

From Cannibal to Terrorist:

State Violence, Indigenous Resistance and Representation in West Papua

S. Eben Kirksey

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To M., possible futures and the past.

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Cover photograph: Indonesian soldiers dressed as Papuan warriors. These 'warriors' wear black-face make-up and carry Indonesian flags that signifying that they support the nationalist struggle (AP Photo/Dita Alangkara).

Abstract

Contemporary Papuans invert orthodox discourse by depicting the Indonesian state as a savage neo-colonial institution that is occupying their homeland of West Papua. Images of Papuans as cannibals and terrorists are mirrored back onto the Indonesian military. Torture and state-sponsored extra-judicial killings in West Papua make Papuans terrified about voicing their critiques of Indonesian rule and their aspirations for an independent nation-state.

Papuans have developed the key symbols of nationalism. They have a largely symbolic 'army' that uses small-scale acts of violent resistance to keep Papuan hopes alive and to bring issues from the realm of the undiscussed into the mainstream media. Most media coverage, however, depicts Papuan nationalist desires as illegitimate. The Indonesian government has tabooed the naming of independence organisations in the media and required that they be labelled with symbolically charged acronyms instead. The large majority of Papuans employ non-violent strategies of resistance to Indonesian occupation.

In the realm of geopolitics divergent Papuan aspirations are not being discussed. Papuan independence organisations are not efficient Weberian bureaucracies. The persistence of the self-determination movement in West Papua is tied to its flexible structure of organisation, or rather, its anti-organisational constitution. The Papuan concept of *merdeka* (freedom) is used to link a wide variety of discourses and politics into a unified front of resistance against Indonesia. Most Papuans in rural areas desire more than an independent nation-state: they hope for new systems of governance based on indigenous modes of authority. They desire a future where indigenous discourses would come to have broader political implications; a social and legal order that combines indigenous protocols of oration with written legislation. As West Papua continues to negotiate independence from Indonesia and interdependencies with the rest of the world there will be further opportunities to bring their indigenous discourses into the forefront of global debates.

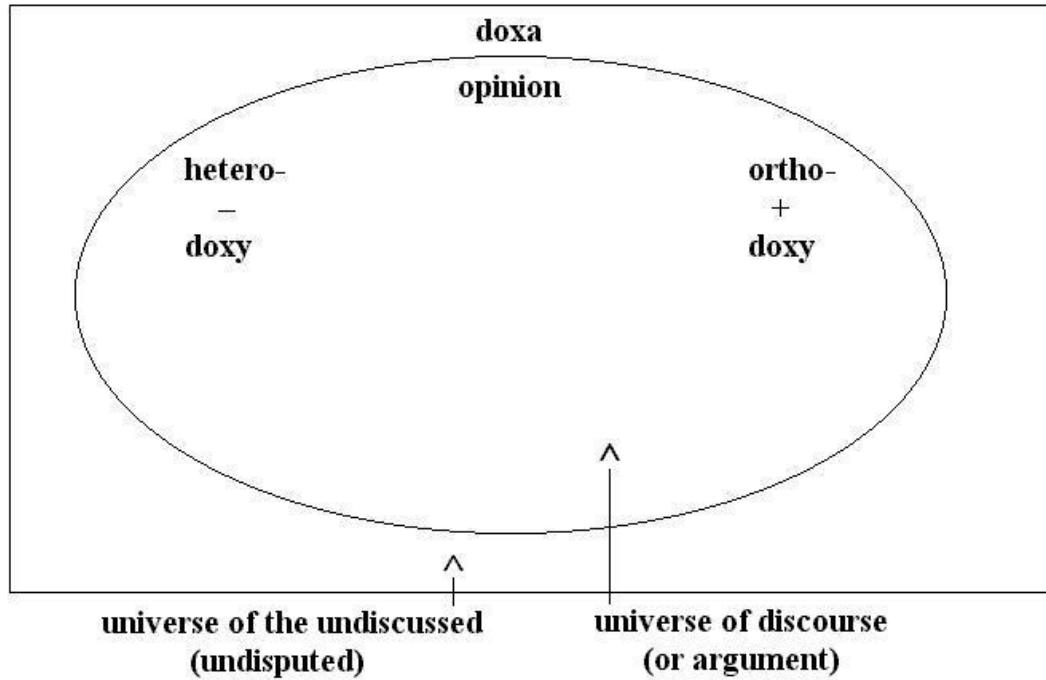
Preface

On 17 August 1998, Indonesia's 53rd anniversary of independence, I met a panting teenager on a trail leading to the Mee village that I call Misty Ridge, which was the ethnographic field site in West Papua for my undergraduate honours thesis. The boy had been given urgent instructions by the village head (*kepala desa*) to sprint back to the village and hoist the red and white Indonesian flag. Four distant gunshots had been heard minutes before by the village head while he was visiting a neighbouring village. He feared that a passing military patrol had begun shooting the people of Misty Ridge because they were not conducting independence-day celebrations. The source of the gunshots was never determined.

The feelings of terror that catalysed this local series of events can be traced to what Papuans call *memoria passionis*, or poignant memories of torture and killings. The subject of the present dissertation did not arise out of a specific *a priori* theoretical problem. Indeed, my original research in West Papua was an anthropological study of food. As is the habit of ethnographers, I have allowed my interlocutors to influence the frame of my research so that it became focused on a topic that is meaningful to them in their own terms: a historical study of state violence and indigenous resistance in West Papua. I felt compelled to follow the lead of my interlocutors in the hopes of making a new discovery. Through me, my interlocutors have succeeded in bringing something from the universe of the undiscussed (undisputed) into the universe of discourse (argument) (Figure 0.1, p. 5).¹ The subject that I have chosen is exceedingly intricate. The primary material that I have collected is relevant to a number of normative, methodological, ethical, historiographical, political, legal and theoretical debates in the social sciences in general and history in particular. In the course of this dissertation I will touch on many issues, but in the final analysis I will demonstrate a single argument.

¹ Cf. P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 168.

Figure 0.1 Universe of Discussion '[T]he manifest censorship imposed by orthodox discourse, the official way of speaking and thinking the world, conceals another, more radical censorship: the overt opposition between "right" opinion and "left" or "wrong" opinion, which delimits *the universe of possible discourse*, be it legitimate or illegitimate, euphemistic or blasphemous, masks in its turn the fundamental opposition between the universe of things that can be stated, and hence thought, and the universe of that which is taken for granted', P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 169-70.



While all of my evidence comes from the past, my primary argument is about a possible future. The complete actualisation of freedom (*merdeka*) would mean, for many Papuans, abandoning a nation-state form of organisation. A desire for economic development, environmental sustainability, geopolitical independence, indigenous mythology and Christian salvation are fused together to form the ideological force that drives a liberation movement called the OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*). This self-determination movement not only desires independence from Indonesian rule, but also to be liberated from systems of bureaucratic regulation and domination.

I will structure the layout of this dissertation around Pierre Bourdieu's model of the universe of possible discussion (Figure 0.1). The main competing poles of opinion within the universe of argument about West Papua are the orthodox Indonesian opinion that the territory should remain part of the unitary Republic of

Indonesia and the heterodox Papuan opinion that West Papua should be granted political sovereignty. The fact that many Papuans desire a revolutionary social and political order that goes beyond simply creating a new Papuan nation-state has largely been dismissed and relegated to the realm of the undiscussed. I will use my historical data to argue that Papuan grievances are legitimate and their aspirations viable. The evidence to back up this claim will be presented in three sections: 1) Orthodoxy, 2) Heterodoxy, and 3) the Universe of the Undiscussed. Section One is a brief critique of orthodox discourse about Indonesian nationalism and Papuan cannibalism. Section Two will argue that violence and surveillance have been used by Indonesia in an attempt to eliminate heterodox discussions about nationalism and state savagery. Section Three will trace how indigenous Papuan accounts of events and visions for the future have begun to work their way into the media.

The 1999 West Papua number of *Pacific History* edited by Chris Ballard identifies many ‘blanks’ in the history of this territory.² While there have been publications on related subjects by Indonesian military historians, human rights campaigners, journalists and Papuan nationalists there has not yet been a comprehensive study published in English of state violence and indigenous resistance in West Papua by a professional scholar.³ My present study is an initial exploration of this complicated subject. I expect that in the near future other scholars will fill in the blanks which remain in the present work due to time and space constraints.

While the final stages of this dissertation have been accomplished alone behind a computer, the research process has been inherently social—relying on an extensive network of colleagues, family and interlocutors. I must acknowledge my intellectual debts first: Danilyn Rutherford, Brigham Golden, Rupert Stasch, Mary Steedly, John Saltford, Jeroen Overweel, Freek Colombijn and Paul Michael Taylor all proved key ideas and source material for this dissertation. As always Maria Vesperi has given me

² C. Ballard, “Blanks in the Writing”, *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 34, no. 2 (1999), p. 149.

³ Ismail, *Praja Ghupta Vira*; R. Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War* (London, 1985); C. Budiardjo *et al.*, *West Papua* (Thornton Heath, 1988); Anti-Slavery Society, *West Papua* (London, 1990); S. Djamhari *et al.*, *Tri Komando Rakyat* (Jakarta, 1995); J. Ottow, ‘West Papua’ (1999); N. Jouwe, unpublished manuscript, ‘Cry of Distress From West New Guinea’, n.d.; Leonardo, unpublished manuscript, ‘The Awakening of a Nation’, February 1999; B. Giay, *Menuju Papua Baru* (Jayapura 2000); G. J. Aditjondro, *Cahaya Bintang Kejora* (Jakarta 2000).

unconditional intellectual and professional support. Gina Clark has read the entire manuscript with a careful and compassionate eye.

Benny Giay served as a personal mentor during my latest fieldwork stint in West Papua. Many other Papuans, who must remain anonymous, took great personal risks to help me with my project while I was in West Papua. My two research assistants in West Papua, One Wakur and Markus Iyai, have courageously asked that their names be included in this dissertation knowing the risks that this might entail. I can acknowledge members of the international Papuan diaspora: Viktor Kaisiepo, Evelien van den Broek, Ottis Simopiaref, Neles Tebay, John Rumbiak and Nicolaas Jouwe.

Wouter Feldberg and Wim Stokhof deserve special mention for the support that they provided me at the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) during the summer of 2001. I am also indebted to Kiki van Bilsen and Joop Roemajauw, who were my research assistants in the Netherlands. My research was graciously funded by the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission and the following bodies of the University of Oxford: Wolfson College, the Committee for Graduate Studies, the Faculty of Modern History and the International Office's Scatcherd European Scholarship Committee. In Oxford, my two supervisors, who must remain anonymous for the purposes of this examination, have provided me with continual inspiration. My parents Will and Jane truly went overboard their support of me during this project.

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Conventions

Speaking the name West Papua is a political act in Indonesia that aligns the speaker with the self-determination movement that can be called the OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*). Many Papuans maintain that Indonesian names for the western half of New Guinea are also politically charged. Irian Jaya is the name that was bestowed on this territory by former President Suharto on 3 March 1973.⁴ The previous Indonesian name was Irian Barat (West Irian). According to Papuans the name Irian stands for a political slogan: ‘*Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti-Nederland*’ (Join the Republic of Indonesia against the Netherlands).⁵ Under the Dutch the territory was known as Netherlands New Guinea (*Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea*). On 1 December 1961 the territory was renamed West Papua following a vote of the West New Guinea Council.⁶ Indonesia officially changed the name of the territory to Papua on 1 January 2002. Independence leaders and members of the international Papuan diaspora continue to use the name West Papua to refer to their homeland. In order to avoid undue confusion to the reader I will use the name West Papua to refer to this territory for all historical periods.

Except as noted in this section I have followed the conventions outlined by the Faculty of Modern History at the University of Oxford in the presentation of this dissertation. My footnotes have followed the standard conventions the first time a work is cited in this text. For the second, and subsequent, citations I have simply included the author’s surname, a short title of the work and—if necessary—a page number. Names of newspapers and archives will be mentioned in full the first time they are cited with an abbreviation in parentheses. The abbreviation will be used in subsequent citations.

⁴ Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*, p. 33.

⁵ H. Subandrio, *Meluruskan Sejarah Perjuangan Irian Barat* (Jakarta, 2000), p. 3.

⁶ J. F. Salford, ‘UNTEA and UNRWI’ (University of Hull, doctoral dissertation, 2000).

I have drawn extensively on Dutch and Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*) sources in this dissertation. Each of these languages underwent major revisions in spelling in the 20th century. I have changed the spelling of my primary sources to follow modern conventions.

I have made every effort possible to conceal the identities of my interlocutors who are currently living in West Papua. It would be unethical for me to disclose this information. Interview material cited will be footnoted with the date and place of the interview. This method of citation does not allow individual interviewees to be distinguished from one another. For example, on 12 April 2001 I conducted five separate tape-recorded interviews with different interlocutors in Enarotali.

I conducted sixty-one interviews during my research for this MPhil dissertation from March through October 2001. The main body of interviews were conducted in four regions of West Papua: Jayapura, Wamena, Nabire, and Paniai (see Map Two). I have conducted interviews with members of the Papuan diaspora and international solidarity network in the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, and eastern Indonesia. Forty of the interviews were tape recorded and 1,065 minutes of these tapes were transcribed. The interviews were conducted primarily in the Papuan dialect of Indonesian (*Logat Papua*) and English, which are both languages that I speak fluently.⁷ My interlocutors also incorporated fragments of three Papuan languages and one other European language into our interviews: Lani, Mee, Biak, and Dutch. I speak both Mee and Dutch at an elementary level and relied on Lani and Biak translators. Upon request of the examiners I will provide transcriptions and cassette-tape recordings of these interviews.

⁷ I am certified by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages as having advanced high fluency in spoken Bahasa Indonesia.

List of Abbreviations

GPK	<i>Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan</i> ('Security Disturbance Movement'). The official Indonesian term that was applied to domestic self-determination movements from the mid-1980s to October 2000. Replaced the term GPL (see below).
GPL	<i>Gerombolan Pengacau Liar</i> ('Wild Terrorist Gang'). Official Indonesian term for 'terrorist' groups that was replaced by GPL in the mid-1980s (see above).
OPM	<i>Organisasi Papua Merdeka</i> ('Organisation of Papuan Freedom'). The cultural force unifying Papuan resistance.
PVK	<i>Papua Vrijwilligers Korps</i> ('Papua Volunteer Corps'). Military force of around 450 West Papuans formed and led by the Dutch in 1960.
TPN	<i>Tentara Pembebasan Nasional</i> ('National Liberation Army'). The primary 'armed' wing of the self-determination movement in West Papua.
TNI	<i>Tentara Nasional Indonesia</i> ('Indonesian National Army'). The armed forces of Indonesia.
TRIKORA	<i>Tri Komando Rakyat</i> ('Three Commands of the People'). A call by President Sukarno to 'liberate' West Papua from the Dutch. Also the name of the Indonesian military command in West Papua.
UNCEN	<i>Universitas Cenderawasih</i> ('Bird of Paradise University'). The oldest university in West Papua.

Chronology

1660	Netherlands East India Company recognises the Sultan of Tidore's sovereignty over the 'Papuan Islands in general.'
1780-1805	Rebellion of Prince Noekoe who fled Tidore and allied himself with local Papuan leaders on Biak. ¹
25 Oct. 1793	British establish Fort Coronation allying themselves with Prince Noekoe in opposition to the Dutch and the Sultan of Tidore.
May 1795	Fort Coronation is abandoned when news arrives that Britain is at war with French-occupied Netherlands.
24 Aug. 1828	Arnoldus Johannes van Delden establishes Fort du Bus and takes possession of the western half of New Guinea for the Netherlands. ²
1835	Fort du Bus is abandoned following the death of over 75 European and Indonesian soldiers from illness.
1850s	A series of indigenous prophets inspire their followers to refuse to pay tribute to Tidore.

1858	A punitive <i>hong</i> i expedition is launched by the Dutch and the Sultan of Tidore against a Papuan leader named Koepang. ³
1861	<i>Hong</i> i are prohibited by the Dutch without express permission from the Resident of Ternate.
1874	Miklouho-Maclay conducts first anthropological research in West Papua on the Kowiai Coast.
1890	A punitive <i>hong</i> i expedition is launched against the people of Wasior (Wandamen).
1898	Dutch government posts established in Fak Fak and Manokwari.
24 Dec. 1899	Officers and engineers of the <i>Generaal Pel</i> are kidnapped at the village of Sileraka. ⁴
1902	The post of Merauke is established near the site of the kidnapping.
1907-15	Military exploration campaigns of West Papua conducted by the Netherlands Indies Government.
1918	Papuans from the Arfak Mountains declare war on the Netherlands Indies government.
1926	Stirling expedition.
1935	Dutch anthropological expedition reaches Paniai region.
May 1938	Jan van Eechoud establishes first highland outpost at Enarotali, Paniai.
Jan. 1942	Japan invades New Guinea. ⁵
early 1942	Stephanus Simopyaref establishes the <i>Amerika-Babo</i> (New America) army to fight for an independent West Papua.
17 Aug. 1945	The Republic of Indonesia declares independence from the Netherlands.
4 Nov. 1956	The Obano uprising takes place in the Paniai region.
1960	The Papua Volunteer Corps (PVK) police force is established by the Dutch.
Nov. 1961	Michael Rockefeller disappears off of West Papua's south coast. The press speculate that he was eaten by cannibals.
1 Dec. 1961	The Dutch form the West New Guinea Council, rename the territory West Papua (previously Netherlands New Guinea), and grant them their own national anthem and a flag.
19 Dec. 1961	Sukarno issues the <i>Tri Komando Rakyat</i> (TRIKORA) to 'liberate' West Irian.
15 Jan. 1962	Commander Jos Sudarso goes down with his ship during the Battle of Aru Sea (Figure 1.2, p. 20).
19 May 1962	Indonesian paratroopers dropped into Teminabuan (Figure 1.2).

15 Aug. 1962	New York Agreement signed by the Netherlands and Indonesia.
10 Dec. 1962	Indonesian troops open fire on Papuan demonstrators in Merauke injuring two.
1 May 1963	UN Temporary Executive Authority officially transfers administration of West New Guinea to Indonesia.
17-18 Feb. 1963	The PVK, led by Sergeant Ferry Awom, mutiny in Manokwari.
26 July 1965	The Kebar Incident. The first action by the OPM against TNI. A number of Indonesian soldiers are killed. ⁶
21 Mar. 1967	Suharto replaces Sukarno as the President of Indonesia.
Feb-Aug 1969	An uprising in Paniai. Ninety armed PVK mutiny and join Mee villagers against Indonesian paratroopers.
1 July 1971	Seth Rumkorem, the leader of the newly founded TPN, issues a proclamation of independence for West Papua.
7 April – June 1977	Indonesian air strikes, bombings, and ground assaults in the Baliem Valley near Wamena in the Central Highlands.
July 1977	A pipe carrying metal ore and owned by Freeport McMoRan is blown up by TPN members led by Kelly Kwalik.
Oct. 1981	The Madi Incident. The Indonesian Air Force kills Mee villagers using three Bronco planes to drop napalm, chemical weapons, and bombs.
26 Oct 1981	Papuan attack on jail in Abepura publicised in the Indonesian newsmagazine <i>Tempo</i> .
April 1984	Arnold Ap, a renowned West Papuan anthropologist, is murdered by Indonesian security forces.
Nov. 1989	Influential Mee leader in the <i>Alam</i> (Nature) movement is jailed.
8 Jan. – 15 May 1996	Cambridge University Expedition taken hostage by the a group of the TPN lead by Kelly Kwalik.
21 May 1998	President Suharto is forced to step down and is replaced by his former Vice-President Habibie.
20 Oct. 1999	Abdurrahman Wahid elected President to replace Habibie.
Oct. 1999	Indonesian Ministry of Information abolished.
20-22 May 2000	Vice-President Megawati Sukarnoputri visits West Papua.
4 June 2000	Results of the Second Papuan People's Congress announced in Jayapura.
8 Jan. 2001	Plane crash near Wamena kills key military commanders.
31 March 2001	Three employees of a logging company shot dead by unidentified armed group in Wasior sub-district following a land dispute.

4 May 2001	Six Papuans shot dead in Wasior. Sixteen people also arrested including two people wounded by gunfire.
11 June 2001	British Ambassador to Indonesia Richard Gozney arrives in Jayapura and then travels to the Bird's Head region near Wasior.
13 June 2001	Five elite police troops gunned down by unknown group in Wasior. Sixteen villagers detained and beaten by police.
23 July 2001	Megawati Sukarnoputri replaces Wahid as President of Indonesia.
Sept. 2001	Pieces of the body of 32-year-old Wellem Korwam found floating in the sea near Wasior (see Appendix).
11 Nov. 2001	Theys Eluay found murdered in his car.
1 Jan. 2002	Autonomy legislation goes into effect for West Papua.

¹ Algemeen Rijksarchief (ARA), No. 2.10.03, pt. 20, 'Contract met Tidor', 17 December 1783.

² ARA, No. 2.10.03, pt. 21, 'Proces Verbaal', 24 August 1828.

³ ARA, No. 2.10.02, Pt. 746, 'Aan zijne Excellentie den Minister van Staat, Minister van Koloniën', 24 August 1858.

⁴ 'De Generaal Pel', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* (NRC), 11 January 1900.

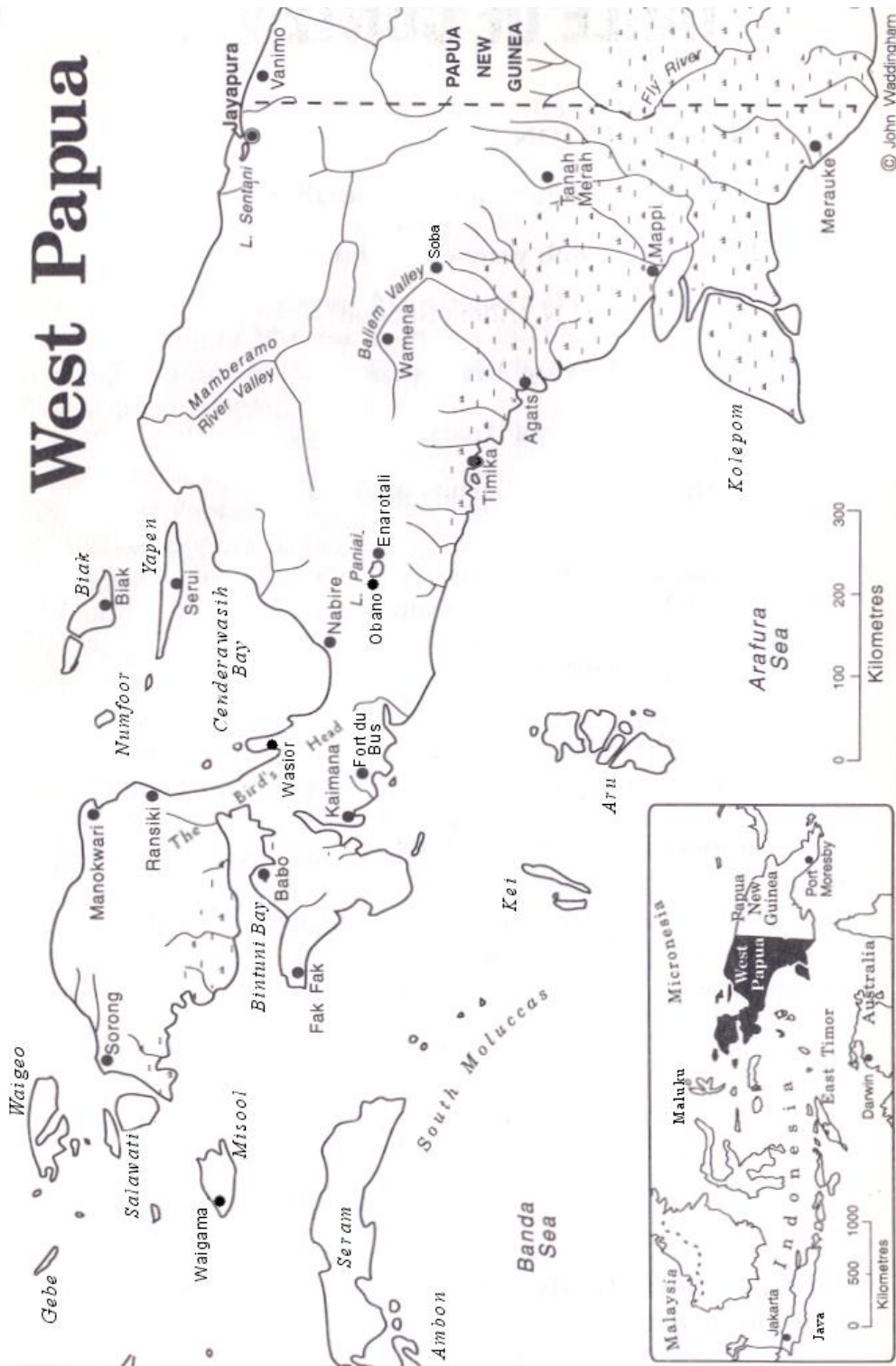
⁵ T. Blamey, *The Jap was Thrashed* (South Yarra, Australia, 1944), p. 8.

⁶ A. Ismail *et al.*, *Praja Ghupta Vira* (Jayapura, 1971).



Map One: Indonesia

West Papua



Map Two: West Papua

Orthodoxy

Section One

Indonesian Nationalism

Chapter One

Hayden White's idea of emplotment (giving a plot) challenges the possibility of composing history that is objective in a comprehensive sense: 'narrative accounts do not consist only of factual statements (singular existential propositions) and arguments; they consist as well of poetic and rhetorical elements by which what would otherwise be a list of facts is transformed into a story.'¹ No historical narratives, according to White, are free from these elements. Following a limited form of objectivity and reliably recording facts does not necessarily produce an objective account of history. In this chapter I will interrogate official Indonesian historiography that portrays state violence as a legitimate means to achieve national political goals in West Papua. While some of the facts about West Papua in Indonesian nationalist histories are not true, deliberate fabrication is not the primary mechanism that is used to portray the state line. The effectiveness of these historical narratives stems from how they are organised: inconvenient facts are simply not mentioned.²

Benedict Anderson has argued that the Indonesian nationalist drive to incorporate West Papua into their fledgling republic can be sourced to the symbolic power of Dutch maps of the Netherlands Indies.³ Aside from several hundred prisoners in the Boven Digul prison camp on West Papua's south coast, few Indonesian nationalists had ever set eyes on West Papua. However, almost all educated colonial subjects in the Netherlands Indies were intimately familiar with maps of the colony. These maps were drawn as if the eastern half of New Guinea, which is the present-day country of Papua New Guinea, did not exist. In 1828, the Dutch staked a unilateral claim to the half of New Guinea west of 141° longitude, thereby defining the present-day border of West Papua. Today, aside from a few army posts, this border remains an imaginary

¹ H. White, 'Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth' (1992), p. 38.

² Cf. M. Weber, 'Science as a Vocation' (1967), p. 147.

³ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 1991), p. 176-8.



Figure 1.1 Imagined Geographies The 14th Century Majapahit empire is depicted in a primary school text book as extending to West Papua’s present-day border with Papua New Guinea, which was created in 1828. The cover page of the same book depicts the Indonesian archipelago on a globe with the eastern half of New Guinea missing from the frame. From S. Kartawiriaputra, *Sejarah Indonesia* (Bandung, 1967), p. 35.

line in the rainforest. In Chapter Three I will discuss the 1828 claim in detail, but here I would like to add some evidence to Anderson’s argument. The 1828 border has become eternalised in Indonesian nationalist histories. A crude map from a 1967 primary school textbook depicts the 14th-century Majapahit empire as extending over exactly half of the island of New Guinea (Figure 1.1).⁴ The cover of the same text book depicts a globe. The only land masses on this globe are the Indonesian archipelago and only the western half of the island of New Guinea is showing.

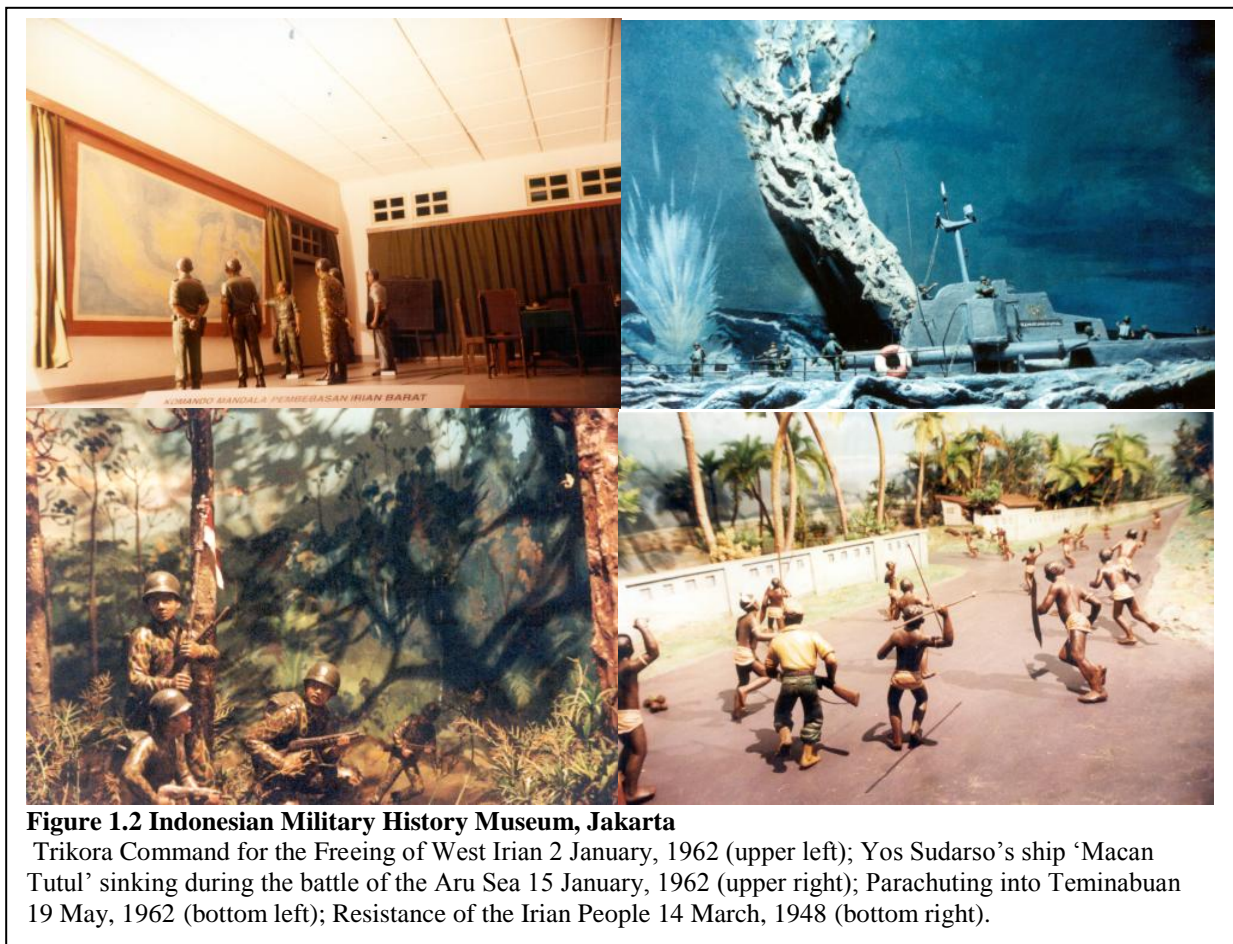
The latest edition of an Indonesian social sciences textbook for students in the 6th class of primary school devotes an entire chapter to the ‘Freeing of West Irian.’ This chapter begins with the question: ‘Why was it necessary to free West Irian? Because West Irian was part of the Republic of Indonesia that was still colonised by the Netherlands. The Netherlands continues to maintain that West Irian should separate from the Unified Republic of Indonesia.’⁵ The primary school history ‘Textbook of the New Generation: An Objective Analysis’ frames the annexation of West Papua in similar terms. In a section titled the ‘The Struggle to Return West Irian’ this textbook reads ‘The Netherlands planned to let West Irian “choose their own destiny.” This sham referendum would, of course, have been engineered. Later the Netherlands formed the puppet State of Papua. Because of this Indonesia confronted the Netherlands with military force

⁴ S. Kartawiriaputra, *Sejarah Indonesia* (Bandung, 1967), p. 35.

⁵ A. Supriyo, *Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial* (Jakarta, 2001), p. 92.

under the mandate of Trikora (Three Commands of the People) on 19 December 1961.⁶ The Trikora commands are: 1) Make the colonial puppet government formed by the Dutch fail; 2) Fly the Red and White Indonesian flag in West Irian; 3) Prepare for a general mobilisation of the people to keep the freedom and the unity of the homeland.⁷

The National Military Museum in Jakarta celebrates military victories that have accomplished political objectives of the Indonesian government and enshrines images of soldiers who have fallen in battle. According to Frantz Fanon, formerly colonised peoples need to experience war: they should experience defeats under, truces with and victories over their colonial masters.⁸ There are three dioramas in the



⁶ Suhartono, *Buku Teks Generasi Baru* (Jakarta, 2000), p. 35.

⁷ Supriyo, *Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, p. 93.

⁸ F. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London 1968), p. 221.

National Military Museum that depict the Trikora campaign to free 'Irian' as a military victory by the fledgling Republic of Indonesia over the Dutch (Figure 1.2).

Papuans are absent from the three dioramas about the 'freeing of Irian' in the National Military Museum. Indeed, Papuans did not play a major role in Operation Trikora and in several instances they captured Indonesian soldiers handed them over to the Dutch authorities.⁹ As will be discussed in Chapter Three, Papuans have a history of resistance to colonial rule that dates to before the first Dutch settlement in 1828. Only a single incidence of Papuan resistance to Dutch rule is depicted by the National Military Museum. The exhibit titled the 'Resistance of the Irian People' claims that a 1948 armed insurrection in Sorido village on Biak is evidence of Indonesian nationalism in West Papua (Figure 1.2). The text accompanying the exhibit reads: 'After Indonesia's Declaration of Independence on 17 August 1945, there were a few natives of Irian Jaya who were already aware of the basics of politics.'¹⁰ This text places political awareness on a linear evolutionary scale: the assumption that Papuans had only a primitive understanding of politics is implicit in the exhibit. Dark-skinned figurines clad only in skimpy loincloths storm a Dutch military compound with their bows and arrows, spears, and machetes.

When I showed pictures of this diorama and read the accompanying texts to one of my Biak interlocutors he responded forcefully, code switching from English to Indonesian: 'That's bullshit—*omong kosong* (empty words)!' He said that there is an Indonesian monument in Sorido commemorating the Papuans who fought in the Red and White (*Merah Putih*) Indonesian nationalist militia to drive the Dutch from West Papua. According to my interlocutor these events that were commemorated by the statue did not take place until the 1960s. Most Papuans were not familiar with the concept of an Indonesian nation state, he says, until after the armed invasion of 1961.¹¹

The first diorama in the chronological sequence about the 1961/1962 'freeing of Irian' shows Major-General, later President, Suharto planning the invasion. He is briefing a group of generals in a plain room.

⁹ W. A. A. Rooseboom, interview, 18 July 2001, Leiden, the Netherlands.

¹⁰ Museum TNI, 'Perlawanan Rakyat Irian' (Jakarta, 2001).

¹¹ Anonymous interview, Oxford, 3 March, 2001.

The next scene stands in a sharp contrast to the determined calm of the briefing room. The Indonesian patrol boat Macan Tutul (Spotted Tiger) is in flames after being hit by a Dutch destroyer in the Battle of the Aru Sea. Before going down with his ship and his crew, according to the primary school textbook discussed above, Commodore Yos Sudarso proclaimed ‘Ignite our fighting spirit!’¹² The diorama titled ‘Parachuting into Teminabuan’ illustrates the next stage of the Trikora campaign. Looming trees cast dark intricate designs over the scene. In the background troops are suspended helplessly by their parachutes from the rainforest canopy. Terrified soldiers peer around in the gloom pointing their guns at shadows. One soldier looming over the other tiny figurines squatting in the foreground calmly holds a stiff Indonesian flag attached to a roughly hewn wood pole. The text accompanying the diorama reads ‘Under a shower of rockets and bullets from Dutch planes they flew the Red and White flag in Irian for the first time. For this heroic story they paid a dear price: 53 soldiers died.’¹³ The flag is planted in what appears to be virgin wilderness, free of human occupation. This event was known as Operation Jackal (*Operasi Serigala*) and was part of the final stage of Indonesia’s campaign to infiltrate West Papua.¹⁴ The expressions on the faces of the miniature Indonesian soldiers suggest that they view the landscape in West Papua as inherently dangerous.

A cease-fire agreement between the Indonesians and the Dutch was reached on 15 August 1962. This arrangement, which was brokered by the Kennedy administration (1961-3), came to be known as the New York Agreement.¹⁵ Three terms of agreement, resulting from these discussions are highlighted by the primary school textbook: 1) From 1 October 1962 the flag of the UN would replace the flag of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) was to replace the Netherlands New Guinea government for a brief period; 2) From 31 December 1962 the flag of the Republic of Indonesia (*Merah Putih*) was to fly alongside the flag of the UN; and 3) The UN would transfer sovereignty to the Republic of Indonesia on 1 May 1963 with the understanding that West Irian would hold the Act of Free Choice referendum in 1969 to confirm the people’s opinion.¹⁶ The ‘Textbook of

¹² Supriyo, *Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, p. 94.

¹³ Museum TNI, ‘Penerjunan di Teminabuan’ (Jakarta, 2001).

¹⁴ Djamhari *et al.*, *Tri Komando Rakyat*, p. 251.

¹⁵ For a detailed discussion of the New York Agreement see G. Pemberton, *All The Way* (London, 1987).

¹⁶ Supriyo, *Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, p. 95.

the New Generation: An Objective Analysis' concludes the section on the history of West Irian by stating: 'The Act of Free Choice was carried out on 14 July 1969. The results indicated that the people of Irian indeed wanted to become part of the Republic of Indonesia. The designation West Irian was later changed to Irian Jaya.'¹⁷

The 'Textbook of the New Generation' is objective in a limited sense. The facts that were selected for inclusion in this narrative are true. An exercise was indeed begun on 14 July 1969 that eventually led to an announcement by Papuan delegates that they wanted to join the Republic of Indonesia.¹⁸ These facts have been assembled through a process of emplotment into a historical narrative about the Indonesian annexation of West Papua that is not true. There are other facts that, if included in this historical narrative, would completely undermine the Indonesian nationalist argument about the legitimacy of West Papua's annexation. For example, what contemporary Papuans call the 'Act of No Choice' allowed for approximately one vote for every 750 Papuans.¹⁹ These delegates were bribed with promises and threatened with death.²⁰ The consultations with the 1,025 'voting' Papuan delegates were conducted publicly in front of the Indonesian military and they unanimously proclaimed that they wished to join Indonesia. In the lead-up to the consultation, numerous petitions were lodged with UN observers asking for a 'one man one vote' system.²¹ The legality and legitimacy of this consultation continues to be disputed by indigenous Papuans to this day.

Chapter One Conclusion

By carefully selecting events to include in historical narratives Indonesian nationalists have left strategic 'blanks' in the history of West Papua.²² Emplotment is used by Indonesian historians to arrange facts in a compelling fashion to give legitimacy to their claim of ruling West Papua. Both the National Military Museum and the school textbooks are silent about Indonesian military operations that continued against Papuans after the brief armed conflict between Indonesia and the Dutch in the spring of 1962. Chapter Four

¹⁷ Suhartono, *Buku Teks Generasi Baru*, p. 37.

¹⁸ Saltford, 'UNTEA and UNRWI.'

¹⁹ A. Malik and J. Luns, 'The Rome Agreement' (1969).

²⁰ T. van de Broek and A. Szalay, 'Raising the Morning Star' (2001), p. 77.

²¹ Saltford, 'UNTEA and UNRWI'.

attempts to fill this gap: I will discuss the role of violence in maintaining colonial and neo-colonial rule in West Papua. Excepting specialised military histories, major Indonesian nationalist historical works are silent about Papuan nationalism.²³ Like the Indonesian newspaper reports that will be discussed in Chapters Five and Six, these military histories portray Papuan nationalism only in terms of an armed guerrilla struggle that must be fought with military might. In Chapter Three I will present a heterodox version of history that stands in direct opposition to orthodox Indonesian nationalist historiography discussed in the present chapter. I will discuss the long history of Papuan resistance to foreign domination and nationalism.

²² Ballard, 'Blanks in the Writing'.

²³ See, for example, H. M. S. Islam, *Sejarah TNI* (5 Vols., Jakarta, 2000).

Savage Papuan Cannibals

Chapter Two

Edward Said has described one institutionalised form of knowledge—Orientalism—that allows for the maintenance of imperial power. Orientalism, according to Said, is ‘the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism [is] a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.’¹ Orientalism played an important role in the European colonial project. Specialist knowledge has been a tool of rulers. In addition to giving imperial leaders the necessary knowledge to rule, Orientalism has legitimated opinions about the colonised that make the imperial project morally palatable to the colonisers.² Discourses about cannibalism function like Orientalism. The ‘Man Eating Myth’ described by William Arens can be viewed as an institutionalised form of knowledge that legitimises foreign domination. I would like to take the argument of Arens one step further. In the case of West Papua, I argue that the myth of cannibalism has been used to legitimate the denial of political rights to indigenous Papuans.

Cannibalism has been depicted as being widespread in Melanesia generally and West Papua specifically.³ In the words of Arens: ‘The list of New Guinea cannibals and the recorders of their unseen deed is almost endless.’⁴ In my systematic search through the vast literature about cannibalism in West Papua I have yet to find a single first-hand account published by a professional scholar.⁵ Like Orientalism, the discourse on

¹ E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979), p. 3.

² Said, *Orientalism*, p. 12.

³ Reviewed in B. Knauff, ‘Melanesian Warfare’ (1990).

⁴ W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth* (New York, 1979), p. 98.

⁵ I have reviewed K. Zubrinich, ‘Asmat Cosmology and the Practice of Cannibalism’ (London, 1999); J. Hallett, ‘Lords of the Garden’ (1994); K. Heider, *Grand Valley Dani* (London, 1997), pp. 135-136, 157; S. Zoellner, *The Religion of the Yali* (Goroka, 1988), p. 116; C. Kalmbacher, ‘Came, Female Cannibal Culture Hero’ (1983); J. H. M. C. Boelaars, *Head-Hunters About Themselves* (The Hague, 1981), pp. XII, 136, 167; D. Richardson, *Peace Child* (London, 1976); K. F. Koch, *War and Peace in Jalemo* (Cambridge, 1974); M. Machlin, *The Search for Michael Rockefeller* (Pleasantville, 2000); R. Hitt, *Cannibal Valley* (Grand Rapids, 1972); L. M. Serpenti, ‘Headhunting and Magic on Kolepom’, *Tropical Man* (1968), pp. 119-22,

cannibalism employs ‘a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone’s work... or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all of these.’⁶ In sum, the literature about cannibalism in West Papua consists of chains of citations that cannot be tracked to a reliable source.

The archival materials at the Smithsonian Institution about Matthew Stirling’s 1926 anthropological expedition up West Papua’s Mamberamo River illustrate how uninformed speculation about cannibalism is repeated and reinforced.⁷ A search of this material with an electronic full-text searching tool reveals that the word cannibalism occurs only three times in the collection. The first mention of cannibalism in this archive is in a letter from the American Consul in Batavia to the US Secretary of State: ‘a military guard is to be furnished inasmuch as the expedition will visit places never before penetrated by white men and where the natives are said to be cannibals.’⁸ It is unlikely that this letter was read by Stirling or his crew, but it is evidence of assumptions that existed prior to Stirling’s expedition. The second mention of cannibalism in this archive is a journal entry by Stanley Hedberg, who had accompanied the expedition as a ‘historian’, that speculates about the fate of two missing members of the expedition:

If these two men failed to return it would be three soldiers who have been lost in the jungle since we arrived. It is a strange coincidence. Mr. Leroux thinks that they were captured by the Burumeso tribe and eaten. They are reputed to be canabalistic [sic = cannibalistic] and we are on their land.⁹

There is a brief account in Stirling’s journal about the same incident that I did not find with my initial electronic search for the word ‘cannibal’: ‘The soldiers have been scouring the jungle all day with no

131; J. v. Baal and J. Verschueren, *Dema* (The Hague, 1966), pp. 5, 370, 540-41, 589, 746; J. v. d. Kroef, ‘Some Headhunting Traditions of Southern New Guinea’ (1952), pp. 229-30; C. Miller, *Cannibal Caravan* (London, 1950); L. Miller, *Cannibals and Orchids* (New York, 1941); Capt. H. Cayley-Webster, *Through New Guinea and the Cannibal Countries* (London, 1898); W. D. Pitcairn, *Two years among the savages of New Guinea* (London, 1891); S. MacFarlane, *Among the Cannibals of New Guinea* (Philadelphia, 1888); E. Redlich, ‘Notes on the Western Islands of the Pacific Ocean and New Guinea’ (1875), pp. 35-6. As of 5 March 2002 there are 105 articles indexed on LexisNexis Executive News Service that contain the words ‘cannibal’ and ‘Irian.’

⁶ Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 176-77.

⁷ C. Duncan and P. Taylor have digitised the materials about Stirling’s expedition at the Smithsonian: the archive occupies about nine linear feet of shelf space and consists of journals, correspondence about the expedition, photographic captions, text from an unpublished book and newspaper clippings. Taylor gave me a copy of the archive on CD-ROM when I was a Research Collaborator at the Smithsonian in 2000.

⁸ Alexander Wetmore Papers, Smithsonian Institution (SI), Box 65, Folder 2, Record Unit 7006, ‘American Expedition into Netherlands New Guinea’, 23 March 1926, p. 3.

results. We were somewhat fearful that they had furnished a meal for the Burumeso as well as the soldier that failed to appear a couple of weeks ago.’¹⁰ Two of the three missing soldiers were eventually found—exhausted, hungry and lost—but one was never heard from again. The two who were found had not had any encounters with the Burumeso ‘cannibals’ while away from the group. There is no other mention made of cannibalism that occurred during the expedition. When Stirling returned to the US he was greeted with a splash of media fanfare. A newspaper clipping constitutes the third mention of cannibalism in the Stirling archive: ‘On the trip up the Memberamo [sic = Mamberamo], they were attacked several times by Papuans, natives of New Guinea who are reputed to be cannibals.’¹¹

Klaus-Friedrich Koch, a professional ethnographer who conducted research among the Yali peoples of West Papua’s highlands, similarly never witnessed cannibalism first hand. Over a dozen examples of what Koch portrays as second-hand accounts of cannibalism are nonetheless cited in his ethnography.¹² Yali language about cannibalism, according to Koch, is evasive:

While they talk freely about details of the butchering and cooking process, they do not openly talk about the matter when they present or accept a body. Instead their speeches contain contextual clues and “hidden talk” that connote the purpose of the transaction. Although they do not conceptualize anthropophagous revenge as a sacred act, their verbal camouflage seems to betray some sort of awe. Be that as it may—and I certainly have not fathomed their feelings about this culinary predilection—the Jalé [Yali] make fine discriminations between “edible” and “nonedible” people.¹³

Arens has documented other cases where anthropologists have erroneously taken silence about the topic of cannibalism to mean that their interlocutors are being evasive about a touchy subject.¹⁴ The ‘hidden talk’ here may mean that the Yali are not in fact talking about cannibalism at all. Koch admits, similar to many other ethnographic researchers (including myself), to having a limited ability in understanding the first language of his interlocutors: ‘in the end did I did not understand every talk I heard’.¹⁵ It is conceivable that Koch mistook metaphorical speech about cannibalism for a literal expression of the same. Among the

⁹ M.W. Stirling Papers, National Anthropological Archives (NAA), SI, Box 2, ‘Hedberg Journal’, Monday, June 21 1926.

¹⁰ M.W. Stirling Papers, NAA, SI, ‘Stirling Journal’, 1926., pp. 133-134.

¹¹ M.W. Stirling Papers, NAA, SI, Arb. 228, ‘Stirling Expedition to New Guinea’, 5 December 1926.

¹² Koch, *War and Peace in Jalémó*, pp. 12-3, 16, 18-9, 61, 79, 80-1, 86, 118, 152-5, 196, 207, 209-10, 219-24.

¹³ Koch, *War and Peace in Jalémó*, p. 153.

¹⁴ Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth*, p. 145.

¹⁵ Koch, *War and Peace in Jalémó*, p. 18.

neighbouring Wodani, heroes from battle are expected to sponsor a pig feast where they metaphorically ‘eat the enemies’ who they have killed.¹⁶ The only meat that is actually eaten during these feasts is pork. In 1998 I conducted fieldwork among the Oge Bage Mee, a sub-group of a highlands tribe called the Mee. The Mee, who emphatically told me that they do not practice cannibalism, hold a pig feast called ‘eating a man’ when an enemy from a neighbouring clan is slain in battle.¹⁷

Siegfried Zoellner, a German missionary who worked in the Yali village of Angkuruk, makes only passing reference to cannibalism in his monograph *The Religion of the Yali*: ‘In November 1967 three people were killed in a garden area in a surprise attack and the subsequent counter-attack. The body of one of the attackers was cooked and eaten.’¹⁸ Zoellner did not witness this incident first hand, but in a recent e-mail he told me that he did observe another earlier cannibalism incident on the Angkuruk air-strip:

I witnessed myself how the dead body of a woman (killed because from enemy side) was taken to the site, with all preparations going on to cook the flesh. I took fotos (and I still have them) how the body was cut to pieces. I was so horrified that I did not stay until they ate, I also wanted to demonstrate that I totally disagreed [sic = disagreed] with their action. But the feast was going on until evening, I watched it from my house (200m), and I spoke to all the people, who attended, not only that day but again and again during the years. There is no doubt that they ate!¹⁹

Like another missionary account from a book called *Cannibal Valley*, Zoellner left the scene before the body was purportedly eaten.²⁰

Koch refers to the incident described in Zoellner’s e-mail, but instead of citing Zoellner or another first-hand ‘witness’ he reproduces an account by one of his interlocutors in the village of Jalémó that is second or possibly third-hand.²¹ Some of Koch’s other references to cannibalism are even less rigorously documented. For example, he reports that two years after he visited Seng Valley ‘these friendly people, who had presented me with a pig to show their hospitality, killed and ate two white missionaries travelling

¹⁶ S. Breton, ‘Death and Ideology’, *Social Anthropology* (1999), p. 306.

¹⁷ S. E. Kirksey, unpublished data; L. J. Pospisil, *Kapauku Papuans and Their Law* (New Haven, 1971), p. 92.

¹⁸ Zoellner, *The Religion of the Yali*, p. 116.

¹⁹ S. Zoellner, ‘Re: photos & “The Religion of the Yali”’ (2002).

²⁰ Hitt, *Cannibal Valley*, pp. 120-31.

²¹ Koch, *War and Peace in Jalémó*, pp. 12, 220.

through their valley.²² Koch does not cite any of his interviews or secondary sources as evidence for this statement. In this case, unlike most cases of cannibalism reported by Koch, there are other written sources that can be consulted. Here he refers to the death of Stan Dale and Phil Masters, two American missionaries who had travelled around West Papua's highlands spreading the gospel. According to Dale's diary he was assaulted with a volley of arrows after unsuccessfully trying to persuade a group of Yali that they should 'free themselves of the power of the fetishes' and burn their traditional religious paraphernalia.²³ Dale was eventually seriously wounded by several arrows, but after being treated in a nearby mission hospital he returned with Masters to continue to proselytise. It is clear that the two were killed by the Yali, whom they were doggedly trying to convert, but there is no evidence that they were eaten: 'a horde of screaming natives burst from the bush, firing a hail of deadly arrows. The native carrier had managed to break through the line and flee to safety. Nothing else was known.'²⁴ The Indonesian police later recovered bones and skulls that were identified as belonging to the missionaries and rumour quickly spread that they had been eaten. In absence of any other evidence Koch seems to have taken the truth of this rumour on faith.

In the absence of sound ethnographic evidence for cannibalism in West Papua, graphic popular accounts have been published. For example, Charles 'Cannibal' Miller claims to actually have partaken in a cannibal feast in the southern lowlands of West Papua in the 1930s:

Before my horrified eyes the chief made a quick slash across the boy's throat. Blood spurted, but even before it could reach the floor the witch-doctor caught the flow in a coconut bowl...Ten times was murder committed on the platform that night...Ten times bowls of blood were passed into the mass of sweating warriors, to be sipped avidly and passed on to the next. Mechanically I went through the motions, and once a shudder of revulsion caused the bowl to splash over and I tasted the warm, sticky saltiness on my lips and saw the dark stain spread on my shirt.²⁵

This story was in all probability fabricated by Miller. He was only in New Guinea for a brief expedition and lacked any significant linguistic skills in Papuan languages. Miller's claim to being a participant in an event that no long-term anthropological researchers have ever managed to witness in West Papua is dubious. His wife Leona, who was also on the expedition, did not witness this purported cannibal feast.²⁶

²² Koch, *War and Peace in Jalémó*, p. 16.

²³ Cited in Machlin, *The Search for Michael Rockefeller*, p. 201.

²⁴ Machlin, *The Search for Michael Rockefeller*, p. 205.

²⁵ Miller, *Cannibal Caravan*, p. 232.

²⁶ Miller, *Cannibals and Orchids*, p. 258.

Miller also claims to have seen and photographed a ‘dinosaur’ in West Papua that was ‘was somewhere between thirty and forty feet long’, which further calls into question his credibility as a witness.²⁷

The debate between William Arens and Shirley Lindenbaum about the existence of cannibalism has methodological implications for any historical research that employs oral sources. Lindenbaum was an anthropologist on the research team that investigated the purported cannibalistic transmission of the Kuru disease among the Fore of highland Papua New Guinea. This case attracted widespread media coverage and, according to Arens, helped solidify the belief of the European and North American public that cannibalism is widely practised by indigenous peoples.²⁸ The basic thesis of Arens applies not only to the Fore, but to the world-wide ‘Man Eating Myth’ that has been propagated by European colonials, anthropologists and other commentators. He maintains that ‘although the theoretical possibility of customary cannibalism cannot be dismissed, the available evidence does not permit the facile assumption that the act was or has ever been a prevalent cultural feature. It is more reasonable to conclude that the idea of the cannibalistic nature of others is a myth in the sense of, first, having an independent existence bearing no relationship to historical reality, and second, containing and transmitting significant cultural messages for those who maintain it.’²⁹ Neither Lindenbaum or other researchers involved in the Kuru project ever directly observed cannibalism among the Fore.³⁰

At the heart of the cannibalism debate is a methodological question with wide-ranging implications: are oral sources valid for establishing truth claims? Lindenbaum conducted scores of interviews with Fore individuals who claimed that they themselves had eaten human flesh.³¹ She contends that some human practices are not witnessed by anthropologists (sex for example), but that we nonetheless know that these practices take place. If a group of people convincingly and consistently describe their cannibalistic

²⁷ Miller, *Cannibals and Orchids*, p. 241.

²⁸ Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth*, pp. 99-115; W. Arens, ‘Rethinking Anthropophagy’ (1998), pp. 48-62.

²⁹ Arens, *The Man Eating Myth*, p. 182.

³⁰ Arens, ‘Rethinking Anthropophagy’, p. 53; S. Lindenbaum, *Kuru Sorcery* (Palo Alto, 1979), pp. 19-22.

³¹ S. Lindenbaum, personal communication, 28 January 2002, Oxford.

practices, argues McLancy, then there is either ‘a very large collective myth’ or the people are telling the truth.³² Arens is arguing that there is indeed a large collective myth about cannibalism.

Cannibalism among the Fore is described by Lindenbaum as a new custom that was appropriated from their neighbours in the early part of the 20th Century.³³ By this account Fore cannibalism can be conceived of as an invented tradition.³⁴ An alternate explanation to the invention of an actual cannibalistic tradition is that the collective European myth of cannibalism, as described by Arens, has been appropriated by the Fore. The idea of cannibalism has been used by indigenous people in at least one other historical and cultural context to gain power over foreigners.³⁵

Arens does not intend to ‘imply that anthropologists have been consciously attempting to delude their consumers. Rather they and their public have been equally deluded by a Western meta-myth.’³⁶ Indeed, Lindenbaum seems to be earnestly following a methodological program of limited objectivity: I trust her assertion that she is reliably reporting accounts that her Fore interlocutors told her. However, interviews with indigenous interlocutors are not always premised on a mutual understanding of the concept of ‘objective truth.’ Our interlocutors *can* also follow the same restricted definition of objectivity that scholars employ in their research, but they are not by necessity tightly bound to academic regulations and epistemological norms. Indigenous interlocutors may be as influenced by Western meta-myths as the Europeans—missionaries, colonial officers, adventurers, anthropologists and traders—who have produced written records of history.

Chapter Two Conclusion

The debate about the existence of customary cannibalism speaks to a number of contentious theoretical and methodological issues in the representation of historical events: What is a sufficient standard of evidence to document the existence of a historical event? What confers authority to witnesses of history? How do

³² Cited in L. Goldman, ‘From Pot to Polemic’ (1999), p. 15.

³³ Lindenbaum, *Kuru Sorcery*, p. 22.

³⁴ Cf. E. J. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983).

³⁵ M. M. Steedly, *Hanging Without a Rope* (Princeton, 1993), p. 90.

³⁶ Arens, ‘Rethinking Anthropophagy’, p. 44.

cultural assumptions of historical witnesses influence the recording and emplotment of their observations? I will not attempt to answer these questions conclusively. Additionally, I will remain agnostic about the practices of customary cannibalism in West Papua. While there is no conclusive proof that cannibalism has ever taken place in West Papua in the sources that I have reviewed, it is easier to document a presence than an absence. I have examined the most widely cited documents about cannibalism in West Papua, and followed the citations in these documents to their original sources. Yet, in the scattered and un-indexed literature on West Papua in Dutch, Indonesian and English it is possible that there are sources that I have not yet consulted that would conclusively document cannibalism.

I will conclude this chapter by arguing that being identified as cannibals had direct political implications for the people of West Papua. During the early 1960s Southeast Asia was a hotbed of geopolitical turmoil: the US was combating communism in the region and Australia was anxious about expansionist policies of the newly-independent nations to their north. A memoranda issued by a senior member of John F. Kennedy's National Security Council staff illustrates connections between cannibalism and geopolitics clearly: 'We must sell them (Australia)...on the proposition that a pro-Bloc (if not Communist) Indonesia is an infinitely greater threat to them (and us) than Indo possession of a few thousand square miles of cannibal land.'³⁷ This internal White House memoranda was issued on 17 February 1961 in the time of growing tension between the Netherlands and Indonesia over the status of West Papua.³⁸

When Michael Rockefeller, son of New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, disappeared off West Papua's south coast in November 1961, the perceptions of Papuans as savage cannibals were reinforced. Rockefeller had capsized in a boat and attempted to swim several miles to shore in open ocean. It is extremely unlikely that he ever reached the shore, but the incident opened up the opportunity for speculation that he had been cannibalised. On 20 November, which is the day that the story broke in the American press, the New York Times ran a front-page article that quoted the Assistant Editor of National Geographic Magazine: 'Until a few years ago, Mr. Scofield went on, the natives used to be "active head hunters and cannibals." But he said it was "doubtful" that they still were and he did not think that they

³⁷ Cited in Pemberton, *All the Way*, p. 86.

would bother Mr. Rockefeller.³⁹ A week later the New York Times ran a story by a correspondent in Merauke: ‘The Dutch District Commissioner denied here today that the buying of skulls by Michael Rockefeller had stirred a revival of headhunting.’⁴⁰ Despite an intensive search that cost USD 50,000-100,000 (USD 500,000-1,000,000 in today’s money), Rockefeller was not found and no clear evidence about his fate was uncovered. None of the New York Times articles published during the search for Rockefeller explicitly stated that he was eaten by cannibals. Since then, however, a myriad of newspaper articles,⁴¹ a book,⁴² and even a musical⁴³ state that he was eaten. Milt Machlin, a American journalist who went to West Papua several years later in search of Rockefeller, suggests that the cannibalism story may have been promoted by Indonesians who wanted to demonstrate that the Dutch had been ‘poor colonists.’⁴⁴

The Kennedy administration closely followed the disappearance of Michael Rockefeller and this incident undoubtedly influenced the perceptions of American policy makers about West Papua. President Kennedy himself sent a telegraph on 21 November 1961 offering assistance from ‘the Defence Department or any other agency’ to Governor Nelson Rockefeller, who had travelled to West Papua to lead the search for his son.⁴⁵ On 15 August 1962, Kennedy’s administration brokered the New York Agreement, setting in motion the transfer of West Papua from the Dutch to the Indonesians. The fact that Papuans were widely perceived as primitive cannibals made this agreement, which involved no consultation with the Papuans themselves, acceptable.

³⁸ Pemberton, *All the Way*, p. 360 note 69.

³⁹ *New York Times* (NYT), 20 November 1961, p. 35.

⁴⁰ ‘Expedition Defended’, NYT, 25 November 1961, p. 59.

⁴¹ ‘Papua New Guinea’, *USA Today*, 8 June 2001, p. 1D; ‘Former “Head Hunters” Retain Culture Amid Progress’, CNN, 19 February 1996; ‘Michael Rockefeller’, *The Associated Press* (AP), 12 April 1979.

⁴² Machlin, *The Search for Michael Rockefeller*.

⁴³ ‘Taking a Chance’, *Chicago Tribune* (CT), 23 February 2001, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Machlin, *The Search for Michael Rockefeller*, p. 145.

⁴⁵ ‘Governor’s Son Last Seen Swimming Toward Coast’, NYT, 21 November 1961, p. 1.

Conclusion of Section One

The orthodox accounts of Indonesian historiography and Papuan savagery described in this section clearly illustrate Foucault's idea that power produces knowledge: 'power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge.'⁴⁶ Orthodox representations about West Papua are very accessible to both domestic and international audiences. Indonesian nationalist historiography is embodied in monuments that dot the landscape, museums and theme parks that present vibrant displays, and school textbooks that children are obliged to purchase. Outside Indonesia, books, popular articles and films about West Papua depict it as a cannibal land.

Historians have a responsibility to 'speak truth to power.'⁴⁷ Many foreign researchers in Indonesia in general, and West Papua in specific, have not done this: they have carefully toed the government line for fear of having their research permits withdrawn by LIPI (The Indonesian Institute of Sciences).⁴⁸ Very few research permits for West Papua have been granted by LIPI during the past 38 years of Indonesian rule. During major military campaigns in West Papua, researchers have been blocked from entering the province. Even when West Papua has been theoretically 'open' to researchers, areas where there are military operations or large-scale resource extraction projects have been deemed out of bounds to all foreign nationals who lack special permission from the regional police. While individual researchers have proved to be capable of resistance,⁴⁹ the tight regulations surrounding research in West Papua have resulted in the production of knowledge that is largely consistent with orthodox normative standards.

⁴⁶ M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (London, 1991), p. 27.

⁴⁷ P. Carey, 'Speaking Truth to Power' (2000).

⁴⁸ I. A. Satya and D. Kabanga, 'Indonesian Institute of Sciences - Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (LIPI)' (2002).

⁴⁹ See for example C. Ballard, 'Signature of Terror' (2002); D. Rutherford, 'Waiting for the End' (1999); B. Golden, 'Letter to the Editor' (2000).

Heterodoxy

Section Two

Papuan Nationalism

Chapter Three

At least part of what Papuans mean when they say *merdeka* (freedom) is that they want political independence from foreign occupation. In the present chapter I will demonstrate that Papuans have developed the key symbols of an independent nation: there is a West Papuan flag, a national anthem, a state seal and a constitution. While Papuans have occasionally used strategies of violence to fight foreign occupation, I will argue that the appropriation of military elements by some members of the self-determination movement has also largely been symbolic. The idea of having a standing army makes the state of West Papua complete (*lengkap*) according to contemporary Papuan logic. Max Weber has argued that bureaucratic organisations have ‘purely technical superiority over any other form of organisation.’¹ In this chapter I will argue that the most powerful and enduring forces that drive Papuan nationalism have not been bureaucracies. Papuan independence organisations have not optimised the ideal characteristics of a bureaucracy as defined by Weber: ‘precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs.’²

In this initial attempt at composing a history of Papuan nationalism I have thus taken contemporary Papuan heterodox challenges to the legitimacy of Indonesian rule as a starting point for the consideration of archival evidence. While Papuan resistance to colonialism dates back to the earliest written records about the region, I will argue in this chapter that Papuan nationalism began in the twentieth-century. To back up this argument I will also present data suggesting that Papuan resistance was local in scope during the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

On 24 August 1828, which was the birthday of the King Willem I of the Netherlands, ‘the commissioner for taking possession of the western shore of New Guinea’ Arnoldus Johannes van Delden shouted the

¹ M. Weber, ‘Technical Advantages of Bureaucratic Organization’ (1970), p. 214.

King's name, planted a flag and read a unilateral proclamation that the island of New Guinea west of 141° east longitude was now under the rule of the King.³ The overwhelming majority of Papuans, who suddenly had become colonial subjects, were not affected in the least by this small act of sovereignty. This ritual of incorporation was largely symbolic: the only immediate and concrete action taken by the Dutch was the construction of Fort du Bus near the site of the proclamation. Seven years later the fort was abandoned following an onslaught of tropical diseases that killed over 75 Europeans and 'native' soldiers from other parts of the Dutch East Indies.⁴ More than 60 years elapsed before the Dutch established the next government post in West Papua.⁵ The existence of Fort du Bus was later used by the Dutch in Europe to legitimate their claims to West Papua.⁶

Three contracts were signed on the same day by van Delden and local Papuan rulers. The Dutch originals contain footnotes saying that they had been translated into the Ceramese language.⁷ It is possible that the Mairasi and Kowiai speaking signatories to these contracts could read Ceramese. The lingua franca of the Dutch East Indies was Pasar Malay (Market Malay), which is the root of modern Bahasa Indonesia. Today less than 5.2% of the Mairasi and Kowiai speak Indonesian in addition to their mother tongue.⁸ But Miklouho-Maclay found many Kowiai who had Ceramese ancestry when he visited in 1874, about 50 years after van Delden's proclamation.⁹ Even if the Papuan signatories could not read the Dutch or Ceramese contracts in a conventional sense these documents undoubtedly played an important role in local communities. Contemporary Biak leaders harness the power of distant lands by 'reading' alien texts in unconventional ways.¹⁰ The unintelligible contracts themselves may similarly have been used as a source of local authority among the Mairasi and Kowiai. They gave Papuans a symbolic role in the colonial state. In the Dutch versions of the contracts two of the leaders are identified with the Malay title 'King' (*Raja*) and

² Weber, 'Technical Advantages of Bureaucratic Organization', p. 214.

³ ARA, No. 2.10.03, pt. 21, 'Proces Verbaal', 24 August 1828.

⁴ G. Souter, *New Guinea* (London, 1964), p. 22.

⁵ Souter, *New Guinea*, p. 264.

⁶ PRO, FO 881/5002, 'Memorandum by Sir R. W. Rawson on the Claims of Holland in New Guinea', 20 August 1884, p. 9.

⁷ ARA, Ministerie van Koloniën, No. 2.10.03, pt. 21, 'Contract met Loetoe', 'Contract met Kafsa', 'Contract met Sendawan', 24 August 1828.

⁸ B. F. Grimes and J. E. Grimes, *Ethnologue* (Dallas, Texas, 2000).

⁹ N. Miklouho-Maclay, *Travels to New Guinea* (Moscow, 1982), p. 282.

¹⁰ D. Rutherford, 'The White Edge of the Margin' (2000).

one was referred to as a ‘rich man’ (*orang kaya*). According to ethno-historical evidence from Biak, on West Papua’s north coast, local authority has long been derived through the accumulation of titles from negotiations with outsiders.¹¹ The titles for the Mairasi and Kowiai leaders that were formalised in van Delden’s contract undoubtedly enhanced the authority of the signatories within their local communities.

The period of indirect rule of West Papua by the Sultan of Tidore took place before the establishment of Fort du Bus in 1828 and immediately after it was abandoned in 1835. As will be discussed below in Chapter Four the Sultan used periodic *hongi* raids to procure slaves and goods from coastal Papuan villages. There is little evidence of any unified Papuan resistance against these raids which were frequently violent. Indeed, it would be Whiggish to speak of a shared ‘Papuan’ ethnicity at this time. Even on a regional level, for example within Cenderawasih (*Geelvink*) Bay, there were no unified fronts against Tidore (see Map Two).¹²

Papuan resistance during this period involved complex local and global dynamics. For example, a rebellion took place from 1780 to 1805 when a renegade Tidorese prince, Noekoe, allied himself with local Biak groups and the British to defy the Dutch and the Sultan of Tidore.¹³ The British established Fort Coronation near the present-day town of Manokwari with the permission of Prince Noekoe in 1793 (see Map Two).¹⁴ The British settlers had made allies with some Biak warriors through Prince Noekoe and had recruited a labour force of 500 Papuans, but by 1794 the fort had been attacked by raiders from the nearby island of Numfor.¹⁵ Some labourers from India brought in by the British settlers were captured and sold into slavery.¹⁶ In late 1794 France invaded the Netherlands and facilitated a revolution.¹⁷ The new Dutch regime joined forces with the French in their war against the British, reopening a conflict that dated back to the 17th century with the Anglo-Dutch Wars.¹⁸ Fort Coronation was evacuated in May 1795 when a ship arrived

¹¹ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 9; Rutherford, ‘The White Edge of the Margin’, p. 314.

¹² Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 215.

¹³ ARA, Ministerie van Koloniën, Supplement, No. 2.10.03, pt. 20, ‘Contract met Tidor’, 17 December 1783.

¹⁴ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 217.

¹⁵ Souter, *New Guinea*, pp. 21-2.

¹⁶ Souter, *New Guinea*, p. 22.

¹⁷ ‘Batavian Republic’ *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2002).

¹⁸ ‘Anglo-Dutch Wars’ *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2002).

bringing news of these political developments.¹⁹ Tidore and Ternate were eventually defeated in a *hong*i raid of Papuan warriors that was organised by Prince Noekoe. In this instance Papuans appropriated a mechanism of state control and turned it back on colonial rulers. But Papuans reaped few benefits from this victory. The Biak oarsmen of Noekoe's fleet were sold as slaves following this successful battle.²⁰



Figure 3.1 Bintang Fajar Flag The flag that is the nationalist symbol of West Papua can be traced to 1942 when Stephanus Simopyaref founded an army named A. B. (*Amerika-Babo* = New America). This flag is now widely called *Bintang Kejora*. However, Papuans from Biak maintain that the name *kejora* has Satanic connotations. The name *Bintang Fajar* (Morning Star) does not have these connotations.

During the 19th century Papuan resistance to the Dutch colonial state continued to be local in scope. Throughout Melanesia ‘reciprocating armed conflict followed quickly after initial tenuous contacts.’²¹ In response to the periodic violence at the hands of Tidorese *hong*i and European explorers coastal Papuans would initiate attacks on passing vessels.²² Following the abandonment of Fort du Bus in 1835 there were no Dutch settlements on New Guinea until 1898 when posts were established in Fak Fak and Manokwari.²³

Papuan nationalism can be traced to the tumultuous times surrounding World War Two. Japan rapidly replaced the Dutch colonial administration following their invasion of New Guinea in January 1942.²⁴ The rapid defeat of the Dutch inspired some Papuans to articulate their desire for an independent state to the occupying foreigners. Among other political dissidents the Japanese liberated Stephanus Simopyaref, a Biak leader who had been imprisoned in Manokwari by the Dutch.²⁵ Simopyaref went on to formulate plans for a united and independent West New Guinea from Gebe to Jayapura (then Hollandia) and Merauke

¹⁹ Souter, *New Guinea*, p. 22.

²⁰ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 215.

²¹ Knauft, ‘Melanesian Warfare’, p. 252.

²² J. Overweel, *The Archives of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, 19th Century* (Leiden, 1994), pp. 27, 34, 35, 43, 44, 54, 69, 73, 82, 92.

²³ Souter, *New Guinea*, p. 264.

²⁴ T. Blamey, *The Jap was Thrashed* (South Yarra, Australia, 1944), p. 8.

(see Map Two).²⁶ His army was named A. B. (*Amerika-Babo* = New America) and the Biak members sought to help what they called the A. B. C. D. Front (American, British, Chinese, and Dutch Front).²⁷ This is apparently a local rendering of the allied ABDA Front.²⁸ A white-and-blue-striped flag with a single star on a red field was adopted as the army's symbol and *Do mamun* (*hong*i songs) were sung (Figure 3.1). When a Japanese naval vessel came to investigate the happenings in Manokwari, Simopyaref met them. He asked for the Japanese to recognise the flag and grant freedom to New Guinea. Simopyaref was detained by the Japanese and later killed.²⁹ Despite Simopyaref's early demise he left a lasting legacy. The flag that he described has gone on to become the unifying symbol of Papuan resistance. Contemporary Papuans imagine the territorial boundaries of West Papua, like Simopyaref, as the former boundaries of Netherlands New Guinea.

Simopyaref issued a decree that contains the roots of a national 'Papuan' ethnicity. His decree defined members of his movement in opposition to the following categories of people who were to be imprisoned: *Amberi* (non-white foreigners from Ambon, Makassar, and other groups who are now 'Indonesians'), members of the Japanese army, all government officials and native teachers/preachers who refused to join the movement.³⁰ In May of 1943, after Simopyaref had been killed by the Japanese, the new leadership of the A. B. army declared that *Amberi* who join the struggle wholeheartedly 'shall be called Papuans.'³¹ The designation 'Papuan' is now taken as a given ethnic category. Papuans, who have curly hair and dark skin, view themselves as being racially distinct from straight-haired and brown-skinned Indonesians. The dialect of Bahasa Indonesia called Logat Papua distinguishes contemporary [West] Papuans from Papuans living east of the border in the independent country of Papua New Guinea who speak Pidgin English.

In the 1930s the Dutch began laying plans for developing West Papua as a home for displaced Indo-Europeans who were facing increasing political and economic difficulties in what was to become

²⁵ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 171.

²⁶ Kamma, *Koreri*, pp. 171-3.

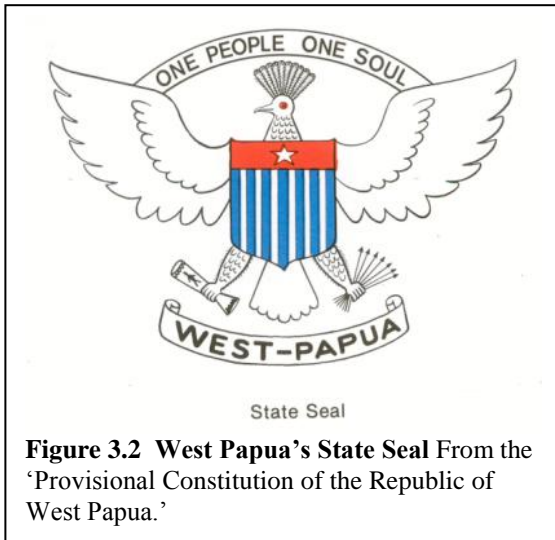
²⁷ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 172.

²⁸ P. Carey, personal communication, 18 March 2002, Oxford.

²⁹ Kamma, *Koreri*, pp. 173, 178-9.

³⁰ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 172.

³¹ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 198.



Indonesia.³² This dream was never realised as it became increasingly unviable politically for European powers to retain colonies. In March 1961, the Government of Netherlands New Guinea published a booklet of photographs with both English and Dutch captions titled *Papoea's op de Drempel van Zelfbeschikking/Papuans on the Threshold of Self-Determination*. This book illustrates in paternalistic tones how the Dutch helped Papuans make 'the tremendous leap forward from the stone age to the

present century.'³³ Papuans are pictured in this book driving tractors, playing baseball, receiving health care, learning and praying. By 1963, when West Papua was transferred to the Republic of Indonesia, there were a total of about sixty Papuans who had been trained by the Dutch to be administrators of the colonial state.³⁴

On 1 December 1961, the territory that had been known as Netherlands New Guinea was officially renamed West Papua. Following a vote by the West New Guinea Council, the territory was given the national anthem 'O, My Land Papua' (*Hai Tanahku Papua*) and a flag that flew alongside the Dutch tricolour.³⁵ According to an internal UN telegram the *Bintang Fajar* flag flew 'over all government buildings and practically every Papuan house and abode' during the period that led up to the temporary UN administration of West Papua.³⁶ The 15 August 1962 New York Agreement that transferred authority over West Papua from the Netherlands to Indonesia specified that the UN flag would be flown during the period of temporary administration from 1 October 1962 to 1 May 1963.³⁷ The UN, under pressure from

³² P. J. Drooglever, 'Documents' (1998), p. 480.

³³ Anonymous, *Papoea's op de Drempel van Zelfbeschikking/Papuans on the Threshold of Self-Determination* (Amsterdam, 1961), p. 5.

³⁴ P. J. Drooglever and L. E. Visser, 'Governing New Guinea' (2000).

³⁵ Saltford, 'UNTEA and UNRWI', p. 13; N. Jouwe, *Provisional Constitution of the Republic of West Papua* (Delft, the Netherlands, 1971), p. 2.

³⁶ J. I. Rikhye quoted in Saltford, 'UNTEA and UNRWI', p. 54.

³⁷ Subandrio *et al.*, 'New York Agreement' (2002).

Indonesia, refused to officially recognise the flying of the *Bintang Fajar* flag during their administration.³⁸ On 31 December 1962, five months before the UN administration ended, President Sukarno of Indonesia was granted the authority by the UN to fulfil a pledge that he had made to the Indonesian people. The Indonesian flag was to fly before the ‘cock crowed’ on New Year’s Day 1963.³⁹ On New Year’s day, according to UN Divisional Commissioner Harold Luckham, Papuans ‘who did not fly flags were threatened and Indonesian soldiers were sent round to talk to them.’⁴⁰ From this point forward Indonesia outlawed the flying of the Papuan *Bintang Fajar* flag.⁴¹ The raising of this flag—a symbolic act of resistance—has been consistently met with violence by Indonesian authorities.

The OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*) is cultural movement that unites Papuan resistance against Indonesia. Initially the OPM was a local military organisation with roots in the Dutch-created police force called the Papua Volunteer Corps (PVK).⁴² The Kebar Incident, which took place on 26 July 1965 near the coastal town Manokwari, was the first concrete event associated with the OPM.⁴³ Participants in an Indonesian military ceremony were attacked by hundreds of Papuans who wielded mixed light firearms, bows, spears, axes, and machetes. Several Indonesian troops were injured or killed during the attack and the group escaped to the jungle with guns of the soldiers.⁴⁴ Two days later PVK Sergeant Permenas Ferry Awom led another large group of Papuans in an attack on an Indonesian military barracks during the Manokwari Incident (*Peristiwa Manokwari*).⁴⁵ Three Indonesian soldiers were killed and four were wounded. The fledgling OPM group made off with one Bren gun and one sub-machine gun.⁴⁶ During the 1960s the OPM was a local phenomenon confined to the Bird’s Head Region. For example, the 1969 Paniai Revolt, which resulted in significant numbers of Indonesian casualties, was conducted independently of the OPM.⁴⁷

³⁸ Saltford, ‘UNTEA and UNRWI’, p. 54.

³⁹ Saltford, ‘UNTEA and UNRWI’, p. 93.

⁴⁰ H. Luckham quoted in Saltford, ‘UNTEA and UNRWI’, p. 93.

⁴¹ Saltford, ‘UNTEA and UNRWI’, p. 55.

⁴² Saltford, ‘UNTEA and UNRWI’, pp. 137-8.

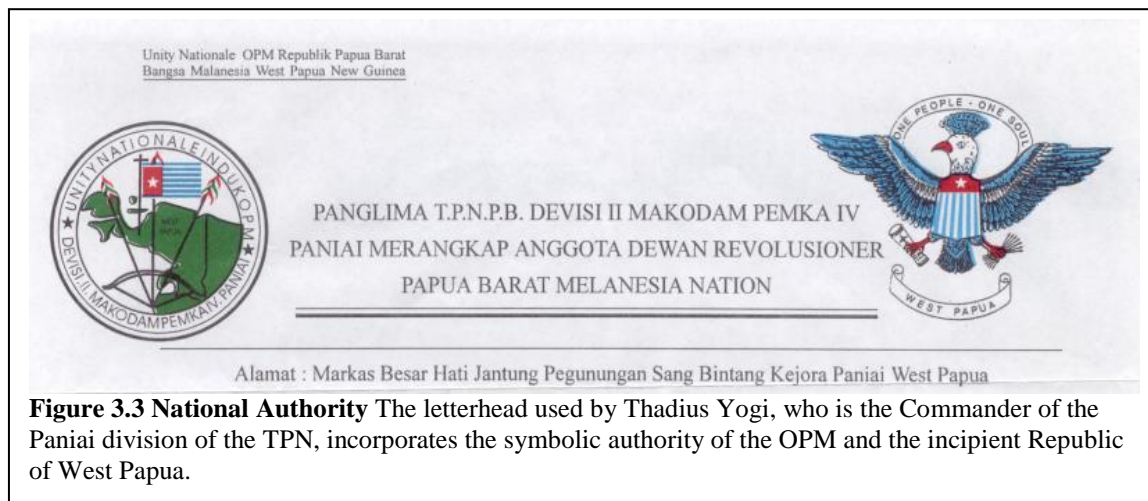
⁴³ Ismail *et al.*, *Praja Ghupta Vira*, p. 122; Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*, p. 18.

⁴⁴ Ismail *et al.*, *Praja Ghupta Vira*, pp. 125-126.

⁴⁵ Ismail *et al.*, *Praja Ghupta Vira*, p. 126.

⁴⁶ Ismail *et al.*, *Praja Ghupta Vira*, p. 128.

⁴⁷ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 12 April 2001; see also B. May, ‘The United Nations Fiasco’ (1978).



Following these local military actions in Manokwari the renown of the OPM began to spread. The *Bintang Fajar* flag was taken on as the defining symbol of the OPM. When Awom died in the late 1960s the OPM ceased to be a military organisation and became a cultural movement. Awom did not pass the reins of the OPM to a widely recognised successor and from this time no one has had a clear mandate to speak for this powerful movement.

The OPM has served as a conceptual umbrella for a variety of distinct organisations. During the 1960s there were dozens of quasi-bureaucratic Papuan organisations that were working within West Papua for independence from Indonesia.⁴⁸ In the Netherlands, Nicolaas Jouwe and Markus Kaisiepo, who were exiled leaders from West Papua, each set up their own independence organisations. Independence organisations have continued to proliferate both within West Papua and abroad since the early years of Indonesian occupation. These diverse organisations have been affiliated with the OPM in spirit and principle, but are

⁴⁸ These include: Napan (*Natural Papua Nasional*), PMPM (*Piagam Masyarakat Papua Merdeka*), Genapa (*Gerakan Nasional Papua*), *Rencana Sepuluh Tahun* (Ten Year Plan), PPPM (*Partai Politik Papua Merdeka*), MU FGS (Melanesian Union From Gak to Sumary), GPM (*Gerakan Papua Merdeka*), IPARI (*Ikut Papua Anti-Republik Indonesia*), Sampari (*Semangat Angkatan Muda Anti-Republik Indonesia*), GKPB (*Gerakan Kemerdekaan Papua Barat*), Panapa (*Partai Nasional Papua*), Petana (*Pecinta Tanah Air*), Okepa (*Organisasi Kemerdekaan Papua*), Sepupu (*Semangat Pemuda Papua*), FKPPB A 69 (*Front Komando Pembebasan Papua Barat Angkatan 69*), FPPB (*Front Pembebasan Papua Barat*), Kaki (*Kampagne Kilat*), Cirap (*Cita-cita Rakyat Papua*), and OMB (*Organisasi Maluku Besar*). In Islam, *Sejarah TNI*, Vol. IV, p. 126.

distinct entities in themselves. Throughout years of contested leadership within the West Papuan movement, the OPM served as a glue binding the various groups together.

On 1 July 1971, Seth Rumkorem, the leader of the newly founded TPN (*Tentara Pembebasan Nasional* or the National Liberation Army), issued a proclamation of independence for West Papua over a short-wave radio in the village of Waris near the border of Papua New Guinea.⁴⁹ In the Netherlands, Nicolaas Jouwe issued an English-language *Provisional Constitution of the Republic of West Papua* that was retroactively given the same date.⁵⁰ Inside the front cover of the constitution the *Bintang Fajar* is captioned as ‘The National Flag of West Papua.’ The same page is emblazoned with the ‘State Seal’ of West Papua (Figure 3.2, p. 41). The constitution contains 129 articles that outline a system of state governance, finance, defence, citizenship, foreign affairs, and legislation. No direct reference to the OPM (or the TPN) is made in the constitution’s program for establishing a bureaucratic government. Needless to say, these plans have not yet been actualised. The constitution has symbolic currency for many Papuans but, since it was written in the English language and not widely distributed, few are familiar with its contents.

The TPN has emerged as the primary ‘armed’ wing of the self-determination movement in West Papua. In 1990, Mathias Wenda became the Commander-in-Chief of the TPN, a position which he still holds today.⁵¹ The headquarters of TPN is popularly known as *Markas Victoria* (Victory Headquarters) or as *Bewani* by TPN members. It is in a constantly shifting location in the border region between West Papua and Papua New Guinea.⁵² The TPN have attempted to appropriate the symbolic authority of the OPM as well as the incipient authority of the Republic of West Papua. The letterhead used by Thadius Yogi, who claims the title of General (*Panglima*) of the TPN for the Paniai Region, has the hybrid English-Indonesian phrase ‘*Unity Nationale OPM Republik Papua Barat*’ written in the upper left-hand corner of his personal

⁴⁹ Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, p. 56.

⁵⁰ Jouwe, *Provisional Constitution of the Republic of West Papua*.

⁵¹ S. Karoba, ‘My Friends in the Jungles.’ (2001); M. Forbes, ‘West Papua’ (2001).

⁵² Thadius Yogi, interview, Paniai, West Papua, 11 April 2001.

letterhead (Figure 3.3, p. 43).⁵³ Yogi's title, *Panglima*, places him in a similar position *vis-à-vis* foreign dignitaries and his local community as the *Raja* and the *orang kaya* in the 1828 contract discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

I have put the word 'armed' in quotation marks in the previous paragraph because most TPN troops only have simple weapons such as home-made bows and arrows, machetes, and axes. The contemporary TPN possesses only a handful of outdated rifles. For example, Yogi has only two bolt-action Mauser rifles and limited ammunition for his several hundred troops. A secret document leaked to me at the Military History Centre (*Pusat Sejarah TNI*) in Jakarta shows a similar ratio of guns to TPN troops throughout West Papua. According to a Dutch military officer stationed in West Papua in the early 1960s these Mauser rifles are probably hand-me-downs from former members of the Papuan Volunteer Corps (PVK).⁵⁴ Uniformed TPN troops wearing red berets and green fatigues saluted me when I visited one of Yogi's outposts in 2001 (Figure 3.4). On my approach the troops each had a blunt stick that they spun around as if they were presenting arms with a rifle.



⁵³ A translation of this phrase that rendered the Indonesian components into English and transformed the quasi-English components into a strange foreign language might read: *Republic of West Papua OPM Nasionale Persatuan*. Note that I have translated the misspelled English word 'Nasionale' as the misspelled Indonesian cognate 'Nasionale.'

⁵⁴ W. A. A. Roseboom, interview, Leiden, the Netherlands, 18 July 2001.

Guns, or 'state instruments' (*alat negara*) as they are popularly known in the Papuan dialect of Indonesian, are powerful symbols in West Papua.⁵⁵ A Papuan man who works at a rural Indonesian military outpost (KORAMIL) told me about being sent to investigate a TPN group that was rumoured to possess rifles. Members of this TPN group had wrapped umbrellas in cloth and claimed that they were guns. The men with the 'guns' had been asking their fellow villagers for money so that they could buy more arms. The Papuan military man recounted to me how he had assembled all of the villagers and challenged the TPN troops to shoot at a target with their rifles: 'I got up and called: "Everyone get your rifles"... I said: "Everybody look, we the blind people can now see...Now, you there, stand up over there and take a shot each one of you...That is, put in a bullet and one, two, three shoot. Now who can hear a rifle shot?"'⁵⁶ The TPN has not merely put up symbolic resistance to Indonesian rule. Despite their limited weaponry they have persistently waged a long-term campaign against the Indonesian military.

The quasi-bureaucratic independence organisations that have proliferated in the urban areas have lived under fear of persecution and constant police surveillance. Under the administration of Indonesian President Wahid (in office, October 1999 to July 2001) these organisations were given a brief window of opportunity to express their aspirations. During the Second Papuan People's Congress from May-June 2000 the delegates concluded that West Papua had already been independent since 1 December 1961, when the first people's congress was held by the West New Guinea Council, and that consequently Indonesia was illegally occupying their territory.⁵⁷ This resolution gave 'full powers' to the Papuan Presidium Council (PDP).⁵⁸ In contrast to the OPM, the Presidium strives to embody the principles of a Weberian bureaucracy: there are clearly defined positions that are filled through a consultative process. Regular committee meetings, which pass formal resolutions, are held at the office of the Presidium in West Papua's capital of Jayapura. However, the Presidium does not have a steady source of revenue to ensure efficient functioning. They are dependent on irregular donations from transnational corporations and sometimes the Indonesian

⁵⁵ In the Javanese dialect of Indonesian 'alat negara' means civil servant. For linguistic purposes I include a quote that uses this phrase in context: '*Pada saat itu masyarakat yang hanya biasa pake adat. Seperti tadi bilang itu. Kemudian mereka itu memakai dengan alat negara, artinya senjata.*' Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 13 April 2001; For information on guns as symbols see also S. E. Hutchinson, *Nuer Dilemmas* (London, 1996).

⁵⁶ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 13 April 2001.

⁵⁷ T. M. Alhamid *et al.*, 'Papua People's Congress Resolutions' (2000).

government.⁵⁹ A bureaucratic structure of organisation, I argue, has disadvantages in resisting an occupying force since its members can be easily identified. Below I will discuss the recent murder of Theys Eluay, who was Chairman of the Presidium.

The Presidium has clearly distanced itself from freedom fighters in rural areas. Presidium member Willy Mandowen told me that the OPM should be kept out of the city.⁶⁰ They appointed a police force called the Papuan Task Force (*Satgas* or *Satuan Tugas Papua*) that would eliminate the need for 'armed' TPN fighters. Members of the TPN, who are based primarily in the rural highlands, realise that they are being marginalised. On 29 August 2000, TPN troops stormed the Presidium headquarters in Jayapura and accused them of collaborating with Indonesia.⁶¹ Despite these accusations, the Presidium has consistently articulated Papuan aspirations for independence.

Papuan attitudes towards a state bureaucracy that would give Papuans increasing autonomy within Indonesia were clearly articulated on 28 March 2001 during a government-sponsored seminar. Delegates at the conference began throwing chairs and dismantling tents that had been set up by organisers.⁶² Outside the conference one Papuan man had his finger shot off as the police opened fire.⁶³ A bill went into law on 1 January 2002 that granted 'special autonomy' to West Papua. This legislation incorporated many symbols of West Papuan nationalism into a new provincial identity: the territory was given the new official name 'Papua' (replacing 'Irian Jaya' but not recognising the name 'West Papua'), the *Bintang Fajar* provincial flag, the *Hai Tanahku Papua* provincial anthem and significant increases in shares of the revenue from different types of extracted resources.⁶⁴ There are competing Papuan perspectives on the autonomy bill: it is viewed as an opportunity for the Papuanisation (*Papuanisasi*) of the state or on the contrary as the latest

⁵⁸ Alhamid *et al.*, 'Papua People's Congress Resolutions'.

⁵⁹ 'Way Beyond Petroleum', *New Internationalist*, April 2002, pp. 14-5; B. Golden, personal communication, Columbia University, 4 November 2001.

⁶⁰ Willy Mandowen, interview, Jayapura, West Papua, 30 March 2001.

⁶¹ L. B. Kogoya, 'TPN Shut Down Offices of Papua Presidium Council and FORERI' (2000).

⁶² 'Nine police injured in Irian Jaya clash', *Agence France Presse* (AFP), 28 March 2001.

⁶³ Brother Theo van de Broek, interview, Jayapura, West Papua, 30 March 2001.

⁶⁴ 'Papua's Future Bright', *Australian Financial Review* (AFR), 2 January 2002; 'Indonesia's Irian Jaya province officially renamed Papua', AFP, 7 January 2002.

Indonesian scheme of assimilation (*asimilasi*). Some Papuans view autonomy as a stepping stone to *merdeka* (freedom), but the large majority of the population completely rejects autonomy.

Chapter Three Conclusion

The symbols of an independent nation—a flag, a national anthem, a state seal and a constitution—have been important in unifying Papuan resistance against Dutch, Japanese and Indonesian occupation. The process of creating these symbols, and Papuan ethnic identity itself, parallels the discussion in Chapter One about the creation of the Indonesian state from Dutch colonial maps. Papuan nationalism has been formed in response to orthodox Indonesian nationalism. Ironically the very language of Papuan nationalism has been Indonesian: this is best illustrated by the fact that the name OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*) stands for Indonesian words.⁶⁵

The power of West Papua's symbols has been derived largely from their direct opposition to orthodox Indonesian symbols. The autonomy legislation has attempted to undermine Papuan nationalism by recognising some of its key symbols as Indonesian. Other heterodox symbols of West Papuan nationalism are being covertly supported by Indonesia. In Chapter Five I will present evidence suggesting that the TPN uniformed troops are funded by regional Indonesian military commanders. Indonesian agents who have been funding the TPN recognise that they do not present a significant military threat to Indonesian occupation. By supporting the TPN the Indonesians are tacitly recognising that orthodoxy cannot exist without heterodoxy: the regional military commanders depend on the existence of 'armed' separatists to justify their existence to the central Indonesian administration.

Like the OPM, the movement of Unity in Kenya (aka Mau Mau) did not have a clear chain of command and there were few specialised functions that were assigned to individuals. They also elaborated the symbolic aspects of a nation-state, such as a national anthem, and leaders of the movement bestowed an elaborate military titles on each other.⁶⁶ Historians of East Africa have long debated as to whether the Unity movement was fundamentally an anti-colonial organisation or the manifestation of a conflict between

⁶⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 178 note 27.

rural/urban populations and elite/mass sectors of society.⁶⁷ Once Kenya gained independence from the British in late 1963 the Unity movement was quickly replaced by a national state bureaucracy.⁶⁸ Many supporters of the Unity movement in Kenya have subsequently felt marginalised by the post-colonial bureaucratic elite.⁶⁹ It is clear that some polities in West Papua similarly do not want to replicate a nation-state system in urban centres after obtaining political independence.

In Timor Lorosa'e (East Timor) the populace was given the opportunity by Indonesia to decide between autonomy and independence (*merdeka*) in a referendum. Undoubtedly, if given a similar opportunity, Papuans would follow the people of Timor Lorosa'e and vote in favour of independence. However, simply having a referendum to choose between autonomy and independence would not guarantee that Papuans would be able to completely actualise what they mean by *merdeka*, according to a prominent Papuan leader exiled in the Netherlands named Viktor Kaisiepo.⁷⁰ In Chapter Seven I will explore the intricate network of meanings that are associated with the word *merdeka* and then discuss how this concept has served as the driving force behind the self-determination movement in West Papua.

⁶⁶ K. Wandai, *Kimathi* (Thika, Kenya, 1990).

⁶⁷ C. A. Presley, *Kikuyu Women* (Oxford, 1992), p. 156.

⁶⁸ C. Rosberg and J. Nottingham, *The Myth of 'Mau Mau'* (1966).

⁶⁹ Wandai, *Kimathi*, p. 5.

⁷⁰ Viktor Kaisiepo, telephone interview, Utrecht, the Netherlands, 4 April 2002.

Savage Colonial States

Chapter Four

*And it was only because the wild Indians were human that they were able to serve as labour—and as subjects of torture; for it is not the victim as animal that gratifies the torturer, but the fact that the victim is human, thus enabling the torturer to become the savage.*¹

-Michael Taussig.

In the late 19th and early-20th centuries some pacifist missionaries and explorers working in Melanesia wrote against the grain of prevailing opinion and discounted the idea that European civilisation had brought peace to indigenous Melanesians hitherto deemed inherently violent.² Instead these authors characterised Europeans as savages and argued that Melanesians would retaliate only after being themselves subjected to violent attack. My Papuan interlocutors similarly invert orthodox discourse to portray the Indonesian state as a savage colonial institution. However, contemporary Papuan folk historiography romanticises the period of Dutch occupation as being a golden age of peace. In the present chapter I will argue that there has been excessive colonial violence under both the Dutch and Indonesian regimes.

Appadurai has argued that ‘the speed and intensity with which both material and ideological elements now circulate across national boundaries have created a *new* order of uncertainty in social life...Where one or more of these forms of social uncertainty come into play, violence can create a macabre form of certainty (emphasis mine).’³ I will contend here that social uncertainty is not a new phenomenon in West Papua; there is no clearly definable historical event that marks a new order of uncertainty. The distinction between Papuan victims and perpetrators of state violence has been fuzzy throughout the historical periods studied. Many colonial officials in West Papua have genuinely hoped to bring peace to West Papua by administering impartial justice. However, the state has shown a persistent inability to determine the identity of the victims of their violence. It has had difficulties in distinguishing between Papuan civilians and

¹ M. Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man* (London, 1986), p. 83.

² Knauft, ‘Melanesian Warfare’, p. 253.

³ A. Appadurai, ‘Dead Certainty’, *Public Culture* (1998), p. 225.

separatists, between good natives and bad natives and between ‘Indonesians’ and ‘Papuan.’ Today there is a blurring of the distinction between the state and the savage on two levels of abstraction: Indonesian troops have taken on the trappings of savagery in both public ceremonies and private rituals. The relationship between ethnic violence and uncertainty is more vivid in recent periods, I argue, because of increasingly sophisticated technologies of representation.

As discussed above in Chapter Three, both before the founding of Fort du Bus (in 1828) and immediately after it was abandoned (in 1835) the Sultan of Tidore collaborated closely with the Dutch Resident of Ternate. The Dutch relied on indirect rule by the Sultan of Tidore in West Papua until 1898.⁴ During this period the Dutch Resident tolerated *hong*i expeditions (*hong*i *tochten*), composed of large fleets of ocean-going canoes that were each paddled by upwards of 30 indigenous warriors, as a mechanism for asserting state authority. The Resident sanctioned the use of *hong*i expeditions to extract ‘tribute’ in the form of tortoiseshell (*karet*), sea cucumber (*tripang*), birds of paradise, rice and sago (*Metroxylon* spp.) from the coastal peoples of West Papua.⁵ In actuality these goods, which were often obtained with force, resulted in a minimal revenue flows. Slaves were the most lucrative trade items obtained during these voyages. When the *hong*i met with resistance from local Papuans violence usually ensued; locals who were captured during the fighting were taken back to Tidore as slaves.⁶ Many Dutch Residents of Ternate viewed the slave trade with concern and negotiated a series of contracts with the Sultan of Tidore in the 1840s and 1850s that outlawed the taking of slaves.⁷ Slaves nonetheless continued to be bought and sold through the early 20th century.⁸

The line distinguishing Papuan victims and foreign perpetrators of *hong*i violence was fuzzy during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Biak raiders originating from an island off of West Papua’s north coast travelled as far as Maluku, East Timor, and East Java as oarsmen in *hong*i fleets from Tidore (see Map One).⁹ Raiding among different coastal Papuan groups replicated the *hong*i expeditions by capturing slaves and taking

⁴ Souter, *New Guinea*, p. 22

⁵ F. Huizinga, ‘Relations’ (1998), p. 399.

⁶ Huizinga, ‘Relations’, p. 408.

⁷ Huizinga, ‘Relations’, p. 399.

⁸ J. L. D. v. d. Roest, *Van een Papoesch Slavenkind* (Oegstgeest, 1921).



Figure 4.1 Headhunter Commander Major-General Dunidja, who was Commander of military region of West Papua (Pangdam VIII/Trikora), is pictured ‘as an Anem Headhunter’. From ‘Kayau Anem’, *Gema Trikora*, November 1995, p. 21.

valued goods.¹⁰ The same ceremony used to celebrate the return of Biak expeditions that voluntarily brought tribute to Tidore was used to mark the return of Biak raiders. These raiders brought back booty and slaves from neighbouring Papuan groups while the tribute bearers brought back new titles, flags and ceremonial dress from Tidore.¹¹

The Dutch attempted to regulate these forms of indigenous violence bureaucratically. An 1824 contract with the Sultan of Tidore stipulated that all *hong*i expeditions had to be approved by the Resident of Ternate or another representative of the Netherlands Indies government.¹² Under some Residents, such as C. F. Goldman (1852-5), J. L. de Dieu Stierling (1855-6) and J. H. Tobias (1856-7), the officially

⁹ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 8.

¹⁰ G. J. Held, *The Papuas of Waropen* (The Hague, 1957), Chapter V.

¹¹ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 14.

¹² Huizinga, ‘Relations’, p. 407.

sanctioned *hong*i expeditions completely stopped.¹³ Resident C. Bosscher (1857-9) ‘felt that since the *hong*i expeditions had been halted, the social situation in New Guinea had deteriorated.’¹⁴ He saw the *hong*i as a means of re-instituting state control.¹⁵ In 1858, Bosscher authorised a punitive *hong*i to arrest Koepang, a local Papuan leader who was allegedly slave trading and robbing other Papuans.¹⁶ This voyage consisted of nine major vessels (*kora-kora*) each manned by nearly 40 warriors and sixteen smaller vessels.¹⁷ This expedition was the result of local conflicts in West Papua. The Kings (*Rajas*) of Misool and Waigama petitioned Bosscher to authorise this *hong*i.¹⁸

The language used by early colonial explorers of West Papua suggests that they were preoccupied with violence. This is clearly illustrated by a short Dutch/Mimika word-list that was composed during a government-sponsored military expedition in October 1904. Selections from this word-list with the English translation and Dutch original are: good people (*goed mensch*), bad people (*slecht mensch*), cry (*roepen*), dead (*dood*), living (*levend*), sick (*ziek*), wound (*wond*), ghost (*geest*), grave (*graf*), machete (*parang*), slave (*slaaf*), war (*oorlog*), murder (*vermoorden*), shoot (*schieten*), headhunting (*koppensnellen*), peace (*vrede*).¹⁹ Command of this limited vocabulary enhanced the authority of Dutch colonial officials as they attempted to distinguish between law-abiding colonial subjects and enemies of the state.²⁰

From 1907 to 1915 the Dutch embarked on systematic military exploration of West Papua with the intent of displaying ‘a sufficient show of force to end all kinds of people-hunting and the like.’²¹ The expedition teams were composed of two military officers, eighty soldiers, one health officer, administrative and hospital personnel, eighty convicts with four foremen, a geologist and two native scouts.²² In the eyes of the local Papuans these expeditions did not deal out justice impartially. One Papuan group began shooting at an

¹³ J. Overweel, ‘Topics Relating to Netherlands New Guinea’ (1995), p. 157.

¹⁴ Huizinga, ‘Relations’, p. 408.

¹⁵ C. Bosscher, ‘Memore van Overgave’ (1995 [1859]), p. 15-17.

¹⁶ ARA, Ministerie van Koloniën, No. 2.10.02, Pt. 746, ‘Aan zijne Excellentie den Minister van Staat, Minister van Koloniën’, 24 August 1858.

¹⁷ Huizinga, ‘Relations’, p. 403.

¹⁸ Overweel, *The Archives of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, 19th Century*, p. 32.

¹⁹ ARA, No. 2.10.52.01, pt. 70, Mailrapport 1270, ‘Woordenlyst’, October 1904.

²⁰ Cf. B. Cohen, ‘The Command of Language and the Language of Command’ (1985), p. 325.

²¹ J. Overweel, ‘A Systematic Activity’ (1998), p. 458.

²² Overweel, ‘A Systematic Activity’, p. 462.

expedition because they thought that the expedition's translator had brought the foreigners to deal out revenge in a local conflict.²³

My Mee interlocutors closely associate the coming of religion (*agama*) and the state (*pemerintah*) as a combined rupturing force that marked a break with their traditional past.²⁴ In 1954, the first missionaries settled among the Lani peoples of the Baliem Valley.²⁵ Shortly after the first churches were established in the Baliem Valley a preacher was killed by Papuans. A religious war was sparked as a result of this incident. Papuan Christians, both with and without the help of Dutch troops, systematically hunted down pagans who had not yet received the word.²⁶ In this instance the coming of the state and religion created new uncertainties in social identities and incited local conflict.

During the Indonesian invasion of West Papua in 1961 the Dutch soldiers defined 'Papuans' as the people who were fighting with them against the Indonesians. The heir of the Raja of Misool collaborated with the Indonesians to fight the Dutch in the early 1960s²⁷ thereby mirroring the actions of his ancestor over 100 years earlier. The quasi-Papuan infiltrators working for Indonesia were given the derogatory name 'plover'.²⁸ This hybrid Dutch-Indonesian name originates from the Dutch word *voorloper* (forerunner). Indonesians borrowed this word as *pelopor* (vanguard, ranger, scout, shock troops) and then the Dutch troops in West Papua borrowed it back as *plover*.²⁹ The naming of someone as *plover*, like the naming of 'terrorists' discussed below in Chapter Six, determined the relationship of these locals to geopolitical conflicts. *Ploppers* were shot by the Dutch, while Papuans were assisted.

The excessive and systematic violence of the Indonesian military against Papuans over the last forty years has been well documented by human rights organisations and journalists. Due to space limitations I will

²³ Overweel, 'A Systematic Activity', p. 643-4.

²⁴ S. E. Kirksey, 'I Eat Anything' (New College of Florida, Sarasota, honours thesis, 2000), Ch. 8.

²⁵ Hitt, *Cannibal Valley*, p. 16.

²⁶ Pinoban Kogoya, tape-recorded interview, Wamena, 1 April 2001; Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Wamena, 4 April 2001.

²⁷ Roseboom, interview, Leiden, the Netherlands, 18 July 2001.

²⁸ Roseboom, interview, Leiden, the Netherlands, 18 July 2001.

²⁹ J. Overweel, personal communication, Leiden, the Netherlands, 19 July 2001.

refer the reader to these publications rather than reproduce their work here.³⁰ This body of work provides evidence to back up Papuan heterodox assertions that the Indonesian colonial state is inherently savage. In the remainder of this chapter I will provide examples of how indeterminate identities have fuelled Indonesian violence in West Papua.

In 1977, a major wave of violence again swept the Baliem Valley, which was the site of the religious war in the 1950s.³¹ Indonesian General Imam Munander launched Operation Eliminate (*Operasi Kikis*) in response to a series of armed uprisings that took place in the Baliem in April of that year.³² The army used anti-personnel Daisy Cluster bombs, mortars and machine-guns to fight Papuans who were largely armed with bows and arrows.³³ Papuan separatists were the target of Operation Eliminate, but in identifying individual ‘separatists’ the army did not realise that they were playing into a conflict that was at least a generation old. According to my Lani interlocutors, ‘pagans’, who were related to victims killed by the Dutch and Papuan Christians in the 1950s, used Operation Eliminate as an opportunity to get even with the Papuan Christian community in the Baliem. The pagans reported to the Indonesian authorities that the Christians were OPM freedom fighters. In some instances, at the suggestion of these military informants, whole villages were forced by the army to assemble in the church. The doors to the church were then locked and the building firebombed.³⁴

Today Papuans collaborate with the Indonesian state in various capacities: as minor civil servants, governors, policemen, army officers, spies, school teachers and postal workers. Leading members of the Papuan movement for self-determination—for example Willy Mandowen, Thadius Yogi and the late Theys Eluay—have been accused of being collaborators. Collaboration with the state no longer strips an

³⁰ Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*; Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War*; Anti-Slavery Society, *West Papua*. For more recent information see *Tapol Bulletin*: <http://tapol.gn.apc.org/>.

³¹ ‘Mereka yang Terpaksa Mengungsi’, *Kompas* 28 November 1977, p. 7-8.

³² Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*, p. 119-20; Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War*, p. 145.

³³ Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*, p. 119-24.

³⁴ Anonymous, interview, Wamena, West Papua, 3 April 2001; Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Megapura, West Papua, 3 April 2001.

individual of Papuan ethnicity. Indeed, in some contexts, a position within the state confers authority within exclusively Papuan circles.³⁵

The murder of the Chairman of the Papuan Presidium Council, Theys Eluay, clearly illustrates that true identity of some Papuans *vis-à-vis* the state has only become clear with their deaths. He was found strangled in his car on Sunday, 11 November 2001. Initially the identity of Eluay's attackers was shrouded in mystery. The only clear fact was that the attackers were Indonesians: Eluay's driver identified the attackers as *Amberi*, the Biak word for non-white foreigner, when he called Eluay's wife on a mobile phone during the attack.³⁶ Recently a spokesman for the armed forces admitted that Indonesian troops may have participated in the killings.³⁷ By late April 2002, no formal charges against individual soldiers, however, had been made public. Prior to his death Eluay had been widely suspected as being an Indonesian collaborator.³⁸ Only with his murder, presumably at the hands of state agents, was it clear that Eluay fundamentally supported Papuan independence. Papuans from all corners of the territory flocked to Jayapura for his funeral.³⁹ Mathias Wenda, Supreme Commander of the TPN and long-time critic of Eluay, condemned his murderers for attacking 'peace, human rights and democracy in West Papua.'⁴⁰

Indonesian military staff have identified themselves as savages in a series of public and private rituals. Officials and foot soldiers don the symbolic trappings of savagery by wearing caricatures of Papuan clothing during nationalist celebrations. Privately Indonesian soldiers act out the role of savages by performing unusual acts of violence against Papuans.



Figure 4.2 Ceremony Papuan leaders solemnly salute the Anem Head-Hunter. From 'Kayau Anem', *Gema Trikora*, November 1995, p. 29.

³⁵ Rutherford, 'The White Edge of the Margin', p. 314.

³⁶ 'Onlusten na Moord op Papoealeider Theys Eluay', NRC, 12 November 2001.

³⁷ 'Jakarta Military Admits Troops May have Killed Papuan Separatist Leader', AFP, 27 March 2002.

³⁸ O. Simopiaref, 'Position of Yorris Raweyai and Theys Eluay' (1999).

³⁹ 'Tens of Thousands Expected to Attend Theys's Funeral', *Jakarta Post* (JP), 17 November 2001.

⁴⁰ M. Wenda, '(IAWP) TPN/OPM Statement' (2001).



Figure 4.3 Subversion A Papuan boy undermines the appropriation of “Papuan” clothing by the Commander of the Indonesian military in West Papua. From ‘Kayau Anem’, *Gema Trikora*, November 1995, p. 47.

The November 1995 edition of the *Gema Trikora*, a magazine for Indonesian troops stationed in West Papua, features an article titled: ‘An Anem Head-Hunter: The Protector and Champion of Peace in the Land of Malaria’.⁴¹ A picture of Major-General Dunidja, who was the Commander of the Indonesian military in West Papua (Pangdam VIII/Trikora), is pictured ‘as an Anem Head-Hunter’ (Figure 4.1, p. 52). The title ‘Anem Head-Hunter’ (*Kayau Anem*), according to *Gema Trikora*, was given to Dunidja as a token of respect by people from the Marind tribe. The name ‘Anem

Headhunter’ suggests, instead, that this title is an Indonesian invention. *Kayau* is the Indonesian word for headhunter, while *Anem* (*Anim*) is simply an alternate name for the Marind people.⁴² To explain why the Marind participated in this ceremony and why the Major-General apparently felt honoured by the title Anem Headhunter requires interviews with the people concerned.

In addition to his military uniform, Dunidja wore a conch shell over his crotch, slung a net bag over his shoulder and donned a cassowary-feather head dress. He strikes a fierce pose with miniature weapons. Like blackface minstrels in the USA, Major-General Dunidja was identifying ‘with native peoples as a step in differentiation from them.’⁴³ The stony looks and half-smiles on the faces of the Papuan participants reveal little about their interpretations of this ceremony. In colonial Java children would laugh behind the backs of Dutch colonial officials after they passed by in procession with golden parasols.⁴⁴ While no adult Papuans apparently dared to challenge the solemn tone of the headhunter ceremony (Figure 4.2), a small Papuan boy

⁴¹ ‘Kayau Anem’, *Gema Trikora*, November 1995, p. 20.

⁴² Baal, *Dema*.

⁴³ M. Rogin, ‘Making America Home’, *The Journal of American History* (1992), p. 1052.

⁴⁴ R. A. Kartini, *Letters of a Javanese Princess* (London, 1921).

dressed in blue-jeans and a striped t-shirt, literally undermines the shell clothing that the Major-General is wearing over his crotch (Figure 4.3).

On 29 December 2001, Indonesian soldiers similarly dressed up in a caricature of ‘Papuan’ clothing paraded around Jakarta to celebrate the military’s National Struggle Day (*Hari Juang Kartika*) (Figure 4.4). There is a double irony in this image: Indonesians are dressed as ‘Papuan tribesmen’ who are proudly displaying the nationalist symbols of Indonesia. Their red-and-white headbands and Indonesian flags flown on a roughly hewn poles indicate that they support the unitary Republic of Indonesia. On the same day at the height of the National Struggle Day ceremony President Megawati Sukarnoputri (in office July 2001-present) addressed 3,000 of Indonesia’s top brass: ‘With the wisdom of the Oath of the Armed Forces as well as the legislation that is in effect, execute your assignments and responsibilities to your best ability without constantly experiencing anxiety about violating principles of human rights.’⁴⁵ This speech effectively gave the go-ahead for Indonesian troops to continue acting out savage rituals in private as well as in public.



One particularly poignant Indonesian savage ritual was related to me during my visit to Paniai last year. Igiyouda Tobai, a man of about 50, was ambushed by Indonesian military troops in October of 1982 as he approached a presumed rebel post on the outskirts of Papato village. The soldiers had been laying hidden in the grass. The troops thoroughly searched Igiyouda for evidence that he was a freedom fighter: they stripped him of

⁴⁵ *Harian Sinar Indonesia Baru Online*, 30 December 2001.

his bark-fibre net sack and his yellow orchid-fibre shoulder bag and rummaged through all of the contents. He was left standing only with his *koteka*, a piece of clothing that consists of a gourd sheath covering the penis (Figure 4.5, p. 60). The soldiers smashed Igiyouda's *koteka* and found what they were looking for: a TPN (National Liberation Army) identity card. The soldiers decided to kill Igiyouda. There were twelve other Papuans who were caught that day at Papato who witnessed the killing. I interviewed one of these men through a Mee interpreter.⁴⁶ Igiyouda's initially indeterminate identity, I argue, is what triggered the killing. Igiyouda screamed, describing what the soldiers were doing to him: 'I'm being tortured,' he shouted, 'they have castrated me.' A long iron rod was heated by the soldiers in the fire until it was red-hot. Igiyouda was skewered with the rod from his anus to his mouth. Some say that smoke issued out of his body.⁴⁷

Papuans maintain that many people have been killed by Indonesian troops in this fashion. Five of my interlocutors, in five separate interviews, volunteered information about people who were run through with a hot iron rod (*besi panas*). Two unpublished manuscripts given to me by local NGOs in Enarotali give a combined total of seven people, including Igiyouda, who were killed in this way in the Paniai region.⁴⁸

In the words of Appadurai 'the worst acts of degradation—involving faeces, urine, body parts; beheading, impaling, gutting, sawing, raping, burning, hanging, and suffocating—have macabre forms of cultural design and violent predictability.'⁴⁹ While I argue that the trigger for Igiyouda's killing was his indeterminate identity, the method of killing followed a cultural transcript. This method of killing with hot iron (*besi panas*) seems to be motivated by sexual fantasies of the Indonesian soldiers. A search for the words '*besi*' (iron) and '*panas*' (hot) with the google.com search engine brought me to an on-line collection of Indonesian stories that border on pornography. One of the stories describes the raping of a young woman

⁴⁶ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 10 April 2002.

⁴⁷ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 10 April 2002.

⁴⁸ 'Laporan Data Tentang Peristiwa Penting Perjuangan Papua', unpublished manuscript, Enarotali, West Papua, 2001; 'Peristiwa Madi', unpublished manuscript, Nabire, West Papua, 29 July 2000.

⁴⁹ Appadurai, 'Dead Certainty', p. 229.

who ‘felt hot sharp pains, like she was being skewered with iron that was red to the point of boiling.’⁵⁰ Fantasies of having sex that is literally ‘hot’ are played out in a grisly fashion on captive Papuan bodies.

As has been provocatively demonstrated by Katherine Verdery, dead bodies can have meaningful social and political lives.⁵¹ On 17 October 2001, after the Second International Solidarity Conference on West Papua in Neuendettelsau, Germany, I had an unexpected encounter with images of a Papuan corpse. I was riding on a train towards the airport with Henk Rumbewas, a Papuan currently working for the UN in East Timor. During the train ride Rumbewas asked me if I would like to look at some pictures from West Papua. He brought out a nondescript photo album that was brown with gold trim. I opened the album expecting to see smiling friends posing on the beach or pictures from a college graduation. Instead I found photographs of a dismembered person. Rumbewas did not comment about the pictures as I looked at them, letting the images stand beyond the realm of linguistic representation.⁵² In this dissertation I am similarly separating my textual and visual representations of these images: the pictures are reproduced in the Appendix without captions.

I will move from description to contextualisation and explanation of these photographs. The first image (Figure A1.1) shows a group of twelve people dressed as nurses, civil servants and civilians looking at two large plastic bags bulging with gas and floating in the water about 100 meters from a palm-fringed beach. A health worker dressed in a

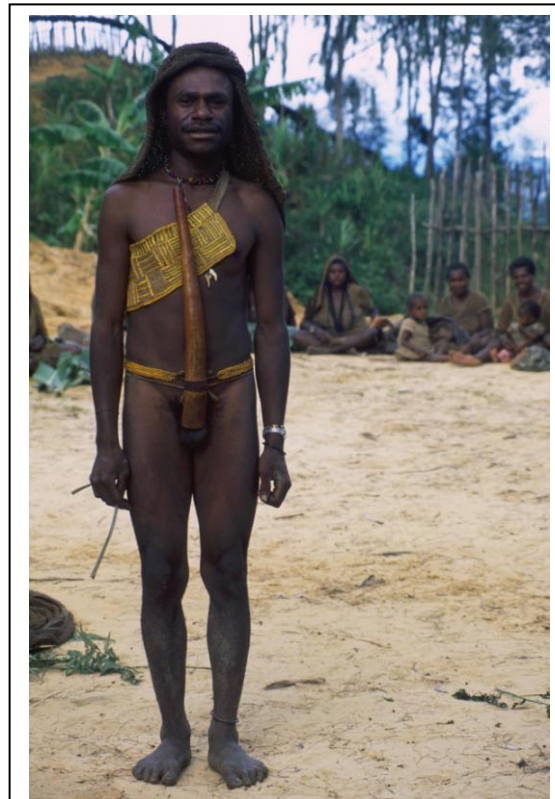


Figure 4.5 Koteka A Bunani man wearing a traditional clothing: a penis sheath (*koteka*), yellow orchid-fibre bag and a net bag over his head.

⁵⁰ From 17tahun.com, ‘Wulan Si Gadis Desa’ (2002).

⁵¹ K. Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies* (New York, 1999).

⁵² M. O’Hanlon, ‘Modernity and the ‘Graphicalization’ of Meaning’, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 1, pp. 469-493.

shining white frock and a civil servant in a green uniform are shown in the next picture towing the bags to shore (Figure A1.2). The subsequent set of photographs are indoors (Figures A1.3 – A1.6). The first of these shows four people are standing around a table wearing gloves and medical scrubs (Figure A1.3). On the table are sheets of clear plastic and a glossy grey and brown mass. A man with plastic gloves is arranging the torso in a white coffin in the next photograph (Figure A1.4). It is a wide-angle shot and one can see the white, black and pink organs inside the torso. A close-up of the barely identifiable head and torso follows: the mouth gapes open in a distorted yawn, whitish-green eyes stare unfocused in different directions, the nose, arms and ears are gone (Figure A1.5). The next picture is a jumble of seven different body-parts: two legs, two arms, the head/torso, and two other pieces of the body's trunk (Figure A1.6). The following series of photos follow the coffin to the burial site (Figures A1.7 – A1.10). Cloths worn over some of the mourners mouths and noses indicate that this body had a dramatic olfactory, as well as visual, presence (Figures A1.7, A1.9, A1.10).

The pictures of the body that I have just described were taken in Wasior sub-district (*kecamatan*), Nabire district (*kabupaten*), of the Bird's Head region in September 2001. According to Elsham, the leading human-rights NGO based in West Papua, this is the body of 32-year-old Wellem Korwam.⁵³ An independent source based in West Papua recalls: 'I remember that he went out one afternoon after work to find some things that were needed by his family. One hour after he left the house there was a sound of a gun shot. Several hours later his child and wife began to look for him. That night they couldn't find him so they continued to search for him the next day. Two (?) days later the wrapped packages were found floating in the sea. Only then was the fate of Mr. Wellem Korwam revealed to his family.'⁵⁴

In a preliminary report dated 22 August 2001, which is before Korwam was killed, Elsham states that there were ten Papuans killed and 92 tortured, arrested, or detained in the region around Wasior from April to July of 2001.⁵⁵ These figures in the Elsham reports only include people whose names and biographical details were verified, but they suspect that there were in fact many more victims. Elsham has been

⁵³ Elsham, 'Re: Wasior' (2002).

⁵⁴ S. Zoellner, 'Fotos From Nabire' (2002).

⁵⁵ Elsham, 'Crime Against Humanity', 22 August 2001.

prevented by the police from visiting Wasior. Forms of torture and assault in this case included burning houses, non-fatal bullet shootings, dousing with diesel oil, beating, breaking fingers, slicing skin with razor blades, stabbing with a bayonet and amputating limbs. The roots of the incident can be traced to the 31 March 2001 shooting of three employees of a logging company by an unidentified armed group (see Chronology). Police forces killed six Papuans and arrested sixteen others near the site of this attack on 4 May. On 13 June, five police troops were shot by unknown assailants, the same day that the British Ambassador was visiting the nearby base camp of Beyond Petroleum (BP or until recently British Petroleum).⁵⁶ The attackers have not yet been conclusively identified and seven rifles that were stolen during the attacks have not yet been located.⁵⁷ As of April 2002 Wasior remains sealed-off to human rights NGOs and Korwam's death is one among many that have occurred in this sub-district since Elsham's preliminary report.⁵⁸

Arjun Appadurai writes 'The peculiar and ghastly forms of vivisection that have characterised recent ethnocidal violence (both in Eastern Europe and elsewhere) carry a surplus of rage that calls for an additional interpretative frame, in which uncertainty, purity, treachery, and bodily violence can be linked.'⁵⁹ On one level the torture and mutilation in Wasior may have been initiated in order to distinguish between Papuan civilians and armed separatists. A deeper level of fear and uncertainty may have also motivated the extreme forms of violence used in Wasior: the police who carried out the extra-judicial killings and acts of torture described above may have suspected treachery on the part of another arm of the Indonesian state.

The attack on police and loggers was surprisingly well co-ordinated and effectively executed: the TPN (National Liberation Army) is the only Papuan group that could have possibly carried out this operation without military aid from a non-Papuan source. The TPN did not take responsibility for the attacks, and it is unlikely that they could have conducted this operation without suffering any casualties of their own. The TPN possesses only a handful of outdated guns while the police who were attacked were armed with

⁵⁶ 'Clashes Raise the Stakes in Irian Jaya', *Courier Mail*, 15 June 2001, p. 15.

⁵⁷ BBC, 'Indonesia: Irian Jaya Subdistrict Declared "Free" of Pro-Independence Activity', 3 August 2001; Elsham, 'Crime Against Humanity', p. 4.

⁵⁸ Amnesty International, AI Index: ASA 21/015/2002, "Impunity and Human Rights Violations in Papua", April 2002.

sophisticated automatic weaponry. John Rumbiak of Elsham has suggested that army intelligence agents initiated the killings.⁶⁰ In-fighting among the Indonesian armed forces in West Papua is not unknown. In April 1996, five civilians and ten soldiers were killed in West Papua during a firefight between the elite army troops (Kopassus) and soldiers from the local Indonesian military command post (Kodam VIII Trikora).⁶¹

The timing of the 13 June 2001 killings of police officers to coincide with the visit of British Ambassador Richard Gozney to BP's Tangguh base camp suggests that West Papua's regional military command may be attempting to send BP a message: work with us.⁶² Beyond Petroleum does not want the Indonesian military to provide security for their new Tangguh Liquid Natural Gas project and hopes instead to develop a 'community-based approach to security'.⁶³ The military in Indonesia receives up to 75% of their operating expenses from contracts with private firms and April 1996 shoot-out between the local military and the elite forces was linked to a dispute over a business contract.⁶⁴ On 26 March 2002 at the 'Workshop on Tangguh' I presented the photographs in the Appendix to John O'Reilly, who is Senior Vice President for External Affairs of BP Indonesia and was at their base camp on 13 June 2001 with the Ambassador. The entire workshop was off the record, but O'Reilly agreed to make a statement about the photographs: he said that they were ghastly but that he did not interpret the killings in Wasior as a sign from the Indonesian military. The link between BP and Wasior is clear in the minds of many Papuans. More research on the contested meanings of the violence in Wasior remains to be done.

Chapter Four Conclusion

There seems to be ample evidence supporting Papuan claims that Indonesia is a savage colonial state. However, it would be easy to slip into the same sorts of essentialisms and methodological traps in this

⁵⁹ Appadurai, 'Dead Certainty', p. 243.

⁶⁰ 'Clashes Raise the Stakes in Irian Jaya', p. 15; J. Rumbiak, 'Re: News Article Cepos dan Papua Post Tentang Wasior (15/6)' (2001).

⁶¹ '14 People Confirmed Killed in Clash in Irian Jaya', *Japan Economic Newswire* (JEN), 15 April 2001; 'Irian Jaya Airport Shooting Spree Left 15 Dead: Military', AFP, 16 April 1996.

⁶² 'Clashes Raise the Stakes in Irian Jaya', p. 15.

⁶³ Beyond Petroleum, 'bp.com: Location Reports' (2002).

⁶⁴ R. Lowry, *The Armed Forces of Indonesia* (St. Leonards, N.S.W., 1997), Ch. 5; B. Golden, personal communication, Columbia University, 4 November 2001.

heterodox account of state violence that I critiqued above in my chapter about orthodox portrayals of Papuan savagery: ‘collective violence is partly a product of propaganda, rumor, prejudice, and memory—all forms of knowledge and all usually associated with heightened conviction, conviction capable of producing inhumane degrees of violence.’⁶⁵ Further research among the killers themselves is needed to further document what has taken place and elucidate the cultural transcripts that are motivating the peculiar forms of torture and violence that I have described.

Appadurai asserts that violence establishes certainty during a ‘*new* order of uncertainty in social life’⁶⁶ and contemporary Papuan historiography downplays the violence that they experienced under the Dutch. However, I have demonstrated that state violence has been motivated by uncertainty throughout the history of West Papua. There has not yet been a transition to a new order of uncertainty. The advanced global communications technologies that I will describe in Chapter Five have made heterodox accounts of state violence perpetrated in West Papua more accessible and vivid for the rest of the world. This technology, however, has not yet fundamentally changed the nature of violence that is taking place in West Papua.

⁶⁵ Appadurai, ‘Dead Certainty’, p. 225

⁶⁶ Appadurai, ‘Dead Certainty’, p. 225.

Conclusion of Section Two

In *Discipline and Punish* Michel Foucault describes a transition in forms of punishment that were used by the state in Europe during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: there was ‘the disappearance of punishment as a spectacle’ and the instatement of punishment as ‘the most hidden part of the penal process.’¹ Convicted criminals were no longer subjected to public torture, execution and dismemberment in town squares. State violence in West Papua is simultaneously a public spectacle and a disguised private affair. Mutilated bodies of suspected separatists, killed under mysterious circumstances, are publicly displayed and mourned. The spectacle of these killings function as a way of restraining the types of public discourse that are possible in West Papua. The threat of state violence enforces orthodox opinion. Papuans hesitant to air their heterodox opinions about Papuan nationalism or the savage colonial state for fear of being tortured or killed.

Punishment has come to be conducted in secrecy since the idea that ‘there is no glory in punishing’ became a prevailing principle in Europe.² In the context of West Papua, punishment administered by the Indonesian state has an intricate relationship to public/private domains. The body that is the subject of the photographs in the Appendix was clearly meant to serve as a spectacle for local Papuan audiences. The fact that pictures were taken of the floating bags before they were opened to reveal a mutilated body suggests that news of the killing was leaked to health officials (Figures A1.1 and A1.2). The body of Obeth Sabarnao was similarly left as a spectacle on the front terrace of the Wombu church (Wasior sub-district) where he was shot on 1 April 2001.³

The audience that beheld the spectacle of the dismembered body in the Appendix was primarily Papuan. Yet, there are glimpses of Indonesian soldiers who supervised the rites of passage that were conducted over the body. Figures A1.3 through A1.6 show Papuan health officials, who simultaneously hold identities as

¹ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 8, 9.

² Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 10.

³ Elsham, ‘Crime Against Humanity’, p. 8.

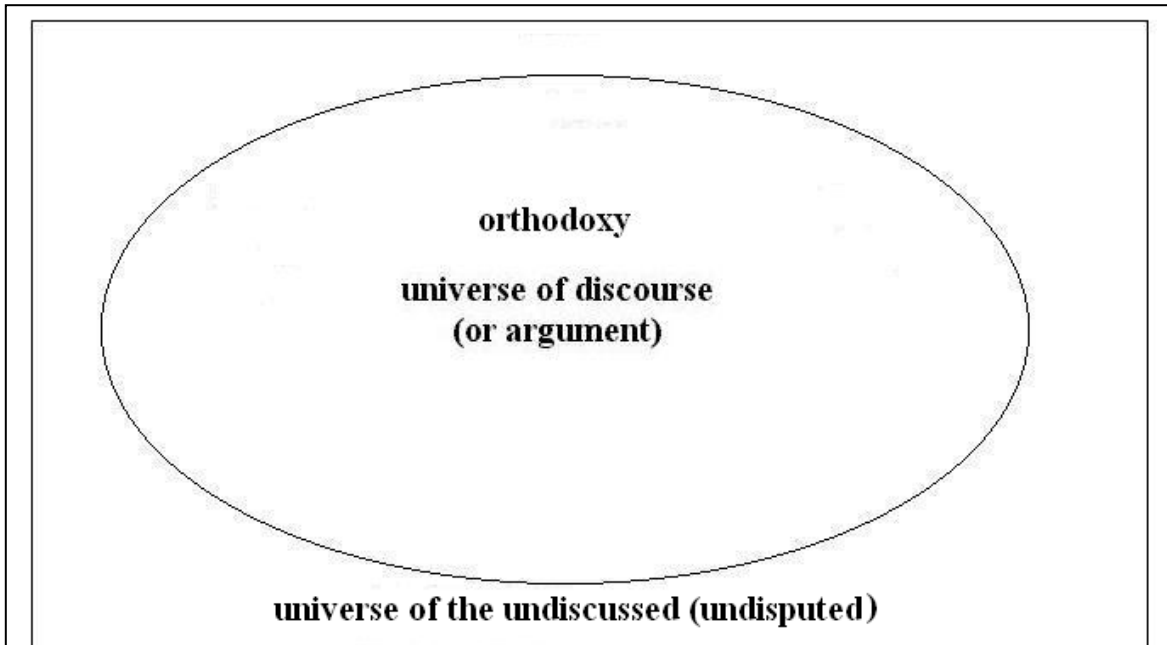


Figure S2.1 Orthodoxy The spectacle of state violence and fears of surveillance collapse the competing poles of orthodoxy and heterodoxy within the universe of discussion. Orthodoxy determines the universe of discourse when it is backed with strict policing mechanisms. Heterodoxy disappears as it is relegated to the realm of the undiscussed.

members of the Wasior community and agents of the state, ritually transferring pieces of the body from the plastic bags into a coffin. White rubber gloves and medical scrubs serve as important pieces of material culture that mark this process as an official state-supervised event. Like the doctors that I will discuss below in Chapter Five that urged a rush on Theys Eluay’s funeral, these health workers enforced a state-sanctioned protocol for handling this dead body.

There are also glimpses of police officers lurking at the margins of these pictures. They insure that this body goes through rites of passage that are within acceptable boundaries. In Figure A1.4 the presence of an Indonesian officer is suggested by peripheral elements that have crept into the frame of the picture: a muscled light-brown arm jutting into the centre, a black [gun?] handle barely visible at the right edge and a bulky bag slung on the person’s hip. Picture A1.8 shows an Indonesian police officer with a rifle slung over his shoulder watching over the transport of body by pall bearers away from the hospital. The police prevented this funeral from turning into a protest—a heterodox challenge to the legitimacy of this extra-judicial killing.

In many contexts in West Papua heterodox opinion cannot be expressed. Uncertain and shifting alliances of friends, family and colleagues have led to feelings of intense surveillance and perpetual terror on the part of many Papuans. Fears of undercover agents prevent many Papuans from expressing heterodox opinions even in private domains. The spectacle of state violence and fears of surveillance collapse the competing poles of orthodoxy and heterodoxy within the universe of discussion (Figure S2.1). Orthodoxy determines what is discussed when it is backed with strict policing mechanisms. While Indonesian authorities have permitted some NGOs to research human rights issues, these issues are not within bounds of safe public discourse. Most of my Papuan interlocutors spoke with me under conditions of strict confidence. My interlocutors could have been detained, arrested or beaten simply for telling me information about Papuan nationalism or Indonesian state violence. Heterodoxy, thus, disappears when it is relegated to the realm of the undiscussed.

Universe of the Undiscussed

Section Three

Papuan Violence and the Media

Chapter Five

There has been a transition in the media coverage about West Papua from a complete Indonesian orthodox monopoly on discussion (cf. Figure S2.1, p. 66) to a universe of discussion that includes Papuan heterodox opinion in addition to Indonesian orthodox opinion (cf. Figure 0.1, p. 5). The transition from local to global media occurred parallel to this change in the structure of discourse, but I argue that new communications technologies did not bring about the shift. The critique that brings the undiscussed into discussion, according to Bourdieu, has the power to revolutionise social order.¹ In this chapter I intend to demonstrate that Papuan acts of violent resistance initiated the transition in discourse structure and brought issues from the realm of the undiscussed into the universe of discussion. New global communications technologies, in contrast, have not brought entirely new doxa into the realm of discussion about West Papua but have sustained the discourse initiated by Papuan actions.

Long before the development of digital communication technologies local events in West Papua were reported around the world. On 20 March 1854, for example, a widely-read Dutch newspaper called the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* published the latest news about the Sultan of Tidore, a Papuan prophet and the travels of a Dutch schooner that had trickled back from West Papua.² On the same page there were stories from correspondents in Batavia (Jakarta), London, Liverpool, Antwerp and Belize. Throughout the 19th Century news coverage about West Papua was largely composed according to an orthodox Dutch perspective until the first major international hostage crisis occurred in West Papua in 1899-1900. On 24 December 1899 several officers and engineers from the *Generaal Pel*, a steam-powered cargo ship with the Royal Dutch fleet, were kidnapped in the village of Sileraka on West Papua's south coast.³ News of this hostage crisis was splashed across leading Dutch-language newspapers: *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, *Nieuws van de Dag*, *Arnhemsche Courant*, *Haagsch Dagblad*, *De Locomotief*,

¹ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, pp. 168-9.

² 'Kolonien', NRC, 20 March 1854, p. 2.

Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad, *Javasche Courant*, and the *Vaderland*. While I have not been able to find any sources that clearly portray the intentions of the kidnappers, the result of this event was a revolution in the structure of discourse about West Papua. In addition to orthodox accounts that condemned the kidnapping as ‘murder’ there were heterodox newspaper accounts that were critical of the rescue operation and Dutch aggressiveness.⁴ However, this structure of discourse was not sustained. In the media reports from 1901-1921 an orthodox perspective that Dutch state violence is legitimate dominates the news reporting about West Papua.⁵

Once Indonesia assumed control over West Papua in 1963 there were tight legal restrictions imposed on journalists operating in the region.⁶ The news stories around the time of the April 1984 murder of Arnold Ap by Indonesian security forces illustrate how Indonesia banned heterodox opinion and enforced orthodox discourse. Ap was a Papuan anthropologist who was widely renowned internationally and locally. Many Papuans compiled local unpublished accounts of Ap’s murder by Indonesian soldiers,⁷ but Ap’s name was not to be found in a manual search through *Kompas*, the leading Indonesian daily newspaper, from the date of his murder till one week after his funeral. On 30 April 1984, the day before Ap’s funeral, thousands of Papuans assembled on the streets.⁸ West Papua rarely entered the news during this period, but *Kompas* ran four front-page items about West Papua on the same day as the protests. But none of these articles mention the protests. Instead they paint a picture of a primitive, underdeveloped land. Arnold Ap’s funeral was thus erased from these Indonesian accounts of news from West Papua. These techniques of distraction are not unique to the Indonesian media. An Algerian comedian once joked that Algerian television always shows Jacques Cousteau underwater films when there is a national crisis.⁹

³ *De Locomotief* (Loc.), 13 January 1900, p. 1; ‘De Generaal Pel.’ *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* (NRC), 11 January 1900, p. 1.

⁴ Overweel, *The Archives of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, 19th Century*, pp. 120-1.

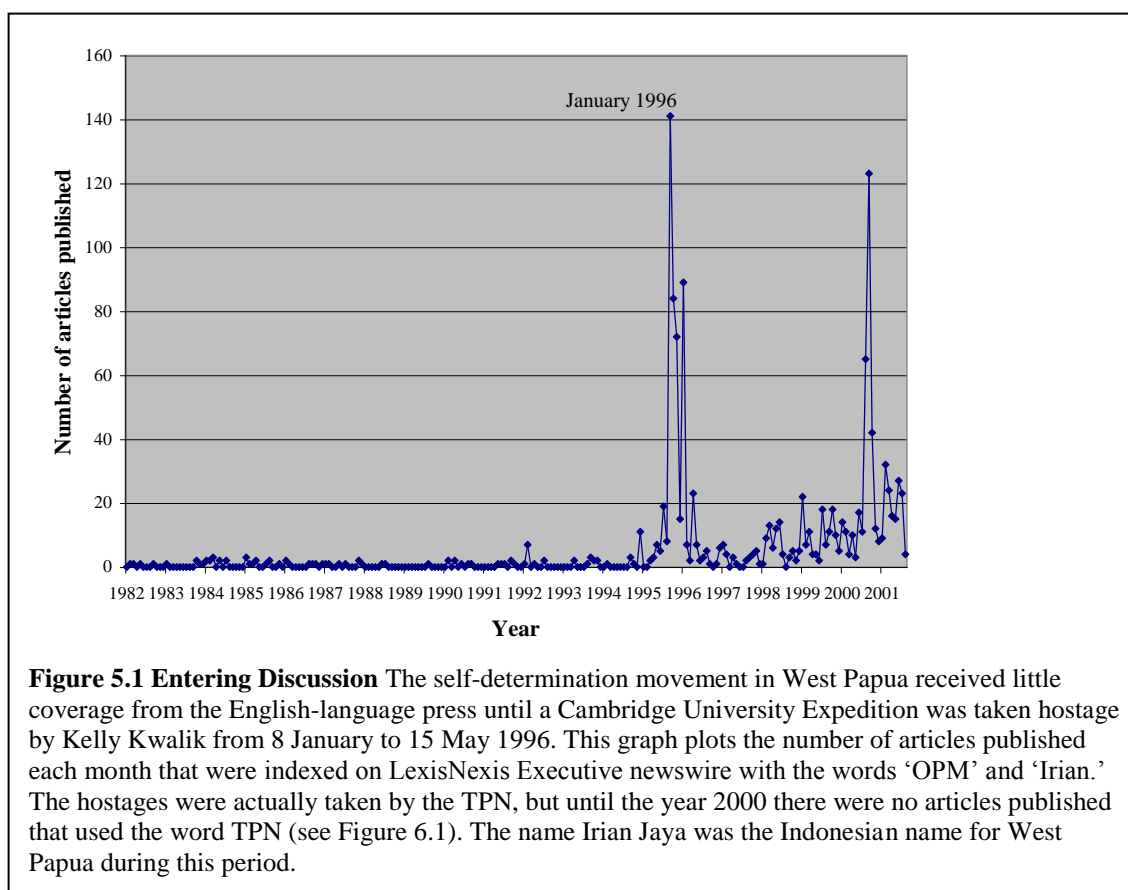
⁵ J. Overweel, *The Archives of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, 1901-1921* (Leiden, 1995), pp. 9-111.

⁶ May, ‘The United Nations Fiasco’ (1978).

⁷ Reviewed in Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*; Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*.

⁸ R. Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*.

⁹ C. Lloyd, ‘Thinking About the Local and the Global’ (2001), p. 9.



In 1996 Kelly Kwalik of the TPN took a Cambridge University Expedition hostage with the aim of breaking the silence in the Indonesian and international media about heterodox Papuan aspirations for independence.¹⁰ Kwalik scored a dramatic success in having the name of the self-determination movement in West Papua heard around the world: the number of articles published about the OPM increased dramatically during the hostage crisis (Figure 5.1). Like the Generaal Peel crisis, this event revolutionised discourse about West Papua. While many of these articles followed Indonesian orthodox modes of emplotment, by simply naming the OPM they recognised that heterodox opinions existed.

Within Indonesia news stories about the 1996 hostage crisis were composed according to a strict Indonesian orthodoxy. Papuans did not necessarily accept this imposed framework passively. Shortly after the hostages were taken, the *Cenderawasih Pos* published a graphic featuring a picture of Kwalik’s head

¹⁰ D. Start, *The Open Cage* (London, 1997).

that was titled ‘A List of Kelly Kwalik’s Sins’ (Figure 5.2).¹¹ The cross-hair from a telescopic rifle sight is positioned squarely on the bridge of Kwalik’s nose. Elements in Figure 5.2 frame Kwalik as a fugitive who has escaped from justice. The magnifying glass in the upper left-hand corner hints at the search that the Indonesian military was conducting for Kwalik. A camouflaged hat sits on Kwalik’s head, marking his status as a soldier. His alleged ‘sins’ float around his face: he purportedly destroyed the slurry pipe of the mining corporation named Freeport McMoRan in 1977, killed a foreign national, planned the killing of 17 Amungme people, killed 5 students, caused ‘innocent’ villagers to be killed and ‘slaughtered’ 1 student. Papuans read beyond these representations. Independent of whether the ‘sins’ are true or false, many Papuan readers still point to this picture of Kwalik as that of a revolutionary hero. Some of these ‘sins’, such as destroying Freeport’s slurry pipe in 1977, are celebrated by the majority of Papuans. While ‘A List of Kelly Kwalik’s Sins’ was composed according to strict orthodox norms, by focusing on Kwalik the article implicitly acknowledged him

as a leader. The domestic Indonesian media and the foreign press were not able to ignore Kwalik’s actions against foreign nationals.

Unlike the murder of Arnold Ap, the media did not ignore the murder of Theys Eluay in November 2001. Due to Kwalik’s 1997 action and other Papuan acts of resistance, I argue that the media were already aware that there were contested

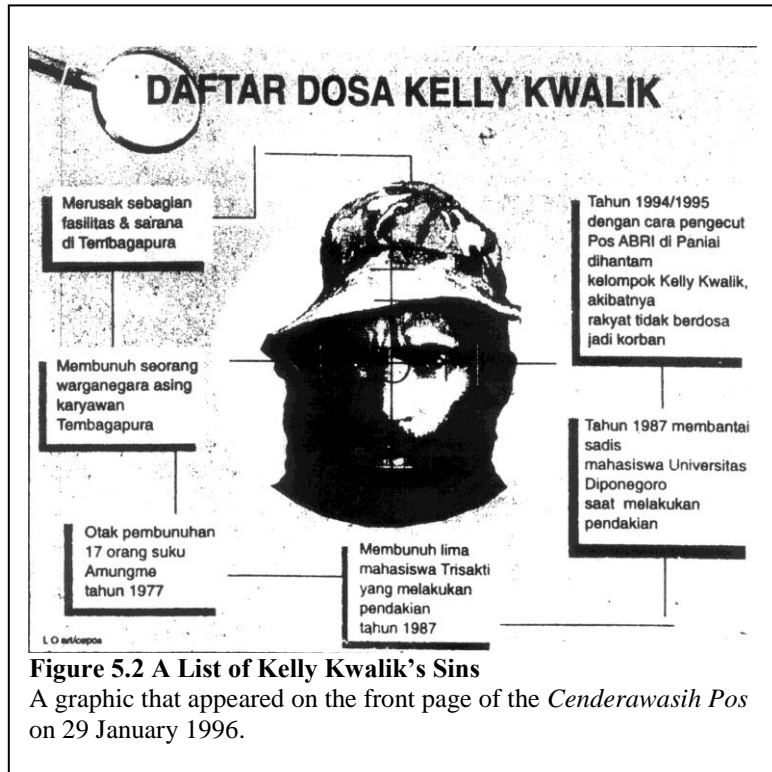


Figure 5.2 A List of Kelly Kwalik’s Sins
A graphic that appeared on the front page of the *Cenderawasih Pos* on 29 January 1996.

orthodox and heterodox perspectives about events in West Papua. The *Straights Times*, a Singaporean newspaper, neatly summed up the contested perspectives about the cause of Eluay’s death in a headline:

¹¹ ‘Daftar Dosa Kelly Kwalik’, *Cenderawasih Pos* (CEPOS), 29 January 1996, p. 1.

‘Indonesian police: Papua leader died of heart attack; Theys Eluay supporters: He was strangled.’¹² When Eluay’s body was found ‘his face was blackened, his tongue was hanging out—suggesting strangulation—and his stomach was bruised and bloodied’ according to eyewitness Aloysius Renwarin from the Papuan human rights NGO, Elsham.¹³ Security forces moved quickly to establish a natural cause of death backed by expert medical opinion. On the day that the body was found an autopsy was conducted by the director of the hospital in West Papua’s capital of Jayapura. The autopsy concluded—in a carefully worded statement—that a lack of oxygen was the cause of death ‘because his oxygen intake channel was blocked.’¹⁴

News reporters that followed the story of Eluay’s missing heart hint at the macabre culture of state violence that I have described above in Chapter Four. Apparently the authorities did not think that the initial autopsy results were satisfactory. During the autopsy, Eluay’s heart was removed from his body and, according to the initial reports, flown out of West Papua to a better-equipped medical lab.¹⁵ Eluay’s heart, however, did not arrive at the lab. A representative of the forensic department of the Cipto Mangunkusomo Hospital in Indonesia’s capital Jakarta stated: ‘We haven’t received it. And thus far, neither the police nor the hospital management has notified us.’¹⁶ According to an investigative reporter of the *Jakarta Post*, the missing heart never left West Papua.¹⁷

Thousands were meanwhile gathering for Eluay’s funeral in West Papua, unsure about burying the heartless body. The medical establishment again intervened on behalf of the state and ordered a rush for Eluay’s funeral. Doctors brought the date forward by a day due to ‘possible decomposition of the corpse.’¹⁸ Rev. Herman Awom, member of the Papuan Presidium Council and Director of West Papua’s GKI (Gereja Kristen Injil) church, agreed with the doctors and stated that Eluay would be buried ‘with or without the

¹² ‘Indonesian Police’, *The Straits Times* (ST), 13 November 2001, p. A4.

¹³ ‘Indonesian Police’, ST, p. A4.

¹⁴ ‘Thousands March’, AFP, 13 November 2001.

¹⁵ ‘Thousands March’, AFP.

¹⁶ ‘Family, Friends On Bury Theys on Saturday’, JP, 15 November 2001, p. 2.

¹⁷ ‘Tens of Thousands Expected to Attend Theys’s Funeral’, JP, 17 November 2001, p. 2.

¹⁸ ‘Doctor Orders Rush for Eluay Funeral’, *The Australian*, 16 November 2001, p. 10.



Figure 5.3 The Papuan Peoples Ask for Freedom. TPN troops preparing to greet Megawati in May 2000 near Enarotali. Thadius Yogi appears second from the right.

heart.’¹⁹ While the articles about Eluay’s heart did hint at Papuan heterodox critiques of the savage Indonesian state, they did not access deeper meanings of this event in indigenous Papuan terms.

News reporting about West Papua has not generally delved into the realm of the undiscussed to bring entirely new critiques into the realm of discussion. For example, media reporting about the May 2000 visit Megawati Sukarnoputri followed Indonesian nationalist norms even though she was challenged with heterodox Papuan nationalist aspirations. At the time Megawati was Indonesia’s Vice-President and she ousted President Wahid on 23 July 2001. Megawati flew around West Papua on a whistle-stop tour. The on-line edition of the *Jakarta Post* ran a story entitled ‘OPM supporters greet Megawati in Jayawijaya.’²⁰ This story described how an estimated 10,000 OPM members thronged to greet her at the highland airport of Wamena.

¹⁹ ‘Family, Friends On Bury Theys on Saturday’, JP, p. 2.

²⁰ ‘OPM supporters greet Megawati in Jayawijaya’, JP, 20 May 2000.

The following day, on 20 May, Megawati visited Enarotali, the other large administrative centre in the highlands. There she was greeted by Mee people running counter-clockwise around her helicopter in a raucous dance. The Mee were ready to engage in a dialogue about Papua's future. Dressed in grass skirts and penis sheaths they crowded around Megawati's helicopter while waving morning star flags and shouting a singsong chorus. In front of the crowd stood a group of TPN troops armed with bows and arrows. When Megawati stepped onto the tarmac the troops unveiled a sign that read 'The Papuan People Aspire to Ask for Freedom' (Figure 5.3). Seeing the TPN troops she 'suddenly pissed in her pants' by Mee accounts. Scrambling back up into the helicopter, Megawati was airborne within moments headed to her next destination in a coastal city.²¹

The English-language media made no mention of Megawati's momentary stop in Enarotali.²² Indeed, Megawati's own recollection of her visit to Enarotali may differ significantly from Mee accounts: perhaps immediately returned to her helicopter because she was simply on a tight schedule. While Megawati clearly disappointed the Mee by not engaging in a dialogue with them about independence, they remember her visit as a symbolic victory over the Indonesian government. Like the Wahgi of Papua New Guinea,²³ it seems that some Mee are proud to think that outsiders may be afraid of them.

I was asked to represent the encounter between Megawati and the Mee in heterodox terms. The picture in Figure 5.3 was given to me by Thadius Yogi, who is the regional commander of the TPN among the Mee. Yogi asked me to publish the picture so that the international community would know about him and his cause. In the course of my research I also discovered undiscussed doxa about Megawati's visit. There is evidence that Yogi was asked to stage this 'demonstration' to deliberately frighten Megawati and bolster funding requests by the regional military administration. Prior to Megawati's visit Colonel Armentony, who was the Head of Indonesian Military Intelligence for West Papua (Asintel Kasdam VIII/Trikora), met with Yogi.²⁴ Airdrops of rice, and, according to one source, money, were made by helicopter to Yogi's group before Megawati's visit. But apparently some of Armentony's promises were not fulfilled. I

²¹ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 9 April 2001.

²² 'OPM supporters greet Megawati in Jayawijaya', JP.

²³ M. O'Hanlon, *Reading the Skin* (Bathurst, Australia, 1989).

witnessed a demand made by Yogi to one of the members of the Regional People's Assembly (DPRD) about why the 'proceeds from the demonstration' (*hasil demo*) had not yet arrived.²⁵ Some urban Papuans question how Yogi obtained his colourful letterhead and elaborate uniforms (see Figures 3.3, p. 44; 3.4, p. 45; and 7.1, p. 89).²⁶ A seam of the uniform worn by Yogi is embossed with TNI-AD, the acronym for the Indonesian army.²⁷

The world-wide circulation of the *Jakarta Post* article about Megawati's visit can serve as a jumping-off point for a description of the communication network that is used by West Papua solidarity groups. An e-mail copy of this article arrived in my inbox shortly after it was published. It had been sent to me by Tapol, which is a London-based human rights NGO, via an e-mail discussion group called 'reg.westpapua' (a regional conference on West Papua). The *Jakarta Post* article about Megawati's visit was composed according to Indonesian orthodox norms. The article states: 'It was Megawati's father, Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, who led the country in freeing the territory from the Dutch on 1 May, 1963.'²⁸ It is thus counter-intuitive that that this article would be sent to the reg.westpapua news group which is described as 'English-Language news and discussion on issues related to politics, human rights, and self-determination for West Papua (Irian Jaya).'²⁹ Instructions to read against the grain of this article were included in the e-mail that posted it on the e-mail discussion list: 'Indonesia did not of course free West Papua from the Dutch as suggested by this piece; they merely replaced them as the colonial power.'³⁰ Readers of this article about Megawati's visit to West Papua's highlands undoubtedly interpreted it according to their own opinions, like the Papuans who read against the frame of 'Kelly Kwalik's Sins' as I discussed above.

The orthodox emplotment of the *Jakarta Post* article and the heterodox injunction to read against the grain, I argue, did little to change already established opinions of subscribers to the specialist reg.westpapua e-

²⁴ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 13 April 2001.

²⁵ Thadius Yogi, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 9 April, 2001.

²⁶ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Jayapura, West Papua, 30 March 2001.

²⁷ Personal observation, Paniai, West Papua, 12 April 2001.

²⁸ 'OPM supporters greet Megawati in Jayawijaya', JP.

²⁹ C. Scheiner, 'Topica E-mail List Directory' (2000).

³⁰ Tapol, 'JP: OPM Supporters Greet Megawati in Jayawijaya' (2000).

mail list. Subscription to the reg.westpapua news group is free and open to anyone. Currently there are the 248 subscribers.³¹ John O'Reilly, who is the Senior Vice President of External Affairs for BP Indonesia and a supporter of Indonesia's territorial integrity, mentioned in passing to me that he reads messages posted on Kabar Irian, another e-mail discussion group for West Papua supporters. These internet news networks are thus not bringing new doxa from the realm of the undiscussed into the universe of discourse, but are providing information that is used to reinforce existing opinions of individual subscribers.

Chapter Five Conclusion

In this chapter I have described a transition in the structure of media discourse about West Papua during the period of Indonesian occupation. Before the hostage crisis of 1996, there were few news stories published about West Papua in the English-language media. Arnold Ap's murder was largely ignored by the press. During this period Indonesia successfully enforced orthodox opinions in the media coverage West Papua: the existence of a Papuan nationalist movement and instances of savage state violence were not widely reported. Kelly Kwalik succeeded in drawing media attention to the self-determination movement in West Papua when he took hostages in 1996. Even though most media coverage of this event was composed according to Indonesian orthodox norms, by focusing on Kwalik they recognised the existence of heterodox opinion. Kwalik succeeded, I argue, in bringing Papuan heterodox opinion into the universe of the discussion. Unlike the *Generaal Peel* hostage crisis at the turn of the 20th Century, the change in the structure of discourse about West Papua following Kwalik's action has been sustained. New global communications technologies have now levelled the playing field between orthodox and heterodox opinion. However, these technologies have not brought new doxa into the realm of discussion.

³¹ Scheiner, 'Topica E-mail List Directory'.

The Wild Terrorist Gang

Chapter Six

In Indonesia taboos on names have been regulated by political policies and social conventions. Under the New Order government of President Suharto (1967-98) self-determination movements were not called by name in the media. Instead they were assigned symbolically charged acronyms. In this chapter I trace how the actual names of the self-determination movement in West Papua went from the tabooed realm of the undiscussed into the universe of media discourse. OPM is the most commonly used name used in the English media to loosely refer to any member of the self-determination movement in West Papua (Figure 6.1, p. 79). However, as I discussed above in Chapter Three, there are a variety of distinct independence organisations in West Papua that are affiliated in spirit and principle to the OPM, but that are operationally distinct entities. The reader may find it helpful to consult the list of abbreviations at the beginning of this dissertation to distinguish between the different independence organisations and the imposed government acronyms that I will discuss in this chapter. Both the Indonesian and English media have consistently blurred the distinctions between the different independence organisations in West Papua. The movement for self-determination in West Papua has essentially been portrayed as a terrorist organisation.

There is no clear consensus about how to translate the name OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*) into English: previous authors have variously translated it as the Free Papua Movement;¹ the Organisation of Independent Papua;² the Papuan Freedom Organisation;³ and the Free Papua Organisation.⁴ There have been few sustained attempts by Papuans to establish one of these translations as the ‘correct’ one. Many Papuans, however, strongly object to publications that have written that OPM stands for *Operasi Papua Merdeka*. These critics maintain that the substitution of *operasi*, which means a [military] operation, for

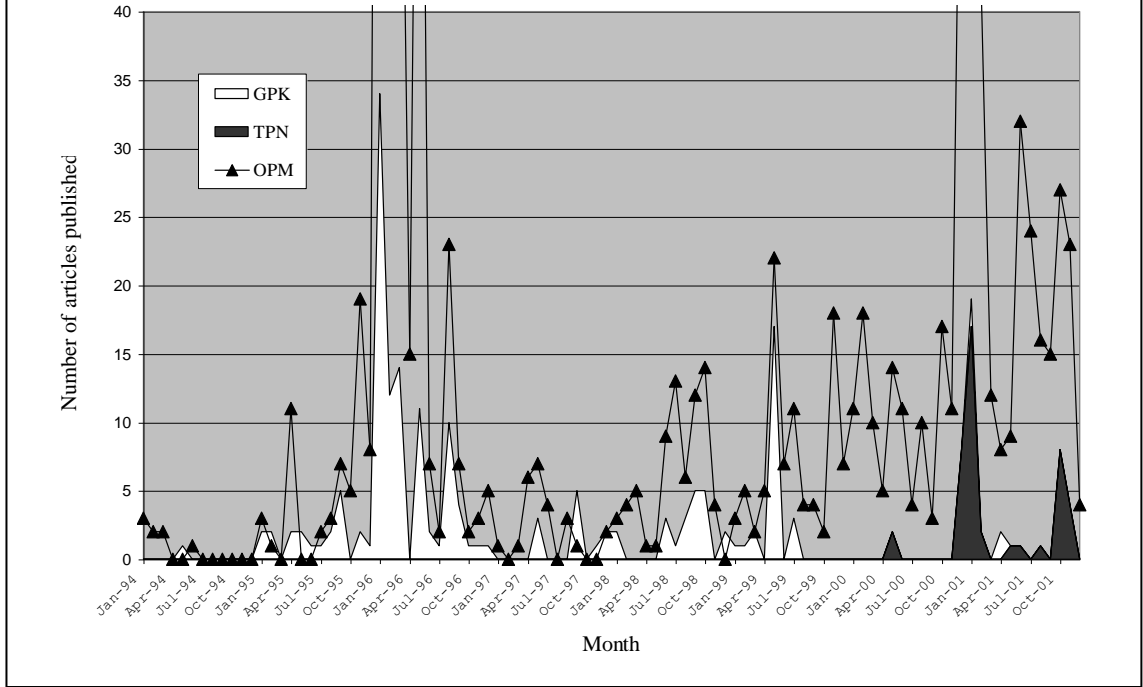
¹ Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War*, p. xiii; Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*, p. v.

² Department of Information, *OPM, Aftermath of Colonialism* (Jakarta, 1976), p. 9.

³ I. Hellberg, ‘Hostage Negotiation and Control of the Media’, *The Indonesian Quarterly* (1999), p. 84; J. Echols and H. Shadily, *Kamus Indonesia-Inggris* (Jakarta, 1990), p. 398.

⁴ May, ‘The United Nations Fiasco’, p. 179.

Figure 6.1 Breaking Taboos (OPM/GPK/TPN) OPM has consistently been the most prevalent name in the English-language news media for the self-determination movement in West Papua. Indonesia's official acronym for self-determination movements GPK (Security Disturbance Movement) has gradually been replaced by the Papuan name TPN (National Liberation Army) as the second most used name. Data from LexisNexis Executive news service. Cf. Figure 5.1.



organisasi is incorrect. This implies that the OPM is a military by nature, rather than a movement for freedom.

The effability principle maintains that everything expressed in one language is, in theory, translatable into a given target language: ‘[e]ach proposition can be expressed by some sentence in any natural language.’⁵ I maintain that the difficulties in translating the name OPM from Indonesian to English challenge this principle. In the lexicon of Suharto’s New Order the name OPM was strictly tabooed. In English there are no names of organisations that are tabooed in the same way. Publishing a story that merely uses the name IRA, for example, is not likely to result in closing of that newspaper by the government. Since it is not possible to clearly establish a one-to-one equivalent for the name OPM in English, I will describe the social and political associations of this name in the Indonesian press.

⁵ J. J. Katz, ‘Effability and Translation’ (1978), p. 209.

The publication of an article about the ‘OPM’ by Tempo newsmagazine on 26 October 1981 marked the rising interest of Indonesian press in West Papua and underscored the growing inability of the government to keep the region out of the public’s gaze.⁶ The publication of this story about an attack by Papuans on a jail in Abepura, which is near West Papua’s capital of Jayapura, further supports my argument in Chapter Five that Papuan violent resistance has brought their cause into the realm of discussion. While it is not clear that the Papuan assailants on the jail in Abepura had any formal connections with independence organisations the *Tempo* article brands them as ‘*Gerombolan pengacau Papua Merdeka*’ and later awkwardly as ‘*Gerombolan Pengacau Liar* (GPL) “Papua Merdeka”’ and finally simply as ‘OPM.’

The designation GPL or *Gerombolan Pengacau Liar* followed a naming convention at the time that was established by the military and enforced by the Ministry of Information. The term GPL was also applied to other self-determination movements in Indonesia such as the GAM in Acéh and Falintil/Fretilin in East Timor. Both Osborne and Budiardjo & Liem translate the term GPL as ‘Wild Terrorist Gangs’.⁷ I have appropriated this translation as a provocative title for this chapter. Few other authors have attempted an English translation of GPL. According to Echols & Shadily, authors of the authoritative Indonesian-English Dictionary, each of the words that make up this acronym is loaded with negative connotations: *gerombolan* means ‘gang, band (of thieves, etc.)’; *pengacau* (from *kacau*) signifies ‘agitator, disturber of the peace’; and *liar* connotes ‘1. wild, primitive (animal, tribe, etc.). 2. wild, illegal, unauthorised (school, organisation, etc.).’⁸ Official Indonesian language about heterodox independence organisations thus explicitly painted Papuan aspirations as illegitimate.

In the early 1980s the official Indonesian name for domestic terrorist groups was changed from GPL to GPK (*Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan*). In several respects this new term is sanitised when compared with GPL. The word *gerakan* means ‘movement’ as in dance steps, a political process, or a military advance.⁹ *Keamanan*, from the root *aman*, signifies security, safety, peacefulness, and tranquillity.¹⁰ In the words of

⁶ Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*; ‘Peristiwa 9 Oktober Itu’, *Tempo*, 24 October 1981, p. 88.

⁷ Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*, p. viii; Budiardjo and Liem, *West Papua*, p. v.

⁸ Echols and Shadily, *Kamus Indonesia-Inggris*, pp. 187, 252, 342.

⁹ Echols and Shadily, *Kamus Indonesia-Inggris*, p. 185.

¹⁰ Echols and Shadily, *Kamus Indonesia-Inggris*, p. 14.

the *Jakarta Post*, the English daily newspaper based in Indonesia, ‘GPK is the Indonesian acronym for *Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan* (Security Disturbance Movement), the military term used to refer to separatist rebel groups.’¹¹ While the explicit meaning of GPK is subtler than GPL, it is nonetheless loaded with negative connotations.

There has been a degree of slippage between the terms GPL and GPK. As late as 1996, more than a decade after the official change in terminology, both *Kompas* and *Cenderawasih Pos* ran stories about the *Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan* or the GPK.¹² This, perhaps unintentional, substitution of *gerombolan* (gang) for *gerakan* (movement) indicates that in many Indonesian minds the terms GPL and GPK are interchangeable.

In the eyes of Indonesians the acronym OPM has come to have the same negative associations as the official government nomenclature for self-determination movements. Many Indonesian newspaper articles have used the name OPM as an interchangeable term first for GPL and later for GPK. A 1996 article in *Kompas* variously names Kelly Kwalik’s group as ‘*Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan (GPK) Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM)*’; ‘GPK OPM’; and ‘*kelompok separatis OPM*’ (the OPM separatist group).¹³ In 1996 the *Tifa Irian* (now *Tifa Papua*) labels Kwalik’s followers as ‘*gerombolan pengacau keamanan (GPK) Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM)*’; ‘GPK’; and ‘GPK/OPM.’¹⁴ The blurring of these distinctions has made the name OPM itself illegitimate in the Indonesian lexicon. Additionally it blurs distinctions between different independence organisations: as the reader may remember from Chapters Three and Five Kwalik’s group calls itself the TPN.

Even though they were legally bound to use the mandated names for self-determination movements from the Ministry of Information, Papuan news sources employed these names to convey heterodox messages. In 1996, *Tifa Irian* published an article comparing the GPK in contemporary Papua with the GPK in colonial

¹¹ ‘Military launches Irian operation’, JP, 15 May 1996, p. 1.

¹² ‘Kemampuan GPK Culik-Ancam Rakyat’, CEPOS, 29 January 1996, pp. 1; 7.; ‘24 Orang Diculik di Lembah Baliem’, *Kompas*, 11 January 1996, p. 1.

¹³ ‘24 Orang Diculik di Lembah Baliem’, *Kompas*, p. 1.

¹⁴ ‘Kronologis Peristiwa Penyanderaan GPK di Mapduma’, *Tifa Irian (Tifa)* 3rd Week January 1996, p. 6.

Java under the Dutch.¹⁵ In a clever appropriation and manipulation of official discourse this article questions whether Indonesians used tactics that are similar to current GPK groups to fight Dutch colonisers.

In January 1996 *Tifa Irian* published an article criticising the slippage in the Indonesian media between the terms GPK and OPM. Citing Theys Eluay, the Papuan leader whose murder was discussed in Chapter Five, the article states ‘the GPK cannot be identified with the OPM. The GPK is a gang (*gerombolan*) that works to disturb the order and the peace enjoyed by the people, while the OPM is an organisation that is in pursuit of chances for the independence of the Papuan Homeland.’¹⁶ In this interview with *Tifa* Eluay attempted to distinguish between the armed rebels in the jungle, and the rest of the Papuan people who desire freedom through the cultural institution of the OPM.

In October 1999 Indonesian President Wahid abolished the Ministry of Information and initiated sweeping changes in Indonesia’s media regulations.¹⁷ The regulations requiring the Indonesian national media to use the term GPK were abandoned. Interestingly the English-language media virtually ceased using the name GPK to describe the self-determination movement in West Papua in August 1999, before the closure of the Ministry of Information (Figure 6.1, p. 79). However, major media outlets in Indonesia have continued to name the self-determination movement in West Papua as GPK even though this is no longer a legal requirement.¹⁸

In May 2000 the *Jakarta Post* published the first English-language news article with the name TPN (National Liberation Army) that is indexed on LexisNexis.¹⁹ This article used the phrase ‘Free Papua Organisation (TPN OPM)’ to distinguish this group from the Papuan Presidium that was holding a congress. Since this time there have been an increasing number of news articles published about the TPN in the English-language news media (Figure 6.1, p. 79).

¹⁵ ‘Perbedaan Persepsi Tolok Ukur Perhatian’, *Tifa*, 3rd Week of January 1996, p. 2.

¹⁶ ‘Mau Merdeka, Kok Minta Obat dan Rokok...’, *Tifa*, 3rd Week January 1996, p. 6.

¹⁷ K. Sen and D. Hill, *Media, Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁸ See also ‘Four OPM Groups Still Trouble Freeport Indonesia and Locals’, *Indonesian Observer*, April 2001.; ‘16 GPK Members Arrested in Manokwari’, *Antara*, 19 May 2001;

On a local level in West Papua there has been an effort by the military to replicate New Order naming practices now that derogatory acronyms for self-determination movements have been officially abolished on a national level. In October 2001, Major-General Mahidin Simbolon, who heads the regional military command for West Papua, tried to enforce a new name for the TPN/OPM. His new acronym 'KSB' stands for 'Kelompok Separatis Bersenjata' or 'Armed Separatist Group.'²⁰ The name KSB has not yet been adopted by domestic and foreign media outlets. As of late December 2001 only a single news story, which was about Simbolon's announcement concerning the new terminology, had been published in *Infopapua.com*.²¹ To date there have been no English-language news articles indexed on LexisNexis that name the self-determination movement in West Papua as KSB.

Chapter Six Conclusion

In New Order Indonesia social norms against voicing heterodox opinions about self-determination movements were reinforced by explicit government policies that banned the naming of these organisations. Self-determination movements quite literally were not discussed in the media. As the actual names of the self-determination movement in West Papua moved from the realm of the undiscussed into discussion a process of slippage has taken place: the names OPM and TPN came to be seen as synonymous with the government-imposed derogatory labels GPL and GPK. The blurring of distinctions between the names of peaceful political groups and armed freedom fighters allowed the Indonesian government, until very recently, to frame requests for social and economic equity as threats to Indonesian national security and territorial integrity. As with the naming of good people/bad people, *plopper*/Papuan and separatist/civilian that I described in Section Two, these names are directly linked to the provision of political, economic and military resources. By naming the OPM as terrorists Indonesia is seeking to gain global support for their domestic conflicts.

¹⁹ 'Papua congress to "rectify" history opens in Irian Jaya', JP, May 30, 2000.

²⁰ 'Hotspots of Violence and Brutality Emerging in Many Parts of West Papua', *AWPA Newsletter*, 26 October 2001.

²¹ 'Pangdam XVII Trikora Siapa Itu TPN-OPM', *Infopapua.com*, (2001)

Articulating Freedom

Chapter Seven

Indigenous resistance throughout Melanesia has been framed as ‘cargo cult’ activity or ‘millenarian madness’ and as such ignored as legitimate political action.¹ In *The Trumpet Shall Sound*, Peter Worsley blurs the distinction between cargo cults and millenarian movements: ‘In these movements, a prophet announces the imminence of the end of the world in a cataclysm which will destroy everything. Then the ancestors will return, or God, or some other liberating power, will appear, bringing all the goods the people desire, and ushering in a reign of eternal bliss. The people therefore prepare themselves for the Day by setting up cult-organisations, and by building storehouses, jetties, and so on to receive the goods, known as “cargo” in the local pidgin English.’² A wide variety of distinct entities are lumped together by this definition. While Worsley recognised that cargo cults and millenarian movements are not unique to Melanesia his work has been an influential guide for interpretations of indigenous resistance by scholars and colonial administrators of the region in general, and West Papua in particular.³

I will employ articulation theory to argue that the self-determination movement in West Papua is not a cargo cult or a millenarian movement. In other words, resistance in West Papua has not been exclusively motivated by a desire for material wealth and by expectations of salvation. The seeds of articulation theory were, in a sense, already present in Worsley’s analysis. Indeed, he is cited by Ernesto Laclau, one of the initial developers of articulation theory.⁴ Worsley described the articulation of Christian theology and indigenous cosmology to the desire for political freedom and material goods: ‘The millenarian movement...brings together, for the first time, social units which have not only been separate from each other—though possessing some cultural links—but often even hostile.’⁵ I am arguing that there is not a

¹ Reviewed in D. Dalton, ‘Introduction’, *Oceania*, vol. 70, 4 (2000), pp. 285-293.

² P. Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound* (London, 1957), p. 11.

³ B. Giay, and J. Godschalk, ‘Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today’, *Oceania*, vol. 63, 4 (1993), pp. 330-344; ARA, No. 2.10.25, Microfische Cabinet D15C, ‘Vertrouwelijk Schrijven Aangaande Cargo-Cult in het Achterland van Serai’, 23 February 1962.

⁴ E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (London, 1982), p. 146.

⁵ Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound*, p. 230.

core of essential characteristics that define a ‘cargo cult’ or ‘millenarian movement.’ Instead the different ideological elements of indigenous resistance movements retain their hostility to one another and can, in the right context, break away.⁶

James Clifford has recently described a new way of understanding what he calls ‘indigenous articulations.’⁷ In the words of Stuart Hall ‘a theory of articulation is both a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects.’⁸ Like bourgeoisie ideology,⁹ Papuan resistance is motivated by a wide variety of discourses and politics: nationalism, Christian theology, the Y2K bug, environmentalism, *hongi* fleets from Tidore, Japanese followed by American liberators, indigenous ideologies of Koreri and Bunani, human rights, capitalism, local myths, development, non-violence and violence. Papuans have not been inextricably bound to any one of these forces since each of these elements has nothing that intrinsically demands inclusion in the movement.

The idea of *merdeka* (freedom) is the powerful force that links heterogeneous elements into a unified front of Papuan resistance. This Indonesian word has a long etymological history that can be traced to the Portuguese rendering of *Maharddhika*, which is Sanskrit for ‘great man’ or ‘high and mighty.’¹⁰ The old Dutch ethnic term for non-Indonesian Asians who were descended from freed slaves in seventeenth-century Batavia, the *Mardijkers*, was the next permutation of this concept. In colonial Java *mardikar* came to mean an area that was free of taxes and obligations to the colonial government.¹¹ Once the rallying cry of Indonesia in the struggle for independence from the Netherlands, *merdeka* has come to be viewed by Indonesians as being associated with separatist demands in West Papua. In contemporary West Papua, as will be discussed in detail in this chapter, *merdeka* has more subtle and intricate meanings. In Chapter

⁶ Cf. J. Clifford, ‘Indigenous Articulations’, *The Contemporary Pacific* (2001), p. 472.

⁷ Clifford, ‘Indigenous Articulations’.

⁸ S. Hall and L. Grossberg, ‘On Postmodernism and Articulation’, *Journal of Communication Inquiry* (1986), p. 53.

⁹ Cf. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, pp. 93-9.

¹⁰ J. G. Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1983), p. 47.

¹¹ P. Carey, personal communication, Oxford, 19 April 2002.

Three I have already demonstrated that one important Papuan meaning of *merdeka* is the desire for geopolitical freedom. This final chapter of my dissertation will explore other dimensions of Papuan aspirations for *merdeka* that have largely been relegated to the realm of the undiscussed in the face of Indonesian orthodoxy and Papuan nationalist heterodoxy.

Today it is a common saying that all Papuans are members of the *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (OPM). This movement literally embodies *merdeka* and has effectively resisted Indonesia by employing flexible organisational principles to adapt to a variety of historical, political and cultural contexts. The OPM has come to have a powerful currency that cuts across traditional cultural boundaries.¹² American anthropologist Brigham Golden describes contemporary Papuan interpretations of *merdeka* as ‘a liberation theology....of moral salvation in which [there is] a Christian desire for a world of human dignity and divine justice.’¹³ Many contemporary Papuans articulate geopolitical discourse with these beliefs. One man admonished me: ‘the Netherlands along with Indonesia, America, and the UN must resolve this problem. If not, watch out: God will become angry!’¹⁴ However, many Dutch Franciscan missionaries who have worked in the Mee area are uneasy about the fact that their teachings have inspired Papuan aspirations for *merdeka*.¹⁵

Despite the powerful link made by Papuans between Christianity and *merdeka*, the relationship between indigenous religion (*adat*) and state recognised religion (*agama*) is fraught with tension. Christian missionaries have often come into direct conflict with practitioners of indigenous Papuan religions. In Chapter Two I described how the Yali killed two missionaries who were pressuring them to burn their ‘fetishes.’ In 1950 Zakheus Pakage returned to his home among the Mee, after being trained in Christian theology in Sydney, and initiated a subtler conflict with foreign missionaries. He began to preach a hybrid form of religion that fused Christian theology with indigenous cosmology.¹⁶ The Mee formed a new

¹² See for example Ballard, ‘Signature of Terror’, p. 29-51; Giay and Godschalk, ‘Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today’; Golden, ‘Letter to the Editor’; Kirksey, ‘I Eat Anything’; J. Timmer, ‘Living with Intricate Futures’ (Katholieke Universiteit, Nijmegen, doctoral thesis, 2000).

¹³ Golden, ‘Letter to the Editor’, p. 1.

¹⁴ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 13 April 2001.

¹⁵ Kiki van Bilsen, personal communication via telephone, Delft, the Netherlands, 19 March 2002.

¹⁶ B. Giay, *Zakheus Pakage and His Communities* (Amsterdam, 1995), p. 61.

religion called Bunani that was based on the teachings of Zakheus, who they regarded as an incarnation of Jesus Christ.¹⁷ The Dutch perceived the Bunani as a threat and jailed Zakheus in 1955. An uprising took place on 4 November 1956 in the Mee village of Obano where the resident missionaries, who originated from Ambon, were killed along with their young children.¹⁸ This rebellion later spread throughout the Paniai region and the Dutch authorities responded by launching a two-month military campaign.¹⁹ Contemporary Bunani consider themselves part of the OPM: they link the next coming of Zakheus (Christ) with *merdeka* from Indonesia.²⁰ They believe that they have the true Papuan religion that will form the basis of the national church once independence is gained.

Many contemporary Biaks similarly articulate *merdeka* with an indigenous religious movement called Koreri, which anticipates the coming of a new world that is free of disease and that has plentiful food. Koreri has successively been perceived as a political threat by Tidorese, Dutch, Japanese, and Indonesian rulers.²¹ In the early 1850s a series of ‘prophets’ were reported to be active on West Papua’s west coast and in the Cenderawasih Bay area.²² In 1855 when a Koreri prophet declared that no more tribute would be paid to Tidore.²³ The Koreri movement, like the Bunani, also maintained a degree of hostility towards missionaries. Missionaries were accused of ripping out the first page of the Bible where it was written that Jesus was really their hero Manggundi.²⁴ But the origins of Koreri are not to be found in Christianity: ‘In the early years...the Mission can be ruled out as a possible direct cause of the movements. The historical outline moreover, provides 18 instances of movements arising in places where the Mission had not yet arrived.’²⁵

¹⁷ Giay, *Zakheus Pakage and His Communities*, pp. 206-7.

¹⁸ Giay, *Zakheus Pakage and His Communities*, pp. 92-3.

¹⁹ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 13 April 2001; Giay, *Zakheus Pakage and His Communities*, p. 93.

²⁰ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Paniai, West Papua, 11 April 2001.

²¹ Kamma, *Koreri*, pp. 102-153; J. A. D. Roemajauw, personal communication, Oxford, 28 September 2001.

²² ‘Koloniën’, NRC, 15 November 1852, p. 1; ‘Koloniën’, NRC, 20 March 1854, p. 2.

²³ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 216.

²⁴ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 161.

²⁵ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 215.

The Christian Church in West Papua has served as an institutionalised vehicle for the message of *merdeka* that is difficult for the State to combat. On 6 April 2001, during the 39th Anniversary Celebration of the GKII (*Gereja Kristen Injil Indonesia*) Church in West Papua, my research assistant Rev. Markus Iyai delivered a sermon in Nabire to the District Police Chief (Kapolres), the District Head (Bupati), a visiting foreigner (myself) and an assembled audience of over 1000 Papuans. Iyai's sermon was peppered with the word *merdeka*, but none of the Indonesian officials batted an eyelid.

On a local level many Papuans expected direct material rewards for converting to Christianity. The book provocatively titled *No Tobacco, No Hallelujah*, illustrates that within Papuan villages missionaries used worldly wealth as a metaphor for greater spiritual rewards.²⁶ Some Papuans have suspected that missionaries hold the key to vast material wealth. A missionary working in the Lani village of Soba was overheard talking on a short wave radio with the deputy chairman of the Regional Assembly of Representatives (DPRD) about gold (see Map Two). The Lani became convinced that the missionary held some secret that could release the natural wealth of the area: 'The people had accepted the Gospel all along, all the church buildings had been completed; so now the time had come for the secret to be revealed.'²⁷ These aspirations were linked to the self-determination movement by Giay and Godschalk in the narrative structure of an article titled 'Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today.' A section of the article titled 'Cargo Talk at Soba' was immediately followed by a section about 'The West Melanesia Movement.'²⁸ Despite this narrative emplotment, the expectation of gold at Soba was not linked to socio-political resistance. In fact, a Lani leader who encouraged his people's hopes about gold also encouraged them to stop resisting Indonesian government officials who wanted to relocate their village.²⁹ Thus, *merdeka* can be separate from Papuan desires for salvation and economic development.

While the missionary in Soba did not possess the technical or business skills that would be necessary to mine the gold in Lani territory she did hold a key, of sorts, to the vast material wealth of the international church network. The Protestant Church provided institutional support for the *merdeka* movement during

²⁶ M. Smedts, *No Tobacco, No Hallelujah* (London, 1955).

²⁷ Giay and Godschalk, 'Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today', p. 337.

²⁸ Giay and Godschalk, 'Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today', pp. 336-41.

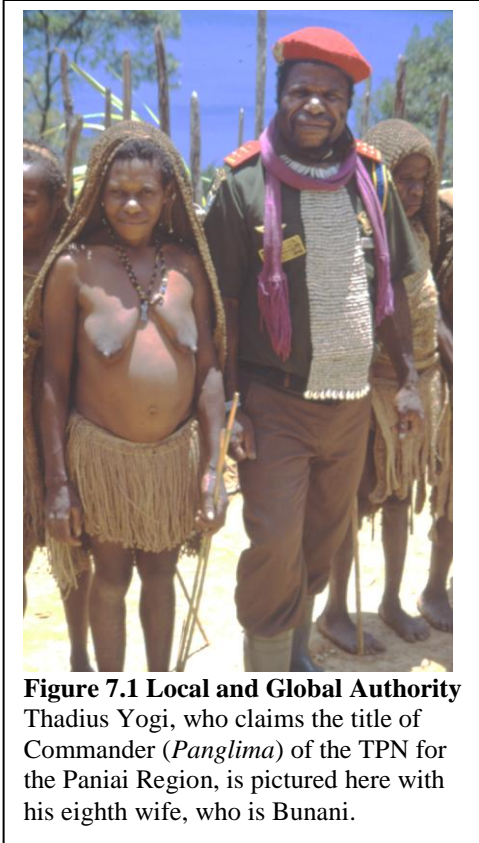


Figure 7.1 Local and Global Authority
Thadius Yogi, who claims the title of Commander (*Panglima*) of the TPN for the Paniai Region, is pictured here with his eighth wife, who is Bunani.

the Second International Solidarity Conference on West Papua in October 2001. This conference, hosted by a missionary organisation called Missionswerk, took place in Neuendettelsau, a small village in Germany with one of the highest concentrations of pastors in the world. Within Papuan villages where missionaries have worked, the flow of political and economic resources has been linked to faith. Now similar processes are at work on an international scale.

Worsley's 'cargo cult' model suggests that believers have incomplete and irrational understandings of economics.³⁰ However, it is clear that Papuan societies have an understanding of microeconomic principles. While the Oge

Bage Mee refer to the coming of state (*pemerintah*) and religion (*agama*) as marking major breaks with their past, they do not talk about industrial economics bringing about a 'great transformation'.³¹ Sophisticated traditional economies functioned in West Papua prior to the establishment of colonial rule.³² Indonesian Rupiah have come to be used by the Mee for the same types of economic transactions that had been conducted with cowry shells, which had previously been imported from the coast. The neighbouring Wodani peoples continue to use cowries to pay for ritual services, bride wealth, pigs, salt, manufactured objects and manual labour.³³

While Papuan societies may resemble our own in terms of the rules that govern micro-economic exchanges, they have divergent explanations of macro-economic processes. According to Koreri mythology there are two heroes named Kuri and Pasai from the mountains of the Wasior region who left West Papua

²⁹ Giay and Godschalk, 'Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today', p. 338.

³⁰ Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound*, pp.238-239.

³¹ Kirksey, 'I Eat Anything', p. 117.

³² See for example L. J. Pospisil, *The Kapauku Papuans of West New Guinea* (London, 1963), p. 18.

³³ S. Breton, 'Social Body and Icon of the Person' (2000), p. 558.

long ago in pursuit of adventures: Kuri went east and Pasai went west. When Pasai returns, Biaks believe, he will bring goods from the west and will usher in a time of abundance.³⁴ The Oge Bage Mee told me related stories about a single man named Kugi Pasai who created sago, sweet potatoes, pigs, taro, deer and kangaroos. The ancestors became angry with Kugi Pasai so he fled to America where he created things like factories, clothing, cars and planes. The Oge Bage Mee await the return of Kugi Pasai with great anticipation, saying that his coming will herald *merdeka* and the construction of a large city on their land.³⁵

Similarly the Bunani articulate *merdeka* with the construction of a new mega-city on their land and the next coming of Christ: they believe that since Jesus does not want to tread on muddy ground he is waiting for the region to be developed before returning.³⁶ However, there are internal tensions among the Bunani about the relationship of material wealth to their movement. In the early days of the Bunani movement Zakheus urged his followers to abandon the pursuit of cowry shells.³⁷ The idea of *merdeka* is so powerful that it has motivated the Bunani to overcome these tensions within their own belief system about material wealth and provide direct economic support to TPN freedom fighters.³⁸ In addition to economic support, Thadius Yogi, the TPN commander in Mee territory, is dependent on the Bunani for a cultural mandate: he is pictured in Figure 7.1 with his eighth wife, who is Bunani. Wearing camouflaged fatigues and a valuable cowry shell necklace, Yogi simultaneously appeals to local and global sources of authority.

TPN troops depend on villagers throughout West Papua to supply them with food and other basic necessities. In 2001, Brother Theo van den Broek of the Jayapura Diocese conducted a seminar about violence in a highlands village. He asked the seminar participants to imagine that they were each given a large sum of money and provided with two options: they could either keep the money for themselves or use it to provide TPN soldiers with guns. The group initially hesitated since they knew of the men described above who wrapped umbrellas in cloth to look like guns. They were sceptical that the TPN soldiers would be able to procure real guns. After van den Broek assured the group that in this hypothetical situation he

³⁴ Kamma, *Koreri*, p. 142.

³⁵ Kirksey, 'I Eat Anything', pp. 117-8.

³⁶ Giay, *Zakheus Pakage and His Communities*, p. 227.

³⁷ Giay, *Zakheus Pakage and His Communities*, p. 176.

³⁸ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Paniai, 11 April 2001.

would personally ensure that the money would be used to purchase guns, all of the seminar participants unanimously said that they would donate their money to outfit the TPN. The TPN troops, however, do not enjoy unlimited support from all Papuan civilians. One of my interlocutors accused Thadius Yogi of stealing food and money from villagers.³⁹

Some Papuans have attempted to form transnational corporations, like those who formed symbols of nationalism described above. In 1989, a charismatic Mee man founded *Freeport Yawudi Nota* (Freeport Wealth Distribution). The name Freeport was appropriated from Freeport McMoRan, a corporation based in New-Orleans that operates a large gold and copper mine in West Papua's south. The charismatic man intended to conduct gold exploration himself thereby pre-empt any corporations that wanted to unjustly exploit Mee natural resources. Revenues were to fund Mee socio-economic needs and purchase guns to drive out the Indonesians. Once the Indonesians heard of these plans they arrested the leader and beat him to the point of near death.⁴⁰

The idea of *merdeka* also includes beliefs that can more readily be linked to ideas of ecology than economy. Viktor Kaisiepo, a Papuan leader exiled in the Netherlands, defines *merdeka* as interdependence rather than independence: he advocates linking ideas about sustainability to definitions of *merdeka*.⁴¹ *Merdeka* should mean self-sufficiency in terms of food production and access to clean water free from pollution. According to Kaisiepo, OPM membership goes beyond the realm of humans: in West Papua every rock, tree, fish, and even nature (*alam*) itself is a member of the OPM. The forest has been known to kill Indonesians: malarial mosquitoes, venomous white snakes, and the trees themselves are foot soldiers of the OPM.⁴² There is an OPM member among the Mee who is said to have the power to become a mosquito and fly around in an invisible form. The man has already killed seven Indonesian military troops by infecting them with malaria.⁴³ The Mee also believe that there is a type of female demon called *tameyai* who lives in the forest and regularly kills Indonesian soldiers. These beautiful she-demons invite soldiers to have sex with them.

³⁹ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 13 April 2001.

⁴⁰ Giay and Godschalk, 'Cargoism in Irian Jaya Today', pp. 334; 343-4.

⁴¹ Cf. the informant of James Clifford who maintains that 'independence and *interdependence* were inseparable', Clifford, 'Indigenous Articulations', p. 474.

⁴² Viktor Kaisiepo, telephone interview, Utrecht, the Netherlands, 11 September 2001.

⁴³ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Paniai, West Papua, 9 April 2001.

Those who sleep with the demon die after returning to their barracks. It is said that in one night a *tameyai* killed 13 soldiers. Once when the *tameyai* was particularly playful she disappeared as a soldier tried to mount her. His 'thing' (*barang*) entered the earth and he immediately died.⁴⁴

Papuans believe that the power of nature (*alam*) has a wide reach. On the 8 January 2001, a twin-prop plane carrying 10 members of the Indonesian military elite in West Papua crashed into a mountain. None of the passengers, including the region's top military commander and newly appointed provincial police chief, survived the crash.⁴⁵ According to my Lani interlocutors, who live in the Baliem Valley near the crash site, the plane did not crash because of technical problems: one man said that 'something pushed them.'⁴⁶ Indonesian government sources ruled out the possibility that the OPM had sabotaged the plane.⁴⁷ My Lani interlocutor believed that nature (*alam*) intervened on the behalf of the OPM and caused the plane to crash.

Chapter Seven Conclusion

The OPM has become the most important cultural force uniting heterogeneous Papuan groups that have the common goal of independence from Indonesia. I have demonstrated that the persistence of the OPM, in resisting Indonesian rule for nearly forty years, is linked to its flexible organisational structure, or rather, its anti-organisational constitution. By being able to rapidly link and dis-articulate different elements with the idea of *merdeka*, this ideology has been able to survive as a unifying force. Building on Chapter Three, I argue that the OPM is not a Weberian bureaucracy that is 'dehumanised' through the elimination 'from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal...and emotional elements which escape calculation.'⁴⁸ Rather, the OPM is perpetuated by deep beliefs that are pervasive throughout Papuan societies. As I discussed in Chapter Six the media has portrayed the OPM as inherently violent by associating them with a number of distinct Papuan organisations that employ tactics of armed resistance. I argue that the contemporary OPM is not an armed band of guerrillas. It is a cultural movement with a broad base of

⁴⁴ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Enarotali, West Papua, 9 April 2001.

⁴⁵ 'Indonesia Rules out Plane Sabotage', BBC, 9 January 2001.

⁴⁶ Anonymous, tape-recorded interview, Wamena, West Papua, 31 March 2001.

⁴⁷ 'Indonesia Rules out Plane Sabotage', BBC.

⁴⁸ Weber, 'Technical Advantages of Bureaucratic Organization', p. 216.

support. The indigenous myths and metaphors associated with *merdeka* have produced a unified worldview, a powerful linking force, that unites Papuans in their resistance against Indonesia.

James Clifford has described how indigenous myths and contemporary political struggles can be articulated together. During planning committee meetings at the Portland Museum of Art in Oregon, a Tlingit elder named Amy Marvin told Clifford a story about how one of the artefacts in the collection relates to the loss of tribal lands:

A headdress representing an octopus is brought out. So she tells an octopus story about an enormous monster that blocks the whole bay with its tentacles and keeps the salmon from coming in.... By the end of the story the octopus has metamorphosed into state and federal agencies currently restricting the rights of Tlingit to take salmon according to tradition... And an older man...[says] that he could feel her emotions as she spoke. He is weeping. The Glacier Bay story reminds him, he says, of how he used to fish and trap there. Now the same monster is coming underneath our canoe again. The land's being taken from us, and that's why I'm telling this. We're sharpening our knives, so to speak. Words are that strong, he says.⁴⁹

It is possible to imagine a future where indigenous discourses would come to have broader political implications beyond committees that decide how museum objects will be displayed. Like the Unity movement (aka Mau Mau) in Kenya, the OPM desire a new geopolitical order based on indigenous epistemologies.⁵⁰

Merdeka has helped resolve the inherent hostilities between missionary Christian theology and indigenous religion; global capitalism and indigenous subsistence; environmental sustainability and desires for a megacity; and violence and non-violence. Articulation theory does provide theoretical tools for going beyond the essentialisms of Worsley's 'cargo-cult' to model how these elements can adhere to or be disassociated from the *merdeka* concept in particular social, cultural or political contexts. However, articulation theory cannot explain everything. Pushed to the extremes it 'can take you to a point where every cultural form, every structure or restructuration, every connection and disconnection, has a radical contingency as if, at any moment, anything were possible.'⁵¹ Once geopolitical freedom is obtained by West Papua it will be interesting to see if the other components of *merdeka* survive as an articulated concept.

⁴⁹ J. Clifford, *Routes* (London, 1997), pp. 189-90.

⁵⁰ J. M. Kariuki, *Mau Mau Detainee* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 53-4.

⁵¹ Clifford, 'Indigenous articulations', p. 481.

Going Beyond the State

Conclusion

Conclusion: Going Beyond the State

The main argument of this dissertation has three components: 1) Papuan resistance is not organised according to Weberian bureaucratic principles; 2) instead resistance is motivated by an ideology that links local myths to geopolitical freedom, environmentalism, Christian theology, capitalism and other elements; 3) a majority of Papuans in rural areas desire more than freedom from foreign occupation—they desire that a non-state form of government be instituted.

Papuan aspirations of going beyond the state have been buried under several layers of discourse. Indonesian institutions such as the Ministry of Information and the National Academy of Science (LIPI)—in conjunction with semi-public exhibitions of torture and killings—were able to enforce a near monopoly on opinion about West Papua during the New Order regime (1966-98). Papuans were portrayed as savage primitives and the territory of West Papua was mapped as part of the unitary Republic of Indonesia. During this period the primary way that Papuans were able to challenge these institutionalised opinions in the international media was to engage in physical violence. The most dramatic example of this was when Kelly Kwalik took a Cambridge University Expedition hostage in 1996 and thereby increased the amount of media coverage on West Papua exponentially. Competing poles of orthodox and heterodox opinions were discussed as a result of these Papuan actions. Both Indonesians and Papuans employ a set of names, historical events and discourses to establish their opinions as legitimate. This can be plotted as a series of binary oppositions: calling the territory Irian Jaya vs. calling the territory West Papua; the 1969 ‘Act of Free Choice’ when 1,025 Papuan leaders ‘unanimously’ voted to join Indonesia vs. the 1 December 1961 formation of the West New Guinea Council; killing Papuan separatists vs. killing Indonesian occupiers; naming the GPL/GPK (Wild Terrorist Gang/Security Disturbance Gang) vs. naming the TPN/OPM (National Liberation Army/Organisation of Papuan Freedom); and stories about Papuan cannibalism vs. stories about Indonesian state savagery. The tension and public struggles between these binary oppositions have effectively hidden profound—and potentially radical—Papuan critiques about the nature of state governance.

Brubaker and Laitin have argued that in the global world order of the late modern and post-Cold War period there has been a decay of Weberian forms of organisation.¹ In West Papua it seems that resistance has never taken a stable Weberian form of organisation. In the words of Appadurai ‘the dominant, Weberian prophecy about modernity in which earlier, intimate social forms would dissolve, to be replaced by highly regimented bureaucratic-legal orders, governed by the growth of procedure and predictability’ has not been fulfilled.² Around the world—in Ireland, Palestine, Sri Lanka, East Timor and Basque to name a few places—there have been strong self-determination movements that challenge the legitimacy of state governance. These movements are organised in a similar way to the OPM. In the urban underground movement in East Timor, for example, there were a multitude of autonomous groups: ‘Each group worked independently of the others. While this independence allowed for a diversity of action and made it almost impossible for the Indonesians to eliminate the entire underground, it also prevented the underground from planning any sort of co-ordinated, large-scale actions.’³ The organisational principles, or anti-organisational natures, of these movements are just as legitimate as the principles that underlie a bureaucratic nation-state. Under a situation of occupation a bureaucratically-organised movement would disadvantage. Yet, as the lack of co-ordination in the East Timor movement illustrates there are functional disadvantages to these anti-organisations as well.

My description of the nature of OPM resistance serves as a base for thinking about West Papua’s future once they are free from occupation. Like members of the Unity movement in Kenya (aka Mau Mau), supporters of the OPM and other associated organisations do not simply want a new Papuan nation-state that is controlled by the urban elite. The invasion of the Presidium headquarters in June 2000 by members of the TPN discussed in Chapter Three illustrates that rural groups have already begun to feel alienated by urban Papuan bureaucracies. To actualise the aspirations of *merdeka* fully it is necessary to go beyond heterodox opinions and consider Papuan ideas that remain largely ignored in the media. Similar to those who lived in *mardikar* areas in colonial Java, Papuans want *merdeka* from obligations to a central

¹ R. Brubaker and D. Laitin, “Ethnic and Nationalist Violence”, *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 24 (1998), p. 424.

² Appadurai, ‘Dead Certainty’, p. 228.

government.

Papuan visions for the future are innovative and manifold. Like the Tlingit elders, who are sharpening their words as knives,⁴ contemporary Papuans tell stories that fuse mythological accounts of the past with politically-charged ideas about the present and future. The next challenge for Papuans is to formalise these aspirations and translate them into a genre that can be understood by the international community; to create a social and legal order that combines indigenous protocols of oration with written legislation. One Papuan highlander living in exile in the UK gave me an example of how these visions might be institutionalised: each of the approximately 250 indigenous groups in West Papua could become incorporated as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). In this hypothetical nation there would be loose guidelines laid out by a national parliament, but the authority to negotiate directly with transnational corporations and foreign governments, for example, would be devolved to each tribal NGO. This nation composed of tribal NGOs is just one possible future for West Papua. Further research is needed to formalise other distinctively Papuan blueprints for going beyond a nation-state form of organisation. As West Papua continues to negotiate independence from Indonesia and develop its own interdependencies with the rest of the world there will be further opportunities to bring their indigenous discourses into the forefront of global debates.

³ C. Pinto and M. Jardine, *East Timor's Unfinished Struggle* (Boston, MA, 1997), p. 97.

⁴ Clifford, *Routes*, pp. 189-90.

Appendix: Wasior Photographs



Figure A1.1

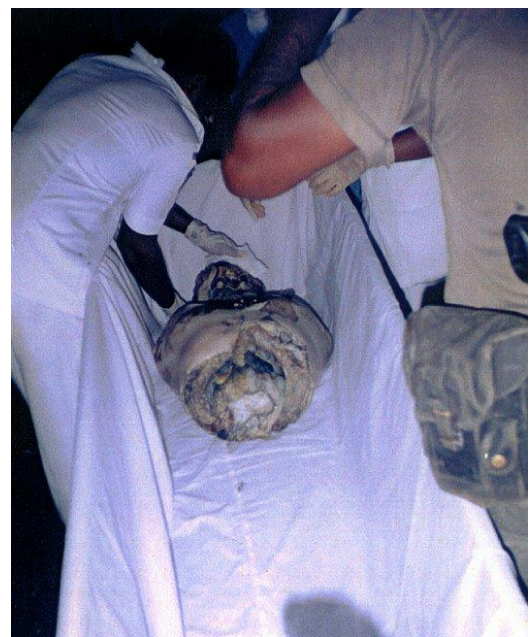


Figure A1.4



Figure A1.2



Figure A1.5

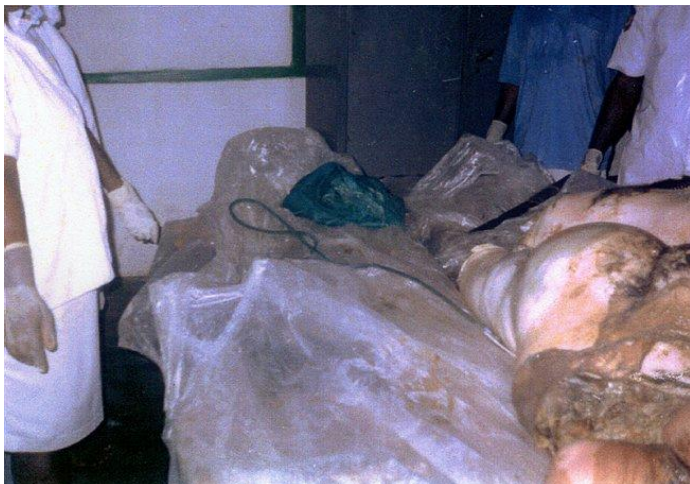


Figure A1.3



Figure A1.6



Figure A1.7



Figure A1.9



Figure A1.8



Figure A1.10

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Word count: 3,513

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