest of NTT) was used for “basic infrastructure that was, in the short and medium term, low yielding,” according to a study by Lorraine Corner.\(^{925}\) This kind of investment did not produce rapid gains, but because it was maintained over a long period of time, gains that were made were incremental and sustained. And, as stated above, the government began to take over in areas traditionally left to the Church.

The slow but steady rise in the standard of living for Sumbanese has continued, concurrent with a slow and steady rise in access to government jobs, as the civil service increased along with increases in the number of *kecamatan*.\(^ {926}\) The recent division of West Sumba into three *kabupaten* from one was viewed by opponents as a means to receive more funds from the central government as well as provide opportunities for patronage to flow through the traditional elites who would occupy the highest positions in


\(^{926}\) This rise in the number of *kecamatan* was exacerbated following the passing of UUD22/1999, the Law on Regional Governance, and UUD25/1999 on Fiscal Balance between the Center and Regions. Furthermore, West Sumba is going to be divided into three *kabupaten* from one in 2008, which will further allow access to government positions.
the administration. Those in favor of the division made appeals to decentralization as a means to better represent local constituents.  

**Economy, Ethnicity and Transmigration**

Both East and West Sumba have experienced sustained economic growth since the 1970s, with per capita income rising. What is apparent, however, from both observation and interviews, is that the majority of wealth is generated in the capital cities of Waingapu and Waikabubak, and that the bulk of this wealth goes to non-Sumbanese. Ethnic Chinese predominate in the economies of both capitals, owning hotels, restaurants and small, medium and large scale businesses. Along with the Chinese, outside entrepreneurs include Savunese, Javanese, Buginese, Balinese, West Timorese, and Florese, as well as others. Furthermore, there is a sizable ethnic Arab minority in Waingapu.

The existence of “market dominant minorities” and the link to violence directed at them and the central government is well established, especially toward ethnic Chinese in Indonesia. Yet despite the obvious nature of this economic disparity between the Sumbanese and the outsiders, there are no outward expressions of jealousy or anger directed at them; the anti-Chinese violence that occurs elsewhere in Indonesia, such as the spasm of coordinated violence against ethnic Chinese in Jakarta and other big cities in May 1998, is absent. Although one can be certain that some element of animosity exists in some quarters, the author never heard racist comments aimed at denigrating ethnic

---

927 Djoeroemana.

Chinese or other immigrant ethnicities while in Sumba. These kinds of subtle but pointed comments are spoken openly elsewhere, especially about the ethnic Chinese.

Part of the explanation lies in the fact that outsiders operate predominantly in the capital cities, and are rarely seen in rural areas. Those outsiders who do business in the districts generally operate out of the district capitals. Outside of district capitals, there is mostly subsistence agriculture, and outsiders do not compete.

Another factor is in how outsiders hold themselves. Because Sumba’s overall economy is poor, there are few opportunities to flaunt wealth. There are areas of the capital cities where wealthier people live, but these areas are mixed, with Sumbanese elites living beside Chinese and Javanese and others, as opposed to the mostly Chinese enclaves one finds in major cities in Java and elsewhere.

Chinese and other outsiders are also viewed as bringing with them opportunities that otherwise would not exist. Chinese will bring livestock to the districts and arrange for villagers to take care of them. Profits from the arrangement are then shared between the two parties, so both parties benefit.\textsuperscript{929} The Chinese and others work with people from the kampungs, so there is a lot of interaction.\textsuperscript{930}

There is also a long history of intermarriage between outsiders and Sumbanese. Intermarriage requires that the outsider be formally adopted into a suitable Sumbanese clan of either wife givers or wife takers, depending on the outsider’s gender. Outsiders are given Sumbanese names, and are expected to incur the obligations of any potential

\textsuperscript{929} Memang.

\textsuperscript{930} Kunda, 22 February 2007. There are, however, among poorer migrants areas of town predominantly occupied by one ethnic group, such as the Buginese section of Waingapu near the harbor.
husband or wife, including negotiating for a bride price (often done through *maramba* intermediaries) as well as ritual obligations. This requirement inculturates outsiders, and satisfies Sumbanese (as well as presenting new opportunities).

There is no government sponsored transmigration to Sumba, as there is in other parts of Indonesia that are sparsely populated. This is because of the lack of natural resources and the harsh climate. The importance of pigs in Sumbanese culture is often cited as another reason why Javanese and other Muslims are not willing to migrate to Sumba (and the reason why much of the Sumbanese police force is Balinese).931 There have been no widespread cases of religious violence in Sumba linked to Muslim immigrants, as there has been elsewhere in areas largely populated by Christians, such as Kupang, Ambon, West Papua, and East Timor. Following the referendum in East Timor and the influx of East Timorese to West Timor in 1999, East Sumba created resettlement villages for the East Timorese, however they decided not to come. Rather, the resettlement villages were used for Sumbanese who were enticed to come down from mountainous regions in order to live closer to services such as electricity and water.932

---

931 Marthen Kilimandu, interview by author, 13 January 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. Kilimandu is the *Kepala Kesbang, Sumba Timur* (Head of National Unity, East Sumba). Kaborang; Ricky Simon Paays, interview by author, 6 February 2007, Waingapu, East Sumba. Paays, is the Chief of Police for Waingapu. The presence of Balinese police in Sumba, along with others from NTT and Nusa Tenggara Barat, is consistent with Indonesian national policy to place police away from their home regions in order to curtail the possibility for graft.

932 Tedju; 2007; Soekardji, interview by author, 23 January 2007, Waingapu, Sumba. Soekardji is a staff member of the *Seksi Penyiapan Lokasi, Sumba Timur*, (Location Preparation Section, East Sumba), the section charged with finding suitable locations to relocate Sumbanese villages. There is a long-running internal transmigration program (called *translokasi*) with the goal of bringing people out of reach of government services to lower regions. These people are provided with housing and a stipend to move,
When pressed for the reasons behind the lack of violence or jealousy, two predominant reasons were stated. Economically, Sumbanese believe that “a rising tide lifts all boats.” With wealthy outsiders moving in, Sumbanese also see their chances at acquiring wealth. The second is a cultural trait: Sumbanese are said to be welcoming of outsiders, and tolerant of others’ beliefs.933

Discussion

One of the most important aspects of electoral politics in Sumba, and one that is overlooked in anthropological and political analyses, is that fact that Sumbanese politicians are engaged in and embrace their presence in Indonesia, whether it be the modernist Umbu Mehang, with experience in Jakarta, or the populist Lukas Kaborang, appealing to farmers and the rural poor. This shift in perception of the self as a citizen of the state of Indonesia has not required much in terms of an identity shift, although it has happened quite fast, beginning around 1950, when a council of kings still ruled Sumba, and more than 30 years after the concept of Indonesia had been formed in Java. This identity does not compete forcefully with other layers of identity, such as being Sumbanese, or a member of a particular ethnic group or clan, for the most part.934

Furthermore, Sumbanese have proved remarkably adept at shifting their own cultural and are guaranteed rights to the land from where they left as well, as part of their ancestral domain.


934 Efforts to incorporate Sumbanese through, for example, Panca sila indoctrination or by forcing the choice of religion were mild compared to other cases in this study.
beliefs to fit with this new place in Indonesian society. Kuipers refers to Sumbanese citizens as “spectators.”

Furthermore, this imagining of oneself as an Indonesian requires no coming to terms with a contentious or contested past, as do the other cases in the study. The indigenous political elite that has ruled Sumba is a continuation, for the most part, of the hereditary roles played by social elites that go back to the Dutch colonial period, if not before. Despite what could be loosely called encroaching modernity in Sumba, with its veneer of egalitarianism, the fact remains that it is those from the top tier of society who could send their children to school while underlings toiled in the fields. So when a camat answers that education is now more important than status, it is understood that higher education is still for the most part reserved for those with social status.

A deepening of political demands was imposed on Sumba beginning with the onset of the New Order period, which required further adjustment to Sumbanese social life. Yet these new demands on Sumbanese were seen as both not requiring a major shift

---

935 Kuipers, “Citizens as Spectators,” 163, 165: “One might be tempted to conclude that citizenship in the ordinary sense of the term does not operate in an out-of-the-way place like Sumba. Isolated by centuries of Indic, Muslim, and Dutch influence, Sumbanese have stubbornly maintained their devotion to ancestor worship and have only slowly been incorporated into the Dutch East Indies and the Indonesian republic with the help of Christian missionaries and military force... In Sumba, citizenship – in the broad sense of membership in a polity – was more akin to a form of spectatorship than the contractual relationship between an individual and the state in modern republics.”

936 “After nearly a century of Dutch and Indonesian government influence, verbal performance is far less central to authority, and privileged forms of citizenship – at the beginning of the twenty-first century – are now expressed through material pembangunan (construction, development) of houses, government offices, and other buildings, which all presume a common membership in the Christian Church, education in and use of the Indonesian language, and – less openly – family ties with powerful people” Ibid., 164.

937 Engge; Hunga.
in belief or action, and as bringing with them newfound development and opportunity. This development and opportunity was associated with the New Order and its political face, Golkar, for so long that support for Golkar remains high, and a sense of nostalgia for the simpler days of the Suharto regime is widespread among Sumbanese.
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION: THE GENESIS AND PERSISTENCE 
OF SEPARATISM IN EASTERN INDONESIA

The four cases under study in this dissertation examine the problem of regional separatism and integration with Indonesia. They differ greatly despite similarities in the variables that some scholars attribute to separatism. Following a brief overview, this chapter explains the similarities and differences among the cases in order to emphasize the relevant variables in each case.

Anti-State but not Separatist

Chapter two of this dissertation explains anti-state violence in Indonesia that was not separatist in nature (although some of these cases have been explained in separatist terms by other authors). These cases go back only as far as the conceptualization of Indonesia itself, around 1920, following the establishment of early nationalist groups such as Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Dagang Islam. Members of these groups were the first to envision a modern state coterminous with the territory controlled by the Dutch in their East Indies; prior to that time, rebellion and anti-Dutch organization was on a local scale, often with the goal of ousting the Dutch in order to return to the order that preceded their arrival, such as the Java War of 1825-30. Led by the charismatic Prince Diponegoro, the war was not waged to “free” Java but rather to oust the Dutch in order to subjugate

---

938 Boedi Oetomo (Glorious Endeavor) and Sarekat Dagang Islam (Muslim Trading Association, later Sarekat Islam) were both early manifestations of Indonesian nationalism, the former emerging from a Native medical school, the latter from a trade union.
Java under a Javanese ruler. Nevertheless, in the mythmaking process that is nationalism, Diponegoro is revered as an early “Indonesian” national hero.\(^{939}\)

This example and others show the fragility of the Indonesian state during its consolidation phase, from the birth of nationalism and prior to the declaration of Indonesian independence, when inhabitants of the Indies had to be convinced of this new nationality, to 1965, when Suharto came to power. Competing ideologies, assertions of regional identity, and jostling for influence, power and access to resources were all parts of these conflicts, but none was separatist in nature.

The first major revolution was the communist rebellion in Banten in 1926, aimed at ousting the Dutch. Although communist in nature, it set an example for the developing nationalist movement.\(^{940}\) The banning of the PKI by the Dutch pushed nationalists to form other parties, including the \textit{Partai Nasionalis Indonesia} (Indonesian Nationalist Party, PNI) and the \textit{Partai Repoeblik Indonesia}.\(^{941}\) The PKI and its affiliate organizations remained underground through the late Dutch colonial period, but it retained respect until the Madiun uprising in 1947.


\(^{940}\) Williams, \textit{Communism, Religion and Revolt}, 314.

\(^{941}\) Kahin, \textit{Nationalism and Revoution}, 85. For more concerning the communist revolt in Banten, see, for example: Benda and McVey; Brackman; McVey; Mintz; Palmier; Williams, \textit{Communism, Religion and Revolt}; Williams, \textit{Sickle and Crescent}. 
The Madiun revolt erupted during the fight for independence, and briefly sullied communism in Indonesia. Because soldiers were needed by the nationalists, most of the plotters were “rehabilitated,” and their reputations restored. Despite the ease with which the rebellion was stopped, it showed the tenuous grip of the nationalists and the care that would be necessary for Soekarno to hold the nation together. Soekarno’s defeat of the communists helped the nationalists in the long run, by removing the Dutch argument that should Indonesia become independent it would become communist. The PKI slowly began rebuilding momentum through the 1950s, eventually becoming a serious contender for power in Indonesia, until its utter and bloody demise in the events of 1965-1967.

The next major threat to Indonesian sovereignty came in 1953 from the Darul Islam movement, also centered in Java but with branches in Aceh, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan. Its genesis was five years prior when Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo founded the movement in West Java and established religious militias that skirmished with both the Dutch and the Republican troops. The movement’s goal was the establishment of an Islamic state coterminous with the borders of newly independent Indonesia, although much of the motivation behind the revolution lay in more mundane matters: opposition to land tenure patterns, economic and political autonomy, and the rationalization and demobilization of the military. The movement was quickly reduced

---

943 Kahin and Kahin, 31.
944 Fealy, 17-18. The treatment of the military following independence led to other disturbances as well, including the 22 December coup d’état led by Colonel Simbolon in Medan, North Sumatra, an effort that was “hurriedly and inadequately prepared” and that ended after a month. Kahin and Kahin, 59-62.
to simmering conflicts in the affected regions, but it soon gained strength again during the next major threat to Indonesia: the PRRI/Permesta rebellion.

The PRRI/Permesta (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/Charter of the Common Struggle) rebellions, the former centered in Sumatra, the latter in Sulawesi, broke out amongst the instability of the 1950s. The leaders were concerned about Soekarno’s plans to include communists in his cabinet as a result of their electoral gains and Jakarta’s economic policies, such as the nationalization of Dutch assets, disproportionately hurt the rebellious regions, which engaged in illegal barter trade with British Malaya and others.945 Vice President Mohammed Hatta resignation left the regions feeling as though they had representation Jakarta and created feelings that Dutch colonialism was being replaced by “Javanese colonialism.”946

Despite covert American military support with the goal of ousting Soekarno, the rebels were routed quickly.947 Daniel S. Lev’s examination of the relationship between the rebellion and the political system shows that the rebellion enhanced Soekarno’s position by eliminating or weakening his opponents. The army also benefited, cementing its role as protector of the nation. Finally, the party system was restructured, and the parties were forced to contend with the emerging power of Soekarno and the military.948 Parties that opposed the government were marginalized after the rebels’ defeat.


946 Mossman, 54.

947 Kahin and Kahin, 17.

948 Lev, The Transition, 134-34.
Masjumi’s political influence was diminished significantly, crippling political Islam and causing a shift in the balance of power within the political system. It also discredited the anti-communist movement and the United States because of its support of the PRRI; the PKI’s reputation was enhanced.949

This section examined and contextualized rebellions aimed at changing the nature of the Indonesian state from the time of the revolution to the New Order. A few conclusions can be drawn from this examination. First, these rebellions against the state did not have as a goal the separation of specific regions from the state of Indonesia (with the Darul Islam in Aceh perhaps an exception).950 Rather, these rebellions had as their primary goal a shift in the nature of the Indonesian state itself. These goals included the establishment of a communist state (Madiun), an Islamic state (Darul Islam), and a federal republic with autonomous regions (PRRI/Permesta).

Second, the primary motivations for these rebellions arose from both the imposition of central government authority on the regions, for example Jakarta’s rationalization of the military, and from feelings of economic exploitation or deprivation at the hands of the central government, as exemplified by the PRRI and Permesta rebels’ use of the “barter trade.” These examples show that during the Soekarno era Indonesian sovereignty was contested and vulnerable.

The imposition of the New Order, however, ended rebellion with these goals. Ideologically, the Indonesian state became anti-communist, secular, and firmly unitary.951

---

949 Harvey, 150.

950 Christie, 125.
The New Order was conceived and led by the group with the greatest potential ability to oppose the state, the military. Through corruption and collusion as well as through the granting of political representation and financial interests, the military was consistently favored. Furthermore, the overall level of development in Indonesia increased under the New Order, with a ratcheting up of the economy made possible through newfound stability that attracted foreign investment and through the oil boom of the early 1970s, as well as through a clear ideological alignment with the West.

The separatist leanings of the residents of Ambon and its surrounding region declined in the Soekarno era, but insurgences in West Papua, East Timor (after its incorporation), and Aceh were prominent features of the political landscape in New Order Indonesia. The next section discusses the cases of Ambon, West Papua, and East Timor in order to parse out the important variables pushing these regions to separatism.

Understanding Separatism

There are six key variables in this study concerning the emergence of separatism: 1) the treatment of dominant local elites – co-optation, alienation, or a combination of both; 2) the region’s relation to the party system, i.e. whether parties provide a reasonable means of interest articulation in a meaningful way for the population; 3) how the territory was incorporated, i.e. through conflict, negotiation or a combination of both; 4) religion and culture, i.e. whether there is a predominant and unified religion that either eased or

---

951 Following the downfall of the New Order, two of the three ideologies resurfaced. Islamists have been asserting themselves in various ways but perhaps most significantly in party politics, and the central government bowed to regional discontent by establishing a program or limited autonomy. Although some communists and communist sympathizers have reemerged, communism remains discredited.

952 The New Order emerged from the military, led by General Suharto.
made more difficult the regions’ incorporation, and cultural and ethnic considerations, i.e. whether the groups’ ethnic and cultural identity vis-à-vis the “national culture” provided a basis for conflict; 5) social continuity, i.e. whether the imposition of Indonesian sovereignty led to a significant break with the pre-existing social order; and 6) nationalism, i.e. whether members of the region participated in the early stages of the development of nationalism in Indonesia, and whether predominant theories of nationalism can account for its inclusion into the Indonesian nation or for the development of indigenous nationalism (see Table 1). The dependent variable is the presence or absence of separatism. This section highlights some of the significant factors, which are organized into Table 1.

**Elites**

The only case in which nearly all of the elites were alienated was East Timor. A tiny group of elites made up the pro-Indonesian political party APODETI, but this party’s support came from a small group of landowners eager to maintain their wealth and from the traditional leader (liurai) of a region that abutted the West Timor border, as well as among some of the numerically small Muslim population.⁹⁵³ Despite assurances from Jakarta in 1974 that it would not invad and following the brief civil war ignited by Indonesian infiltration and several weeks of border excursions, Indonesia eventually invaded. There was virtually no local support from East Timorese elites following the invasion and for several years to come; many of those from APODETI who supported Indonesia withdrew their support following the brutality of the invasion. The consolidation of Indonesian rule, though never complete, took more than five years.

---

In the Ambonese and West Papuan cases, some elites were pro-Indonesia, some were not. It would be impossible to quantify the number of people who supported Jakarta, but accounts show both supporters and detractors of Indonesian rule in West Papua following the Revolution and leading up to its de facto integration. Rather, after Indonesian consolidation came the alienation of many Papuan elites, some of whom turned away from Indonesia and supported the separatists. And in Ambon, there was a large contingent of pro-Jakarta Ambonese elites, many of whom had spent significant amounts of time in Java such as national hero Johannes Leimena, as well as those against Indonesian rule. The latter, however, consisted mostly of pro-Dutch elites who feared for their loss of status should the Dutch leave; members of the colonial army (KNIL), veterans, and their families, who feared for the loss of their prestige and pensions; and traditional leaders of Muslim villages, where the Dutch had propped up these leaders and offered rewards to the leaders for village members who entered the KNIL.954 Most of the non-Muslim, pro-Dutch elite and military left the region and other parts of Indonesia following the outbreak of the RMS revolution, emasculating the movement and ensuring its swift defeat.

**Parties**

Neither the West Papuans nor East Timorese had significant party representation leading up to and following their incorporation. West Papua was dominated by pro-Dutch parties, partly as a result of Dutch bans on pro-Indonesia political expression. But once Indonesia took de facto control in 1963, all political parties were banned, and West

---

As shown in the West Papua case-study chapter, the incorporation of West Papua proceeded through a legal process from 1950 – 1969. There were, however, incidents of violence throughout this time period, including during the pre-1961 negotiations with the Dutch, following the assumption of Indonesian control after 1961, and most markedly after the founding of the OPM in 1965. And although West Papuans were mostly left out of the negotiations, there were some who were avidly pro-Indonesia.

Although no Sumbanese contributed in a significant way to the early period of nationalist development in Indonesia (ca. 1920 – 1945), there were also no significant challenges to Indonesian nationalism. Rather, at the onset of the Indonesian revolution, European missionaries in Sumba encouraged Indonesian nationalism.
Papuans were not allowed to participate in national politics. During the “Act of Free Choice” in 1969, Indonesia argued that Papuans were not sophisticated enough to vote and therefore permitted – under heavy-handed coercion including killings of outspoken opponents of the process – 1,080 representatives chosen by Indonesia to represent the will of the West Papuan people. They voted unanimously and publicly for integration with Indonesia. Just two years later, Papuans were allowed to vote in their first national election, although the results are widely viewed as a sham. Suharto’s Golkar won all of the seats offered in the vote, a counterintuitive result given that the region had a significant and influential Christian population and the PDI was the nominal Christian party at the time.957 This pattern persisted through the New Order.

East Timorese were not allowed to vote until 1982, and then Golkar won 99.5 percent of the vote. Similar to West Papua, the vote was rigged, and the PDI would also have been a natural choice for East Timorese if they had participated in a meaningful way in elections. The manipulation of these results was meant to show the support for Indonesian rule in the regions, as well as support for Suharto’s party as it was consolidating its rule. It also shows, however, that there was no significant party representation for these regions and that Indonesia was clearly afraid of allowing any meaningful political articulation; its grasp on these regions remained tenuous and was enforced through violence.

In Ambon, however, due to its earlier integration during the open period of the Soekarno regime, there was significant party representation for potentially disaffected Ambonese Christians. The major Protestant party of the time, Parkindo, was founded by

957 Leith, 13; Biro Humas Komisi Pemilihan Umum, 71.
the Ambonese Christian Johannes Leimena, who served as its Chairman. In Ambon, Parkindo came in close second to the Muslim-based Masjumi party in the open elections of 1955, but garnered a small number of seats in the national assemblies.

The election of Parkindo representatives and the selection of Ambonese among them were immediate signs to the Ambonese population that they would be represented at both the local and the national arenas. Furthermore, because none of the major parties carried a clear majority in national elections, minor parties, including both Parkindo and \textit{Partai Katolik}, exercised influence (both nationally and in Ambon) beyond their sizes by working in coalition with other parties, as well as through the disproportionate number of Christians in the civil service, the military, in universities and schools, and in important businesses, and due to the extraordinary prestige of some of the leaders, including Leimena, who served in Soekarno’s cabinets throughout his rule and into the first Suharto cabinet.\footnote{Kahin, \textit{Major Governments}, 550-551; Feith, \textit{The Decline}, 145.}

Christian representation through Parkindo and \textit{Partai Katolik} was able to influence some key decisions made about the nature of the Indonesian state. Leimena (siding with secular nationalists) argued against the Jakarta Charter, for example, which would have made Islam a \textit{de facto} state religion. Although he supported a unitary state, Leimena also argued on behalf of autonomy (“to be regulated by central legislation”) for the regions, including Ambon, and on behalf of pardoning RMS rebels who wished to join Indonesia.\footnote{Leimena, 12-13.}

\textbf{Incorporation}
The method of incorporation was another relevant factor in the cases. Both Ambon and West Papua were integrated following negotiations but also after armed conflict. In the Ambonese case, the declaration of the RMS led to increased violence and tension, although major fighting lasted only a few months and many of the principal separatist combatants left for Holland or fled to Ceram to continue a low-level insurgency. In the negotiations process, pro-Indonesia Ambonese (including Leimena) were among the chief negotiators.

In West Papua, however, Papuans were completely left out, save token representation at the Malino Conference by Frans Kaisiepo in July 1946. Kaisiepo’s stance – that West Papua should be part of the Moluccas and therefore a constituent territory of the State of Eastern Indonesia – alienated both Indonesians and Dutch as well as most of the West Papuan elite and no Papuans were allowed into the subsequent negotiations processes involving first the Dutch and the Indonesians and later the UN, the United States, Australia and others. So although West Papua’s *de facto* integration in 1963 was the result of negotiations, no West Papuans participated in a significant way.

The West Papuan integration had a violent component as well. Indonesian incursions and attacks beginning in the late 1950s pestered the Dutch enough so that they sent reinforcements to defend the region. Although Jakarta began amassing troops in Eastern Indonesia in preparation for an invasion, its early forays were easily repelled by the Dutch. Most of the West Papuans greeted the Indonesian “liberators” as invaders, killed or captured them, and turned them in to the Dutch for rewards. Following the breakthrough year of negotiations in 1962, in which geopolitical considerations turned Western support toward Indonesia, Indonesia assumed control of the territory in 1963. Its
military used violent and repressive means to stifle West Papuan voices in favor of independence or a continued Dutch presence, and banned any political expression that was not explicitly pro-Jakarta.

East Timor, however, was simply a brutal military invasion. Prior to the invasion, East Timorese elites had discussed their fate with Indonesian leaders. In June 1974, José Ramos Horta, as a representative of the party ASDT, visited Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister Adam Malik, who wrote a letter promising that Indonesia would support the East Timorese should they opt for independence. In the months leading up to the invasion, however, Indonesia began incursions into East Timor’s border region, resulting in East Timorese and Indonesian casualties and the death of five journalists from New Zealand, Australia and Great Britain in October in Balibo.

The 7 December 1975 invasion, just hours after US President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger flew out of Jakarta, was a massive show of force. Reports from the ground described indiscriminate killings, as well as the confusion that reigned, leading some Indonesians to fire on other Indonesians. Although East Timor had unilaterally declared independence on 28 November, no major powers spoke out against the invasion; rather, the Americans, British and Australians attempted to disavow knowledge of the invasion despite having given implicit or explicit agreement to Suharto’s invasion plan. Stiff guerilla resistance surprised and angered the Indonesians, and led to tremendous loss of life; estimates run as high as 200,000 killed in the first six years of the war, representing about one-third of the population. The UN put the official

---

960 Ramos Horta, 40-44.
toll at as many as 183,000 but acknowledged these were only the deaths that could be verified.961

Prior to the invasion, Indonesia was concerned that East Timor would become independent, and succeeded in a public relations effort that portrayed the East Timorese as hostile, communist and unstable to the United States, Australia, Great Britain and others. The accusations against the East Timorese were baseless, but they provided a sufficient rationale to look the other way in tacit support of the vehemently anti-communist New Order Indonesia. Given developments in East Timor in 1974-75, nothing but a brutal military invasion with a nod and a wink from the West would gain Indonesia the territory.962

**Religion and Culture**

In every one of the cases under study, Christianity was the predominant religion practiced among the inhabitants who professed a world religion. Christians were granted special status by both the Dutch in the Indies and the Portuguese in Timor during the colonial period, and indigenous elites converted to Christianity as a means to consolidate their status; as an institution, the Christian and Catholic churches provided tangible benefits. Yet in three of the four areas under study, including West Papua, East Timor and Sumba, at the time of incorporation the majority of the inhabitants did not profess...

---

961 Jolliffe, 278, 301; Jardine, 22; Pilger, 16. The figure is often disputed, especially by the Indonesian side, but it reflects Catholic church census data, considered the most accurate by independent analysts (Dunn, *A People Betrayed*, 320-23). The recently published report by the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR, from the Portuguese *Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação*) put the death toll between 102,800 and 183,000 (Chega!, 2005 6.2.1, 57). This figure reflects statistical uncertainty based on methodological problems with data gathering. Many in East Timorese civil society regard even the higher figure an underestimate.

962 Lundry, “Manufacture of Threat.”
belief in a major religion but were considered “animists;” it was only a small fraction of the population, predominantly elites, who were Christian or Catholic. In Ambon, despite the popular characterization of the region as overwhelmingly Christian, Muslims made up 44 percent of the population.\textsuperscript{963} Rather than through sheer numerical dominance of the Muslim population, the Christian Ambonese dominated the region socially through their privileged connections to the Dutch.

It is, therefore, difficult to make a case for religion as a cause of separatism among the general population in these cases. In Ambon, for example, the majority of RMS sympathizers were Christian, but it was not their Christianity that caused the eruption of separatism, but rather the fear of their loss of status and support by the Dutch. There were Muslim supporters of the RMS, and the most prominent Indonesian nationalists from Ambon were Christian. The fear of “Mohammedian” dominance in Ambon was part of the discourse of emerging separatism, but it was counterbalanced by the Christian Indonesian nationalists as well as their party, Parkindo.

In West Papua, the fear of Muslim dominance was also part of the rhetoric, but again Christians were a minority and separatism was not religious in nature. The same is true for East Timor. Religion was not a root cause of separatism, but once separatism emerged it became salient in the two cases where it lasted, West Papua and East Timor, but irrelevant in Ambon, where Christians continued to occupy the most prestigious positions.

Religion did play a facilitating role in the emergence of nationalist movements in Ambon, West Papua and East Timor, however. Elites generally had strong ties to their

\textsuperscript{963} Chauvel, \textit{Nationalists}, 3.
churches. And in East Timor, nationalism emerged and spread through the publication Seara, a diocese newsletter that advocated the use of Tetum, the East Timorese lingua franca.964

Although it is an admittedly slippery topic (mainly over differing definitions or interpretations of the term culture), in each case there were cultural differences that could have led or did lead to conflict. Java and Javanese culture predominate in Indonesia. The Javanese are the largest ethnic group, and they dominate the military and the government.965 Although Soekarno made conscious efforts to mute Javanese dominance over Indonesia, for example through the choice of lingua franca Malay as the national language, Javanese chauvinism is palpable especially in regions that have very different cultural norms and in which large numbers of Javanese have moved, including those under study.

Cultural differences in Ambon were less pronounced than in the other regions. Ambonese Christians, through their long association with the Dutch, were very well educated. And those Ambonese who lived on or visited Java, especially those in the Indonesian nationalist movement, had long associations with Javanese and other Indonesians.

In West Papua and East Timor, however, cultural differences were pronounced. In both regions, the level of education was far below that of Indonesia. West Papuans were

964 Chris Lundry, “Peranan Gereja Katolik.”

965 The only non-Javanese president was B.J. Habibie, and he was not elected but rather as vice-president he assumed the presidency after Suharto abdicated. Megawati Sukarnoputri was half-Javanese and half-Balinese, but she too as vice-president assumed the presidency after Abdurrahman Wahid, a Javanese, was forced out in 2002. Megawati also identified more closely with her Javanese side, for example practicing Islam.
(and often still are) considered lazy, stupid, backward, or even animals. Muslim
Indonesians are offended by the importance of pigs to West Papuans, and the garb of
some of the highland tribes who wear the koteka or penis gourd. Under “Operation
Koteka” in the early 1970s, West Papuans were degraded for wearing the koteka and
couraged to wear “modern clothes;” this alienated West Papuans.

East Timorese were similarly belittled prior to and during the Indonesian
invasion. They were portrayed as backward and stupid due to low levels of education,
and the prevalence of pigs in East Timor also disgusted Muslim Indonesians. They were
called godless communists and animals not worthy of life to justify the mass killings in
the early period of the invasion. These impressions of East Timorese lasted throughout
the Indonesian occupation.

And once Indonesian rule was fairly well established in West Papua, East Timor
and Ambon, Jakarta sent Javanese and Madurese transmigrants. These transmigrants
caused resentment among the indigenous populations. Sumba, however, was never a part
of the government’s transmigration program. The few Javanese who live there went as
“spontaneous” or voluntary migrants, and their small numbers in proportion to the
Sumbanese does not cause resentment.

Social and Political Continuity

The next variable examined is whether the incorporation of the region presented a
significant break from pre-existing social continuity. In Ambon the situation was mixed.

---

966 The provincial website of West Papua today refers to the “backwardness,
poverty and stupidity” of West Papuans, blaming the Dutch while ignoring the fact that
under Dutch control, 1945-1963, rapid advancements were made in education that
quickly faded under Indonesian rule. Pemerintah Propinsi Papua: Tokoh Papua,
The Dutch-oriented elite would certainly be facing some significant changes, although they were assured that should they chose Indonesia they would be incorporated into the new system. The pro-Dutch Muslim elite, almost entirely poorly educated village level rajas, faced a reduction in their power but retained much of their traditional prestige and influence. Because of the predominance of Christians in Ambon despite the near parity in terms of population and primarily due to the vast differences in the levels of education between the two groups, Christians maintained their dominance over political life in Ambon for decades following the region’s incorporation.

In West Papua and East Timor, however, the situations were very different. In the period between the end of the Indonesian Revolution and the onset of Indonesian control (1949-63) the Dutch had poured money into West Papua, building schools and training West Papuans to govern the territory in preparation for the promise of eventual independence (by 1970); this stopped after the assumption of Indonesian control. The West Papuan nationalists were aware that should Indonesia take the territory they would become *persona non grata*, to be co-opted, imprisoned, or eliminated. It was apparent that social and political continuity would be drastically interrupted.

The case was very similar for East Timor, although perhaps more stark. East Timorese shared very little socially and politically with their Indonesian neighbors. After 400 years of separate colonial experience, the East Timorese saw themselves as very different from Indonesians and feared the imposition of Indonesian sovereignty. They were also well aware that the imposition of Indonesian sovereignty would bring suffering and the status of East Timorese elites would decline comparable to those in West Papua.
Nationalism

The final variable I examined is whether theories of nationalism can explain the emergence of separatism or the integration of the regions. I favor a constructivist interpretation of nationalism and reject primordialist theories of nationalism. Nationalism is not inherent, and therefore the establishment of nationalism has the potential for success or failure. In the cases of separatism, Indonesian nationalism failed and an alternative, local nationalism succeeded.

Ambon is the only clear case where Indonesian nationalism took root among a significant section of the population. At the genesis of the Indonesian state, there were politically active Ambonese, including and perhaps especially those at STOVIA (School Tot Opleiding Van Inlandsche Artsen) and other schools in Java, the birthplace of Indonesian nationalism. These Ambonese were separated from their homes in Ambon but retained ties to family there, and their Ambonese relatives and others were sympathetic to the Republican cause. This has been shown, for example, in Richard Chauvel’s data and exploration of the Ambonraad (Ambon Council) elections during the revolutionary period (1945-49), when the majority of members elected were pro-Indonesia, much to the consternation of the Dutch.967 Ambonese were also influenced by immigrants from other regions in Indonesia, as well as those Ambonese who had been able to leave Ambon for reasons other than education and military service, including many Muslims. On the other hand, there were also Ambonese in Java who threw their lot in with the Dutch, including members of KNIL (although not all KNIL were pro-Dutch). Pro-Dutch KNIL also influenced opinion in Ambon; their pay and pensions provided sustenance to their

967 Chauvel, Nationalists, 279, 294.
families and villages. So although there was resistance to Indonesia from Ambonese, there were also those who firmly supported the Indonesian nationalist enterprise. As described in chapter four, some of the latter went on to play significant roles locally and nationally.

In the West Papuan case, however, there was very little exposure to the ideas of Indonesian nationalism among West Papuan elites and masses prior to the Indonesian Revolution. Indonesian nationalism was introduced through Indonesian traders, settlers and civil servants who travelled to and settled West Papua as well as through nationalist prisoners at the Boven Digul prison camp, but it was not widespread, especially in regions distant from major cities and towns. There were no West Papuans who participated significantly in the early nationalist movement, but rather those who were pro-Indonesia emerged during the Revolution and afterward.

On the other hand, following the Indonesian Revolution and in the face of mounting Indonesian claims on the region, the Dutch encouraged a sense of identity among West Papuans separate from Indonesia and prepared West Papuans for eventual independence. West Papuan nationalism emerged following the Revolution as the Dutch began training and schooling West Papuans, and as they promised West Papuans eventual independence. The scope of this West Papuan nationalism was limited by several factors, including the mixed experiences of West Papuans with the Dutch; the low overall levels of education; the lack of unity among West Papuans; and the fact that most West Papuans lived in regions in which Dutch sovereignty was an abstraction or unknown. As the Indonesians became aggressive in their stance toward West Papua, the pro-Dutch and pro-Papuan elite resisted, but because of the limited scope of West Papuan nationalism
and the geo-political factors working against independence-minded West Papuans, the territory was eventually handed over to the Indonesians, who immediately began exercising strict political and social control over the region, as well as banning expressions of West Papuan nationalism. This also led many formerly pro-Indonesia West Papuans to defect.

Primarily because its integration occurred much later than the others and Portuguese sovereignty was not contested by Indonesia, there was no known significant connection between East Timorese and the early Indonesian nationalists. The Portuguese had provided no higher education and extremely limited primary education for the East Timorese prior to Indonesian independence. And for their part, the majority of Indonesian nationalists did not view East Timor as a part of their own nationalist struggle due to centuries of different colonial rule.

East Timorese nationalism emerged following the opening of the *Seminário Nossa Senhora de Fatima* in Dare in 1958, during the consolidation of the Indonesian state. This East Timorese nationalism was enabled in part by the Catholic Church and had Catholic undertones (although there were some Muslim, animist and perhaps Buddhist East Timorese nationalists as well); there was no feeling of solidarity with the Indonesians.

Once Portuguese plans for decolonization in East Timor were announced in 1974, political parties emerged from the uncertain climate. Among the main three, one had an orientation toward Indonesia: APODETI. Although APODETI leaders had links with the Indonesian intelligence service BAKIN that went back to the 1960s, its membership was estimated at around 300 in 1974. The two other parties, ASDT (later to become Fretilin)
and the UDT, were both pro-independence and their opinions differed mostly over how long the transition to independence should take and the extent of future ties to Portugal.

Leading up to the invasion, Indonesia coerced some of the leadership of the UDT to sign the Balibo Declaration, pledging loyalty to Indonesia. They had fled the conflict between supporters of FRETILIN and UDT that Indonesian machinations had helped create, and that FRETILIN had handily won. Most of the signers have disavowed the document, however, arguing that they were under duress. Following the Indonesian invasion and attempts to consolidate its rule in the region, the few pro-Indonesian elites were rewarded, and other elites were co-opted into service, many under threat.

The Indonesian occupation was marked by widespread torture, killings, rape and “disappearances.” East Timorese elites who were discovered were either killed or forcefully co-opted to work for the Indonesians under threat of death. Despite the investment that poured into East Timor from Jakarta, however slim the chances of East Timorese accepting the legitimacy of Indonesia following the brutal first years of the invasion and occupation, the behavior of the Indonesians prevented significant widespread support. In its many institutional roles the East Timorese Catholic Church provided the only acceptable mass organization for East Timorese tolerated by the Indonesians. As a result, membership in the Catholic Church skyrocketed (it is around 95 percent today). As shown in the results of the 1999 referendum, Indonesian nationalism in East Timor, brought through the barrel of a gun, failed. Despite attempts to wipe out traces of indigenous and Portuguese cultures, they were maintained, nurtured and encouraged by the Catholic Church.
Sumba: the “Negative Case”

Sumba is the “negative case” of this study, a case in which the dependent variable (separatism) is different, but one in which it could have plausibly been the outcome (due to similarities on some of the independent variables). This dissertation examines Sumba most thoroughly, but this section will give a cursory review, making the argument that some similar conditions there did not lead to the same outcome.

During the years of nationalist leavening in Java and elsewhere, Sumba remained peripheral. It was not “pacified” by the Dutch until 1911 and was known as a place of violence and slave trading (despite the Dutch ban on the slave trade in 1860). It did not fall under Dutch civilian administration until 1933, although it continued to be ruled by local chiefs vetted by and subservient to the Dutch. There was, however, very little contact between Sumbanese and other Indonesians aside from a few traders or those who worked for the Dutch. For a significant part of its recent collective memory, Sumba had been raided by other Indonesians, primarily Makassarese, Endenese, Balinese, and Javanese, seeking slaves; these memories affected their settlement patterns and continue to haunt Sumbanese.

---


969 Rodney Needham found that this was a widely held belief as late as the 1960s, reflecting the late establishment of Dutch sovereignty and the end of the slave trade in the region. Needham, “The Slave Trade,” 2. Jacqueline Vel noted this in her research decades later, although she did not mention the roots for this belief. Vel, *Uma-Economy*. 
Prior to the Revolution, no Sumbanese participated in a significant way in the emergent Java-based nationalist movement.\textsuperscript{970} Yet as the Revolution broke out, and Sumba became a constituent of the State of Eastern Indonesia, there was no significant opposition to becoming part of Indonesia. The German and Dutch missionaries in Sumba tolerated if not encouraged Indonesian nationalism, and their experience under the Dutch provided the Sumbanese with no impetus to loyalty.\textsuperscript{971} In this case, the influence of Christianity pushed them closer to the Indonesian nationalist side. As a constituent of the State of Eastern Indonesia, the Sumbanese could have made claims to independence under the terms of the Linggadjati Agreement as the RMS did, but did not.

As Indonesia became independent, Soekarno dissolved the Sumbanese Council of Rajas (Dewan Raja) in 1950, but created a local governing council made up of the Dewan Raja’s members. The three-tiered caste system (maramba or royalty, kabihu or freemen, and hamba or slaves) was maintained. There was little social discontinuity as traditional elites maintained their holds on positions of power (and this remains the situation to this day). Some local elites, faced with Indonesian assertions of power, began to reassert their own, but this was always on a local level and never led to the forging of a pan-Sumbanese identity, and certainly nothing resembling an anti-Indonesian movement.\textsuperscript{972}

In Sumba political organization was diffuse and local; there was never a viable

\textsuperscript{970} Keane, “Knowing,” 39.

\textsuperscript{971} Jacqueline Vel notes that the foreign missionaries decided to break with the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, GKN) to form the Protestant Church of Sumba (Gereja Kristen Sumba) in 1946. The decision was based partly on fear of expulsion at the hands of Sumbanese supporters of Indonesia; the missionaries felt that it would be better for them to remain under these circumstances than clinging to their Dutch association. Vel, Uma-Economy, 92.

\textsuperscript{972} Forshee, 16-17.
alternative enunciated to compete with the idea of becoming Indonesian. Sumba became ethnically more heterogeneous as people from outside of the region moved in, but these outsiders were generally welcome and viewed as bringing with them the trappings of modernity.

Similar to Ambon, the timing of Sumba’s incorporation in the early Soekarno era meant that there was relative political openness in the region. As a result, the two Christian parties, Parkindo and Partai Katolik, received a combined 60 percent of the provincial vote in the 1955 national election.\(^{973}\) Sumbanese elites participated as local cadres in these elections down to the village level; their influence was important to provincial and national party figures because if a local elite could be persuaded into support, he would then persuade his followers into voting the same way.

Thus despite the differences between Sumba and most of the rest of Indonesia, there was no significant opposition to the region’s incorporation. Because of its peripheral status, very little was asked of the Sumbanese vis-à-vis their membership in the Indonesian state. On the other hand, because of Sumba’s lack of resources and low level of development, Jakarta was willing to forgo a heavy hand in Sumba and allow social and political life to carry on much as it had. The differences among the cases explained in the sections above with respect to independent and dependent variables is highlighted in Table 2.

\(^{973}\) The Elections Commission did not publish disaggregated statistics at the kabupaten (regency) level, so the results are for the entire Nusa Tenggara Timur province, including West Timor, Bima, Flores and Sumba. Feith, *The Indonesian Elections*, 58-59, 71. The success of the Partai Katolik in NTT is explained by the population of Flores, which is overwhelmingly Catholic. The other two major regions of NTT, Sumba and West Timor, are predominantly Protestant with Catholic minorities.
Table 2. Predominant variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Elites</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Incorporation</th>
<th>Religion/Culture Potential/Actual</th>
<th>Continuity</th>
<th>Nationalism</th>
<th>Separatism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambon 1920-1951</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Mixed(^{974})</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Papua 1945-1969</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Yes/Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Timor 1975</td>
<td>Alienated</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>Yes/Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumba 1949</td>
<td>Co-opted</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Negotiated</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{974}\) For the majority of residents in the South Moluccas, there was social continuity as described above. Those who experienced the most significant change were the Dutch-oriented Ambonese who remained, although, as described in the previous sections, the dominant Christian elites remained in positions of power and influence, and the Dutch-oriented Ambonese were incorporated into the Indonesian body politic.
Separatism: Emergence versus Persistence

This section will briefly differentiate the emergence of and the persistence of separatism with regard to some of the variables discussed as well as some to be introduced. If one thinks of separatism as a binary dependent variable that is either present or absent, it is easy to focus on the time period in which separatism emerged, as the above sections of the paper have done. If one considers variation among cases of separatism in terms of their intensity and persistence, however, the three cases appear very different indeed. Put simply, among the three cases of separatism is one in which separatism slowly waned (Ambon), one in which separatism remains but as a very muted threat (West Papua), and one in which separatism succeeded (East Timor). What explains this variation?

This section introduces three new variables to explain the persistence of separatism and conjecture as to the success of East Timor’s separation. These new variables include: “relative deprivation,” i.e. the perception by residents of the regions that they were receiving less from the center than they thought they were entitled; the level of violence following integration with Indonesia; and the level of international support for the separatists. These new variables are shown in Table 3, and the three cases of separatism are discussed below.

Ambon

In Ambon, support for separatism waned significantly following the defeat of the RMS and the exodus of its members to Holland. Much of the explanation for this is the social and political continuity following the region’s incorporation. In Ambon, the elites
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Elites</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Religion/Culture</th>
<th>Relative Deprivation</th>
<th>Violent</th>
<th>International Support</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambon 1951 +</td>
<td>Co-opted</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Papua 1969 +</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Little</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Timor 1975 - 1999</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumba 1949 +</td>
<td>Co-opted</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
who remained became firmly Jakarta-oriented. And for its part, Jakarta allowed the
dominant Christian elites to remain in control of the region, preserving over the long term
social and political continuity. Ambonese were represented by the two Christian oriented
parties, Parkindo and Partai Katolik, through the beginning of the New Order and prior to
the consolidation of political parties. Because of the Christians’ continued dominance,
religion was not a source of conflict in Ambon. Jakarta’s lingering suspicion of
Ambonese was counterbalanced by the demonstrated loyalty of pro-Indonesia elites.

With regard to the new variables, Ambon differed from the other cases as well.
Economically, Ambon relied on the central government for much of its budget. There are
no major natural resources or industrial infrastructure in the region, so Ambonese do not
have a sense of exploitation at their incorporation into Indonesia. Furthermore, following
the eradication of much of the RMS, and despite a heavy military presence (Ambon was
used as a major military port for eastern Indonesia, including during the PRRI/Permesta
rebellions and the conflict with the Dutch over West Papua), there was very little
violence in Ambon itself. Finally, following the move of the RMS leadership and many
of its supporters to the Netherlands, there was little international support for the RMS,
aside from token support from Holland, mostly from religious groups. The idea of an
independent Ambon did not resound nor did it draw much support internationally, aside
from emigrant Ambonese in Holland and Dutch who were hostile to Indonesia.

---

975 Religion did become a source of conflict in 1999, however. This was caused
by the political opening associated with the fall of the New Order and democratization,
and Muslim attempts to compete for newly opened positions of power within society and
a Christian reticence to give up domination. Gerry van Klinken, “The Maluku Wars:
‘Communal Contenders’ in a Failing State,” in Violent Conflicts in Indonesia: Analysis,
Representation, Resolution, ed. Charles A. Coppel (New York: Routledge, 2006), 138-
142.
As a result, separatism was not maintained in Ambon, nor did it find success. Just five years after the defeat of the RMS, when the PRRI/Permesta rebellion broke out, Ambon became a target for rather than allies of the rebels in Sulawesi and Sumatra. Ambon had, by that time, come firmly and relatively willingly under the control of Jakarta.

**West Papua**

Following the incorporation of West Papua, many of its political elites were co-opted or chose to participate in Indonesian political and social life. Some who were pro-Indonesia prior to West Papua’s incorporation, however, became quickly disillusioned, renounced Indonesia, and joined the rebels. Because of the timing of the sham plebiscite incorporating West Papua *de jure* (the “Act of Free Choice” in 1969), there was very little party representation for Papuans, and early elections were rigged to select Suharto’s political vehicle, Golkar.

Following West Papua’s incorporation, and as Papuans were forced to select a religious affiliation for themselves allowed by the Indonesian government (Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism), many chose Christianity due to prior Dutch attempts at conversion. As more and more Papuans identified as Christian, their resistance to Indonesia became couched in religious as well as political terms. Yet among the various Protestant faiths in West Papua (as well as some Catholicism), there was competition and a lack of unity. Javanese cultural chauvinism towards Papuans continued.

Between West Papua’s *de facto* and *de jure* incorporations (1963 and 1969), two significant events occurred. The first was the ascension of Suharto to the presidency
following an attempted coup, the details of which remain murky, and the massacre of up to two million Indonesians suspected of communist ties.\textsuperscript{976} The second was the verification of massive deposits of gold and copper in West Papua, as well as oil and natural gas. Suharto’s ascension resulted in Indonesia firmly aligning with the West, and as a result he reversed Soekarno’s withdrawal from the United Nations as well as his policy blocking foreign investment. The first major contract Suharto signed was with US-based Freeport McMoran, to exploit the mineral resources in the region. Freeport is the largest foreign contributor to the tax base of Indonesia and makes hundreds of millions of dollars a year from its operations in West Papua, yet West Papua remains among the poorest of regions in Indonesia. Economic exploitation, fueled by a feeling of “relative deprivation,” remains a primary justification for separatists in West Papua.

Furthermore, Indonesian tactics in West Papua, beginning in 1963, have remained violently repressive. The military presence is stifling in major cities, and it seems omnipresent even in peripheral areas through patrols and checkpoints. Outspoken critics of Indonesia continue to be murdered, tortured and imprisoned.\textsuperscript{977} There is some international support for the separatists in West Papua (or at least to revisit the sham “Act of Free Choice” and hold a genuine act of self-determination), but internal divisions in West Papua have made it difficult for West Papuans to put forward a consistent front, and therefore make it difficult for consistent outside support. Furthermore, although widely regarded as a sham, the acceptance of the “Act of Free Choice” by major powers

\textsuperscript{976} For a recent and thorough review of the events of 30 September 1965 and its aftermath, as well as a review of the leading scholarship on the topic, see: Roosa.

represents a significant degree of international recognition of Indonesian rule in the region. As a result, separatism has persisted in West Papua, but has not led to success.

**East Timor**

Following East Timor’s integration, elites remained alienated, party representation was lacking, and religious and cultural differentiation and alienation persisted. Despite Jakarta’s investments in the region, which built up East Timor’s infrastructure, East Timorese felt a sense of relative deprivation. The money that poured into the region was viewed as enabling Indonesian dominance. Roads, for example, were seen as a means for the Indonesian military to better control far-flung regions; schools were viewed as attempts to indoctrinate East Timorese children; Indonesian clinics were seen as places where sterilization or even murder occurred, and so East Timorese avoided them. What major businesses there were in East Timor were owned by the Indonesians who occupied the region, including the generals who oversaw the invasion such as Benny Murdani.

There was, however, significant international support for the East Timorese. Contrary to West Papua, there was no internationally sanctioned act of self-determination for the East Timorese (despite, of course, the flaws of the West Papuan plebiscite). And the violence that was perpetrated in East Timor, including resettlement that led to tremendous famine, was known in international circles. In 1991 the Indonesian military perpetrated a massacre of over 400 peacefully demonstrating East Timorese, caught on film and broadcast by Western journalists. This led to an explosion of East Timorese

---

978 Gil Pinto, interview with Author, 13 January 1997, Bacau, East Timor. This interview was conducted clandestinely and the subject wished to use a pseudonym. Pinto worked in a hospital in Bacau, and tracked the fate of patients brought there; he showed the author detailed lists of dozens of people who had been killed at the hospital.
solidarity groups, including, for example, the East Timor Action Network in the US, the East Timor Alert Network in Canada, and dozens of others. These groups effectively lobbied their home governments to pressure Indonesia for change. And the Catholic Church presented a unified and reliable front for information about events in East Timor; the Catholic Church remained separate from the Indonesian Catholic Church at the orders of the Vatican.

As a result of continued pressure from outside, and due to the political and economic turmoil of the East Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-98, Suharto was forced to abdicate and his successor, B.J. Habibie, assented to a referendum to allay some pressure. Despite attempts to influence the results by intimidating and killing East Timorese opposed to Indonesian rule, on 30 August 1999, 98 percent of registered voters turned out for the referendum and over 78 percent voted to secede from Indonesia.

Conclusions

This dissertation makes four significant contributions to the field. The first is through a detailed case-study approach comparing three regions that have undergone serious separatist movements in the state of Indonesia – one of which remains serious, one of which has declined significantly, and one that succeeded in its goals – as well as a “negative case.” This contribution is evident in the chapters and the beginning of the conclusion.

The second contribution is the differentiation between the causes of the emergence of separatism and the causes of the persistence of separatism. In this chapter,

---

the decline of separatism as a threat in Ambon was a very different outcome than those of East Timor and West Papua. Social and political continuity were the major factors in these differing outcomes, as described above. Separatism is no longer a serious threat in Ambon, but remains a perceived threat by the Indonesian state to justify tight control as well as a way for some Ambonese to express dissatisfaction.

The third contribution this dissertation makes is toward a better understanding of the relationship between nationalism and separatism. Predominant conceptualizations of Indonesian nationalism focus on the success of the endeavor. There is no question that with Indonesia’s myriad ethnic groups and with little prior history between them prior to the (relatively late) Dutch consolidation of the region in the early part of the twentieth century that despite the few cases of serious separatism in Indonesia, especially given the tenuous nature of sovereignty in the early stage of independence, that by far it has been successful. The “negative case” of Sumba demonstrates that a region with tenuous ties to Indonesia, with elements that could have potentially created conflict over its incorporation, and with potential juridical claims to separatism was nevertheless incorporated successfully through the pursuit of policies that had little effect on social continuity (and often reinforced it) and which provided overall benefits to the region. On the other hand, analyses of separatist movements in Indonesia emphasize the failure of Indonesian nationalism to take hold in some regions, for various reasons, usually after the regions’ incorporations.

This dissertation takes both of these approaches into consideration, but adds a third: the presence of separatism and the rejection of Indonesian nationalism in these regions also signifies the success or appeal of alternative nationalisms. As described in
each chapter, these nationalisms are rooted in different perceptions of identity with roots in the colonial period, and tied to the early education of elites.\textsuperscript{980}

Separatism is not simply the airing of grievances by one sub-group within a state. Chapter two, which explores early challenges to the Indonesian state that were not separatist in nature, is instructive. These challenges did not reject Indonesian nationalism, but rather the ideological driving force behind the government at the time and its economic consequences. These rebellions were not aimed at separating regions from Indonesia because the leaders of the rebellions viewed themselves as patriotic Indonesians hoping to save the nation from perceived threats, including communism and economic exploitation of the regions.

The development of these alternative nationalisms mirrored the development of Indonesian nationalism albeit following Indonesia’s declaration of independence. The roots of Ambonese nationalism are deeper, yet remained unarticulated until the threat of the severance of ties between the region and the Dutch – and the subsequent loss of status for Ambonese elites – emerged. All three of these nationalisms were articulated by a cadre of elites educated during the colonial period and by the colonizers. All three regions faced the challenge of uniting and mobilizing the inhabitants within the perceived nation to varying success. Yet unlike the Indonesian case, these nationalisms were also affected by the very actions of Indonesia; although nationalism was present during the

\textsuperscript{980} Michael Hechter differentiates state building nationalism (“an attempt to assimilate or incorporate culturally distinctive territories in a given state”) and peripheral nationalism (“when a culturally distinctive territory resists incorporation into an expanding state, or attempts to secede and set up its own government… Often this type of nationalism is spurred by the very efforts at state-building nationalism described above”). In this case, the former is what I have referred to as Indonesian nationalism, the latter applicable to the separatist movements. Michael Hechter, \textit{Containing Nationalism} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 15-17.
period of incorporation, Indonesia’s appeasement in Ambon and hostility in West Papua and East Timor led to different outcomes.

Finally, when taken together, these three elements combine to challenge predominant theories of separatist conflict that emphasize one causal factor over others, including, for example, poverty, ethnicity or religion. These factors led to the maintenance of separatism in East Timor and West Papua, but none was necessary or sufficient for the development of separatism; Sumba, for example, has all of these conditions but never developed a nationalist ideology. Rather, the most important factor in the rise of separatism in the regions under study was the development of an alternative nationalism within the region, and a means to articulate and spread this nationalism in order to gain support. It also raises doubts about the applicability of theories of anti-state violence in states that are beginning the consolidation process, as Indonesia was during the conflict in the South Moluccas, or as they incorporate territory after the consolidation process has been lung under way, as in the case of West Papua and East Timor.

Ethnicity, religion and poverty as well as the ability to articulate and spread nationalism, however, were factors that exacerbated these separatist conflicts once they had broken out in all three cases. Combined with a drastic social change at the introduction of Indonesian sovereignty in the cases of East Timor and West Papua, these factors led to the persistence and intensity of separatism/nationalism. In the case of Ambon, where social continuity was maintained and where Indonesian nationalist sentiment was widespread, religious, ethnic and economic factors were not enough to maintain significant resistance to Indonesian rule. Although there remains some separatist sentiment in Ambon, including the creation of the Front Kedaulatan Maluku (Moluccan
Sovereignty Front), it is not a serious challenge to Indonesian sovereignty, and it has not led to the kind of violence experienced in West Papua and East Timor. Following the defeat of the RMS, Ambonese elites who remained in Indonesia supported Indonesian state-building efforts as well as the “rehabilitation” of former rebels. Social continuity was preserved through the maintenance of the privileged position of Christian Ambonese elites, due to their much higher levels of education compared to Muslim Ambonese and their high profile roles in Indonesian nationalism. Through local leadership, and with the ability to be represented through influential Christian parties, Ambonese elites and masses felt as though they had something at stake at remaining within Indonesia.

This chapter summarizes the important factors that explain both the emergence of separatism and the success or failure of incorporating peripheral regions, as well as the persistence of separatism. Using cases within Indonesia, it has combined variable-driven and case-study methodology to present a more nuanced picture of the causes of separatism. The importance of theoretically and methodologically grounded case-study research has been well documented.981 King, Keohane and Verba note “one of the often overlooked advantages of the in-depth case-study method is that the development of good causal hypotheses is complementary to good description rather than competitive with it.”982 They also note the danger of purely descriptive work by “historically-oriented or interpretive social scientists,” cautioning that the explanatory value of such work is questionable.983 Charles C. Ragin notes the value in a synthetic approach utilizing both

---

981 King, Keohan, and Verba, 45, 209; Ragin, 34-52.

982 King, Keoahane, and Verba, 45 (emphasis in original).

983 Ibid.
variable-driven and case-study methodologies, which can show generalizations as well as the particular circumstances of each case.\textsuperscript{984} David Jacobsen and Ning Wang have shown the value of “organic” approaches that “engage complexity rather than simplify it” – “quantitative analysis as commonly practiced… is more helpful in teasing out patterns between variables but ill equipped to (sic) investigating the fluid and complex social processes that accounts (sic) for the patterns.”\textsuperscript{985}

There remain some significant avenues of research in order to strengthen or challenge the findings presented here, as well as some questions that remain unanswered. Further comparison of the integration of peripheral and minority regions in Indonesia could establish whether the events in Sumba that led to its integration were part of a broad pattern or were particular to each region. Cases chosen from outside of Indonesia could test the applicability of the model to other cases.

Finally, although East Timor has separated from Indonesia and faces its own troubles, the question of the fate of West Papua remains. The Indonesian government has been pursuing a special autonomy plan in order to help develop West Papua, but by most accounts it has not been effective at alleviating poverty. At the same time, Jakarta has divided the region into three provinces, fueling speculation that the government is trying to establish firmer control through divide-and-conquer tactics and leading to more tension.\textsuperscript{986} Although the granting of autonomy leading to social continuity was a key in

\textsuperscript{984} Ibid., 82-84.

the successful integration of Sumba, it remains to be seen if granting the same autonomy in West Papua following decades of social dislocation and economic exploitation will have the same effect. If significant change comes to West Papua with these new policies, it will likely take generations (if ever) for all West Papuans to give up any claims to an independent state. As for the East Timorese, the future is in their own hands in as much as the future of any poverty-stricken state belongs to its people amidst the influences of international politics and economic institutions.

---

WORKS CITED

Books


*East Timor: Building for the Future*. Jakarta: Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, 1996.


Vicziany, Marika, and David Wright-Neville, eds. *Islamic Terrorism in Indonesia: Myths and Realities*. Victoria, Australia: Monash University Press, 2005.


**Theses, Dissertations and Papers**


**Journal and Newspaper Articles**


Cribb, Robert. “‘Indische’ Identity and Decolonization.” International Institute for Asian Studies Newsletter, No. 31 (July 2003): 52.


**Online Sources**

Aditjondro, George J. “After the Bamboo Curtain has been Pulled Out,” At the Dili Massacre Commemoration Rally, Perth, November 12, 1995, Forwarded by apakabar@clark.net.


Interviews and Personal Communication

Adam, Jack. Interview by author, 11 Jul 2006, Salatiga, Central Java.


Djama, Yonathan Tunggu. Interview by author, Jan 19, 2007, Waingapu, Sumba.


Djubida, Fritz. Interview by author, 9 November 2006, Kupang, West Timor.


Hunga, Arianti Ina Restianti. Interview by author, 5 March 2006, Salatiga, Central Java.

Hungga, Ngguli. Interview by author, 10 January 2007, Waingapu, Sumba.


Jones, Sidney. Interview by author, 5 May 2006, Jakarta.


Kapita, Umbu Katu. Interview by author, 7 February 2007, Paberiwai, Sumba.


Kristonen, Yari. Interview by author, 7 August 2006, near Wamena, West Papua.


Litaay, Flip. Interview by author, 8 October 2006, Salatiga, Central Java.
Litaay, Theofransus. Email communication by author, 7 May 2008.
Litaay, Theofransus. Email communication by author, 3 January 2008.
Liwe, Amelia. Email communication by author, 8 January 2008.
Makambombu, Stepanus. Interview by author, 19 September 2007, Waingapu, Sumba.
Mansoben, Johszua R. Interview by author, 5 August 2006, Abepura, West Papua.
Ndamu, Umbu. Interview by author, 5 February 2007, Pahungga Lodu, Sumba.
Nusapessy, Yos. Interview by author, 29 June 2006, Ambon.
Pinto, Gil. Interview by author, 13 January 1997, Bacau, East Timor.


Yoman, Socratez Sofyan. Interview by author, 9 August 2006, Abepura, West Papua.

Yosiya, John. Interview by author, 5 August 2006, Wamena, West Papua.

Government Publications


