

**The Construction of Marginality  
among Upland Groups in Indonesia:  
The Case of the Wana of Central Sulawesi**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

---

<i>Bara kasaa rapali</i>	What is it that she seeks,
<i>Mandudu kojo momai</i>	she who comes so often,
<i>Je rugi manga linjaki</i>	wandering in pain
<i>Re tana to kasi yasi</i>	on the land of the pitiful and poor?

*Tendebomba* by Indo Laku<sup>1</sup>

This thesis is about people who are described as marginal and who consider themselves marginal. But it is also about people who have developed their very own understanding of their marginality and who have recently started to use their marginal position as a powerful tool to counteract marginalization processes directed towards them.

The Wana ethnic group is located in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, living in the mountainous region in and around the Cagar Alam Morowali – the largest nature reserve of the province, covering an area of 225,000 ha of the eastern peninsula. Most Wana live in small dispersed farming settlements in the rugged interior of the Morowali upland, some of them within the area of the nature reserve itself. They practice swidden agriculture, follow a semi-nomadic lifestyle and adhere to their own distinct religion. Due to these ways of living the Wana as well as other upland groups in Indonesia have generally been described as isolated and backward communities, while the Indonesian uplands are perceived as a “marginal domain, socially, economically and physically removed from the mainstream, ‘traditional’, undeveloped, left behind” (Li 1999a: 1). People living in the uplands have therefore been constituted as marginal people, as geographically distant, politically peripheral and socio-culturally distinct groups. The Wana are thus continuously described as “primitive” people who “fit the bill” (Li 2000: 162) of the “real indigenous”. This conception of upland groups serves state-centered discourse in which people like the Wana must be “civilized” and introduced to the Indonesian state system. From the point of view of several NGOs, however, upland

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<sup>1</sup> Indo Laku, a Wana woman, expresses her curiosity about the research that I conducted among her community – in her words, among those who are “pitiful and poor”. She came up with this verse one night in her house in the uplands, when I was sitting on the floor, exhausted from a strenuous hike, taking care of a number of little wounds and blisters: I was, according to her, “wandering in pain”. The verseform is called *tendebomba*, an artistic way of articulating feelings and meanings among Wana.



groups often serve the idea of the “ecological-noble savage” or of neglected indigenous people. Both pictures present Wana people as well as other upland groups as marginalized (Li 1999a: 2). External factors such as the state and religion play their part, adding to Wana marginalized standing. To some extent, this is, however, part of a self-marginalization process. Wana tend to speak of themselves as pitiful people, poor and helpless. Their marginality is likewise an embodied aspect of Wana culture. They have constructed their very own cosmological center, which serves as a central point of reference and reveals an indigenous understanding and justification of their marginal position. Wana marginality is thus a manifold complex project whose different strands are not easily unraveled.

## **1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

My guiding research query is centered on the question of how marginality is constructed culturally by Wana people themselves. Following Li (1999a), I seek to understand and describe how marginalization processes that are relevant for Wana people, both upland and lowland, are perceived and created by Wana themselves and by various local and non-local actors. Li has pointed to the importance of the question of how marginality is constructed “by the people whom outsiders take to be marginal by nature” (1999a: 33). In this regard, specific historical processes of marginalization become highly important for understanding current processes that shape Wana ideas and understandings of their marginality and the way they grasp their status as a marginalized group. Keeping these special foci in mind, I consequently focus further on Wana negotiations of contemporary state ideals in their everyday lives and how they relate these to their own marginal standing. I will trace definite effects – whether economic, social or cultural – that are caused by marginality, in an ascribed as well as self-ascribed sense. Discussing these questions requires a clear understanding of the concept of marginality. For Tsing, margins “are sites from which we see the instability of social categories” (1994: 279). It is precisely their unsteady character that makes them a highly potential analytical field of study; these “zones of unpredictability at the edges of discursive stability, where contradictory discourses overlap, or where discrepant kinds of meaning-making converge” (1994: 279) are what Tsing grasps under the idea of margins. By this means margins cannot be reduced to essentializing spatial categories that describe a specific

geographic setting. Margins are not descriptions of nonconformity within a given society. Rather, margins designate “an analytical placement that makes evident both the constraining, oppressive quality of cultural exclusion and the creative potential of rearticulating, enlivening, and rearranging the very social categories that peripheralize a group’s existence” (Tsing 1994: 279). The constitution of margins and centers as a social construction (Shields 1991, Li 1999a) is thus part of a hegemonic discourse, a political project that needs to be challenged, disputed and renegotiated: “The cultural, economic and political projects of people living and working in the uplands are constituted in relation to various hegemonic agendas, but never are they simple reflections of them” (Li 1999a: 2). Following Tsing (1993; 1994) and Li (1999d), I therefore regard upland and lowland regions as situated within one single analytical frame. Marginality, in the context of this thesis, therefore, is about complex relations between people, ideas and regions that are often subjected to dichotomous categories such as upland/lowland, modern/traditional, state/non-state actors, civilized/primitive.

A great number of anthropological studies have dealt extensively with the socio-economic and political effects of marginalized positionings among upland people all over the world and in Indonesia specifically (e.g., Burling 1965, Spencer 1966, Conklin 1961, Tsing 1993). However, three relevant aspects thereby remain largely neglected: First, the significance of religion in marginalization processes is often ignored in studies focusing on upland–lowland relations. This is due to the fact that most studies focusing on religion among upland groups in Indonesia emphasize syncretist elements of religion among converted upland groups, now usually Christian or Muslim (e.g. Duncan 2003; George 1996). Religious affiliation for converted groups is an important category of agency that is, however, less important for upland marginalization processes. For Wana, in contrast, as a non-converted group, religion becomes a highly politicized marker of identity in regard to marginality-related issues since religious association is closely intertwined with a Wana self-marginalized positioning and socio-religious hierarchies. Second, studies concerning the transformation of marginalization processes mostly ignore the importance of those I call “Powerful Friends” – individual or group actors who interact with marginalized groups and thereby become influential allies. Third, I stress the politics of knowledge that significantly shapes hierarchical relations between upland and lowland entities and extensively contributes to the allocation of power and control. Sociopolitical orders and formations of knowledge, as well as their epistemological formulation, are of

central relevance for hegemonic structures and cultural practice. Against this background, access to knowledge and further education play a significant role for Wana social positioning.

## **1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

For a thorough understanding of marginality and its construction among Wana, I will focus precisely on the construction and deconstruction of Wana marginality in its various dimensions. I will offer a threefold approach to marginality that focuses on the cosmological, socio-religious and political-economic dimensions of the subject and its relevance for Wana people.

In this introductory chapter, I will provide a brief overview of the regional context and the Wana in Morowali Regency of Central Sulawesi as an initial presentation of the local context, as well as a short literature review. However, many local details will be presented only later, in the relevant chapters when necessary for understanding the specific dimension of marginality. For instance, the historical framework will be touched upon only briefly in the introduction, but will be portrayed in detail in Chapter 5 where a thorough description of colonial intervention becomes necessary for understanding the political and economic dimension of marginality. Furthermore, I will present an overview of the ethnographic methods used and an initial description of what I call “fieldwork politics”, thus introducing the role of the anthropologist in dealing with matters of marginality. This aspect will continue to play an important part in the course of this thesis and I will come back to it with greater focus in the main three chapters dealing with Wana dimensions of marginality.

The second chapter will dive deeper into the theoretical and epistemological understanding of marginality as a concept. The interest in marginality as treated and discussed within anthropology as well as other disciplines reveals important theoretical considerations and historical developments of the discipline as well as the concept itself. I will show how marginality as a concept offers a way to analyze power relations, deeply questioning the meanings of “center” and “peripheries” and the ways in which aspects of each continuum are perceived by those at both poles. Furthermore, understanding marginality as a term that is socially constructed, I will then show how the concept is

applied by anthropologists to upland groups in Southeast Asia and especially in Indonesia to gain a general understanding of the category “upland group”, and how and why the distinction between upland and lowland has evolved. I will then provide a general introduction to the meanings of marginality in the Indonesian uplands, showing historical developments as well as specific markers of marginalization processes connected to aspects such as resettlement and ongoing struggles over land rights. I will also introduce Indonesia’s indigenous peoples’ movement, which started in the 1990s, and will then discuss the notion of religious marginality within the Indonesian nation-state.

After these clarifications I turn to the three main critical dimensions of marginality that are of central significance for Wana marginalized status:

The first dimension, presented in Chapter 3 – the cosmological dimension – deals with Wana religious or cosmological notions of marginality. Drawing on creation myths from a Golden Past, Wana obtain a self-ascribed marginalized standing that is deeply intertwined with cosmological narratives and a millenarian movement. Marginality in this dimension is represented as a contemporary but transient situation that is rooted in Wana cosmology. Through its millenarian character, the cosmological dimension offers Wana their very own way out of current marginalization, a way that undermines hegemonic constellations vis-à-vis the state. Wana shamanism in this context portrays an important bridge between an ideal past, an anticipated glorious future and the marginal present.

The second dimension discussed in Chapter 4 is, to a certain extent, rather socially shaped yet closely related to religion as a social category concerning religious practice and affiliation. Marginalization occurs within socio-religious hierarchies in which Wana “animists” (often perceived from a state point of view as “non-believers”) feel subjugated by their Christian and Muslim neighbors. An important factor here is Wana adhering to their own religion, a belief system they sometimes call *agama Wana* (BI, Wana religion).<sup>2</sup> Since they are not followers of an officially recognized religion they struggle to be part of the Indonesian ideal of a modern citizen, which is connected to adherence to a “world religion”. Here, marginalization happens on a rather day-to-day basis, forcing Wana to situate themselves on the lowest rung of the social ladder in relation to their other-ethnic as well as other-religious neighbors. The importance of knowledge, and access to it, for

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<sup>2</sup> All words in languages other than English are set in italics. All words in *Bahasa Indonesia*, Indonesian, are marked with the abbreviation “BI” when quoted for the first time, while Wana terms as well as Dutch terms are set without any further indication.

discussing matters of marginality becomes further visible as the religious dimension hinders those Wana who refuse religious conversion to go to school. Therefore, religious conversion is a very important aspect when considering religious marginality for indigenous groups like the Wana.

Finally, the political-economic dimension of Wana marginalized status, discussed in Chapter 5, is constituted by the ongoing danger of land loss, historically a well-known state of distress for Wana people. Specific marginalization processes include for example resettlement programs by the government that were aimed at moving Wana permanently from the uplands in centralized villages. The current relevance of resettlement becomes meaningful when accompanied by a current threat of land loss for Wana people related to the expansion plans of a local palm oil company. The example shows how Wana within the Indonesian nation-state struggle to come to fight for their rights since their marginality in its complex constitution hinders them from obtaining knowledge of these rights. The chapter further deals with strategies of resistance. While locating agency in the Wana region, I will further distinguish between strategies of everyday resistance as tools of “weapons of the weak” (Scott 1985), and a new form of agency, highlighting the role of “powerful friends”, such as NGOs or the anthropologist. I will by this means also analyze the politics of “being Wana, becoming indigenous”, portraying the reasons for Wana entering the *masyarakat adat* (BI) movement, the Indonesian indigenous peoples’ movement.

In my view, this analytical and methodological framework of marginality, resistance and agency, with its complex relations within the analytical upland–lowland framework, offers a new perspective on the concept of marginality, while drawing upon and simultaneously expanding Tsing’s famous work on marginal Meratus people (1993), thereby, again, confronting common assumptions of a supposed gap between upland and lowland in general, and especially in Indonesia.

## 1.3 REGIONAL CONTEXT

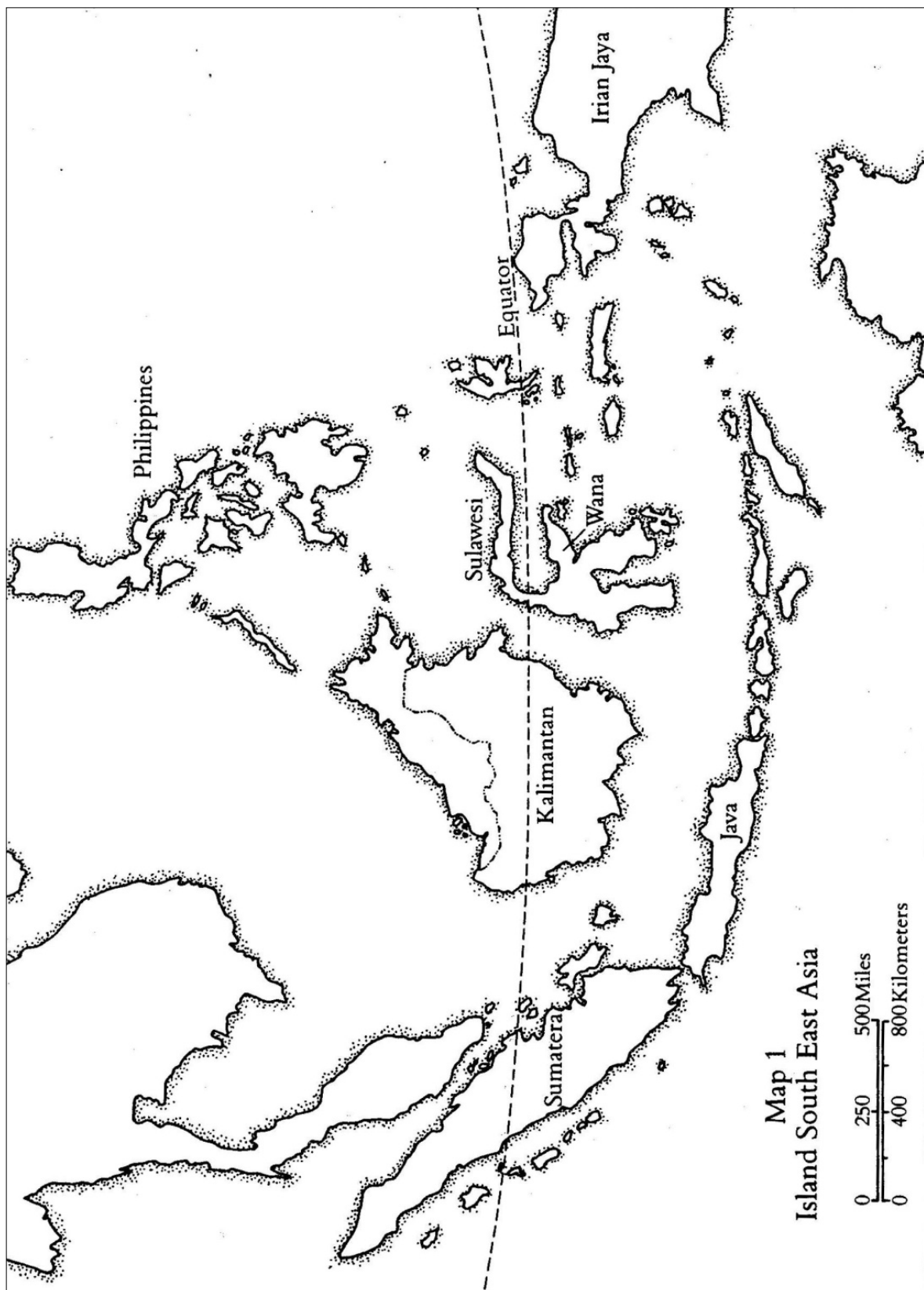
### 1.3.1 A Brief Introduction to Central Sulawesi

The Wana live in the province of Central Sulawesi, Sulawesi Tengah, one of the largest provinces in Indonesia, covering an area of almost 70,000 km<sup>2</sup> (Map 1). Political control in Central Sulawesi was historically influenced through outer centers such as the kingdoms of Mandar, Ternate and Makassar between the 15th and 17th century.<sup>3</sup> The Kingdom of Luwu of South Sulawesi extended its regional impact through Morowali and Poso regencies into Wana territory (Sangaji 2007: 325). External power in Central Sulawesi reached its climax with increasing Dutch colonial expansion at the beginning of the 20th century.<sup>4</sup> Outside of the island, Dutch colonial intervention had started with the Dutch East Indian Company (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC*) in 1596, when the first Dutch trade ship reached West Java. Sulawesi, however, was only marginally affected by Dutch interference until the 20th century. Until the turn of the century, the two “poles” of the island, Manado in the north and Makassar in the south, were the only places in Sulawesi deeply affected by Dutch intervention (Map 2). Although Dutch authority did not have control over Central Sulawesi in the beginning, the outcomes of colonial rule already became visible in the 17th century: The mass of Buginese migrants from the south, who had fled north after the Dutch had conquered the island’s southern tip, portray the first indirect impact of colonial rule on Central Sulawesi (Weber, Kreisel, and Faust 2003: 402).

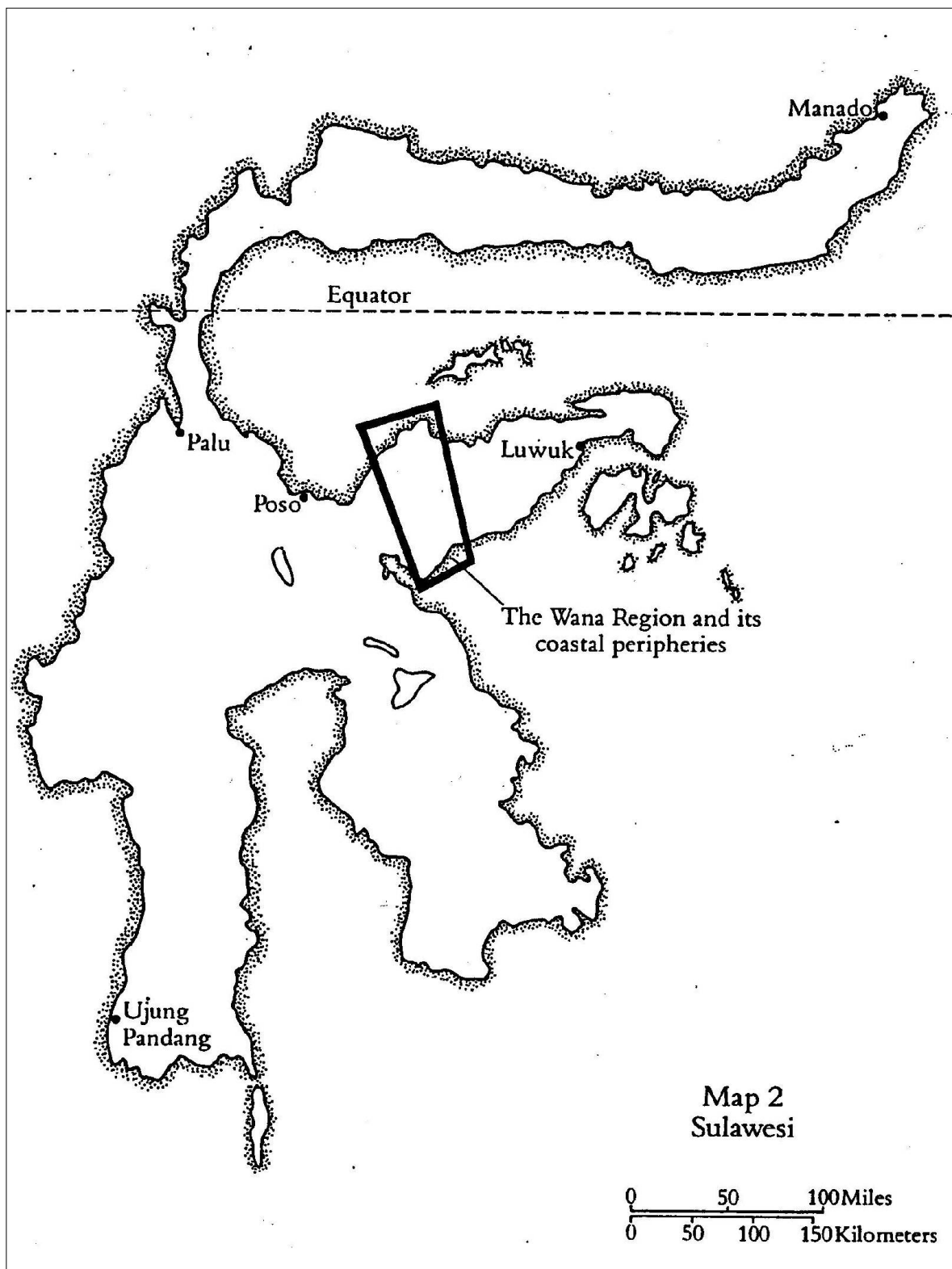
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<sup>3</sup> The Kingdom of Ternate had an important influence on Wana who claim that their first *raja* was the ruler of Ternate (Atkinson 1989: 335).

<sup>4</sup> For example, the Dutch began in Western Central Sulawesi by inventing a number of trading ports around the region – a common form of colonial control in the *Buitenbezittingen*, the outer islands – especially around Palu (Sangaji 2007: 325). For an overview of the colonial development of Indonesia with special reference to Central Sulawesi see table 1 in Weber, Kreisel, and Faust (2003: 404).



Map 1 Island Southeast Asia and the Wana Region (Atkinson 1989: 325).



Map 2 Central Sulawesi and the Wana Region (Atkinson 1989: 326). Ujung Padang today is called Makassar.



Apart from this, colonial forces largely ignored the island's central region. Henley (1989) points to a paragraph written by the British naturalist Sydney Hickson in 1885:

“The central continent of the island has not yet seen the face of the white man, and by far the greater part of the four peninsulas is almost unknown and undescribed [...]. It is true that the Dutch flag flies in name over the whole island, but the only parts which are really governed by the Dutch are a small region round Makassar in the south, Minahasa in the north, and the district of Gorontalo in the Bay of Tomini. These parts are, nowever [*sic*], as nothing compared with the wide acres of land still covered with virgin forest and calling no one master but untutored savage” (Hickson 1889: 3-4; quoted in Henley 1989: 4).

But this general situation in Central Sulawesi was soon to change. Approximately around 1890, the last period of colonial rule started. A few years later it reached the isolated mountains of Central Sulawesi when between 1905 and 1907 the Dutch brought Central Sulawesi under colonial authority (see Chapter 4). Although using military intervention, the new initiative also indicated a fresh shift in colonial administration through what is generally called the Ethical Policy (Coté 1996). The new strategy in this policy was linked to the colonial government's goal of expanding its territory towards the outer islands in order to maintain power and control. Local riots in Lombok and Aceh, pressing for a new Indonesian nationalism, were perceived as a direct threat to Dutch authority. The former practice of *onthoudingspolitiek*, a policy that attempted non-involvement in local power structures outside of areas of direct colonial control, could no longer serve the needs of colonial government, nor answer a new pressure from the homeland towards a moral obligation connected to the colonial project. As a result, queen and parliament commenced the Ethical Policy. However, this meant for Central Sulawesi, which so far had not come under direct Dutch colonial rule, that “development” had to be introduced via military invasion – the process of so-called “pacification” (Weber, Kreisel, and Faust 2003: 408).

Already by 1891, some Dutch entrepreneurs had been sighted near the Gulf of Tomini, but without colonial support Central Sulawesi's forest products, iron ore and coal could not be extracted. In 1894 the first trading post was erected on the coast in Poso under the authority of the first Dutch *controleur* (district officer).<sup>5</sup> This post experienced an upgrade in 1902, when the first assistant-resident was installed. A.J.N. Engelenberg, the first governmental official in the region, was trained in Ethical Policy, and highlighted the

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<sup>5</sup> The goal was here to employ and monitor tax payments for the evolving trade between local communities and Chinese merchants (Coté 1996: 93).

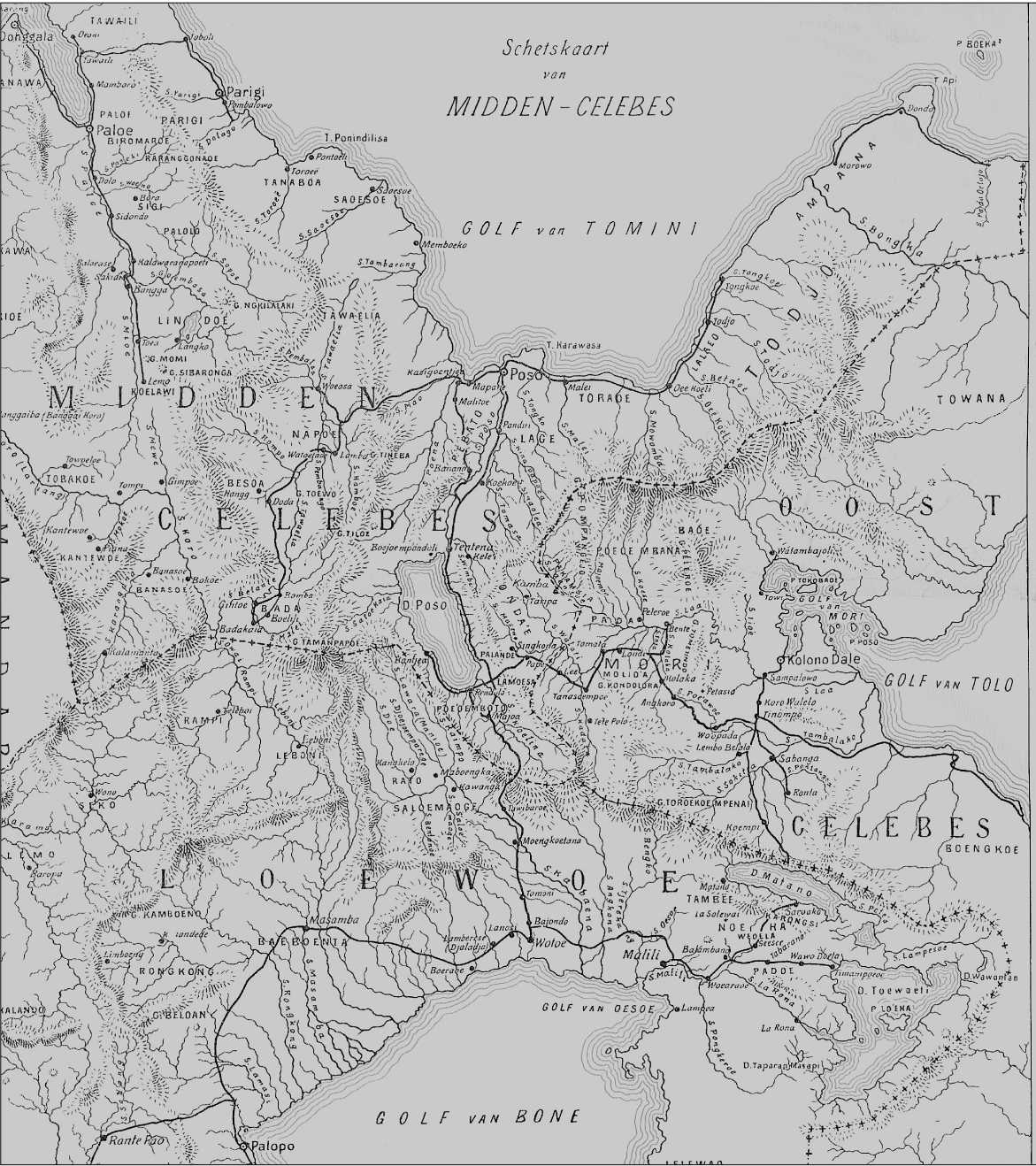
moral duties in his work: “Our vocation is to give the native the opportunity to [achieve] a high standard of living ... [to make him suitable] for a dogged perseverance in the difficult struggle which life always imposes” (Engelenberg quoted in Coté 1995: 260). The goals behind the Ethical Policy approach for Central Sulawesi can be found in the aim for a larger economic benefit, a higher population density and optimized control over the people living in the region. New implementations were the introduction of a head tax, the prohibition of some forms of local belief praxis, a pressure to change from shifting dry-rice agriculture to continuous wet-rice production, as well as the resettlement of upland people to the lowlands.<sup>6</sup> A series of military actions began in 1905, when “the Poso region witnessed a relatively ‘uneventful’ sweep of Dutch forces” (Coté 1996: 97). This was part of a military action leading from the Gulf of Tomini southwards to the kingdoms of Luwu and Gowa, which were subjugated under Dutch force. Well concealed behind a “welfarist rhetoric” (Coté 1995: 261) were particularly economic interests that fit neatly with the goals of another form of Dutch intervention in Central Sulawesi: Several years before the first *controleur* was sent to Poso, the missionary Albertus Christiaan Kruyt had set foot in the region of Central Sulawesi, where he built the Pamona missionary school in Poso.<sup>7</sup> The strong governmental support for a missionary post in the area finds its explanation in the goal to “undertake ‘civilising work’ where the natives [...] who had a reputation of ferocious head hunters, would be gradually made amenable to a European presence and [...] create a barrier against the growing influence of Islam in the area” (Coté 1996: 93). A.C. Kruyt’s Poso mission eventually lead to a Christianization of the interior of Central Sulawesi, “spark[ing] a religious transformation of the highlands” (Sangaji 2007: 324).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> For a detailed analysis of colonial implementations see Schrauwers (2000).

<sup>7</sup> I will come back later to the works and results of A.C. Kruyt and the Poso mission in detail (Chapter 4).

<sup>8</sup> It also laid the foundation for the 1947 Tentena establishment of a central Christian organ in Central Sulawesi, the Central Sulawesi Christian Church, *Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah* (BI).



Map 3 Central Sulawesi under colonial administration, ca. 1912 (Adriani and Kruyt 1951).

Dutch colonial rule was terminated with the arrival of the Japanese in 1942. The Japanese occupation ended in 1945 with the declaration of Indonesia's Independence, but Dutch forces returned to their former colony after the Second World War and regained control over several islands including Central Sulawesi. It was not before 1949 that the Netherlands recognized Indonesia's sovereignty. With the country's Independence the political diversity of Central Sulawesi transformed "into a single political entity within a modern state" (Sangaji 2007: 325). At the beginning of autonomy, the region was subjugated under the province of North Sulawesi, but it became a sovereign province in 1964. Numerous new laws and regulations were formulated that affected regional and local constellations. Under the rule of President Suharto, an era called *Orde Baru* (BI), New Order, new ratified state laws deeply impacted land rights and access to resources; large areas were converted into conservation areas and protected forest regions, not uncommonly leading to the repression of local communities. As elsewhere in Indonesia, the Central Sulawesi region had to face the implementation of administrative and thereby standardized village units, the *desa* (BI). Another trait of the New Order was the transmigration program, where more than 85,000 Javanese and Balinese families were moved to the province (Sangaji 2007: 323).<sup>9</sup> Still today the population of Central Sulawesi is growing continually, partially because of inner-Indonesia migration. In market terms, Central Sulawesi's economy was severely influenced already through Dutch colonial rule, where most communities were involved in some form of business, trading products like resin, ebony, rattan, crocodile skin and copra – the latter product was backed up by the government through the official order for Central Sulawesi families to each plant a minimum of 50 coconut trees. Under Suharto's rule foreign investment left its impact on local communities. Sangaji notes that 4.6 million hectares of Central Sulawesi's total 6.8 million hectares of land are allocated among 130 private companies as well as companies that are linked to the government (2007: 326). Another aspect mentioned by Sangaji is the immense transformation of agriculture in the province, deeply affecting land control due to the "revolusi coklat" (Sitorus 2002) or as Li calls it, the "cocoa boom" (2002) beginning in 1988. Cocoa has become one of the most important export goods of the province, with an export value of around 29.6 million US\$ in 2013.<sup>10</sup> Land that was

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<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless migration to Central Sulawesi had already played an important role in the region before. When the Dutch subjugated Makassar in 1667 a great number of Bugis fled from South Sulawesi to the central province (Sangaji 2007: 323).

<sup>10</sup> Juhrihandt et al. note that smallholders from Central, Southeast and South Sulawesi alone produced in 2008 75 percent of the country's cocoa output (2010: 116). See also Sangadji (2014).

formerly communally owned is now increasingly subject to individual or family private control (Sangaji 2007: 326). While cocoa and copra are subject to smallholder farming schemes, in recent years a new product managed generally by large companies has become highly important for the province: As in many other regions in Indonesia, palm oil has gained significant influence in Central Sulawesi. The province has the lowest population density of the island, with around 40 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> in 2013 (BPSP Sulteng 2013). The great majority today follow Islam while around one quarter of the population are Christians; Buddhism and Hinduism as well as a number of local belief systems are only minimally represented. The province experienced a violent conflict in the Poso region in the early 2000s that sparked international attention. This conflict had its roots in socio-economic tensions but soon became an escalation between Christian local inhabitants and Muslim migrant communities and resulted in the loss of several hundred peoples' lives (Aragon 2000). The province today consists of one administrative city, which is the capital Palu, and twelve administrative regencies, called *kabupaten* (BI). One of them is *Kabupaten Morowali*, where the Wana portrayed in the course of this work live.

### **1.3.2 *Kabupaten Morowali***

The regency of Morowali covers a total area of 45,453 km<sup>2</sup> but due to its coastal location around the Teluk Tomori, Tomori Bay, around 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> is water territory. Furthermore, Morowali is the *kabupaten* in Central Sulawesi with the lowest population density: While in 2013 Palu had a population density of 881 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> Morowali had only 14 per km<sup>2</sup> (BPSP Sulteng 2013). The three main ethnic groups found in Morowali are the To Mori, who live mainly in the north in and around the city of Kolonodale, and the To Bungku, who inhabit the southern region of the regency around the capital Bungku. The Wana are found across the Tomori bay area and north of Momosolato (see map 5 and 6). Several other ethnic groups, mainly Bugis, Toraja, Ternate and Buton, as well as ethnic Bajau Laut, have settled for generations in Morowali, and transmigrants from the islands of Bali, Lombok and Java have moved to Central-Sulawesi as well. Due to the high labor demand from mining companies and palm oil plantation the intra-Sulawesi migration to Morowali has significantly increased during the last years (Gogali 2012: 16–17).

Since my last research stay *Kabupaten* Morowali has been divided into two new regencies, in late 2013 it was split to form Morowali Utara and Morowali Regency. During the time of research this division had not yet been enacted. I will briefly explain the process of this division and the current situation of the regency. After the downfall of Suharto a new era of government made way for process of general decentralization within the Indonesian state. As a result, numerous new regencies (*kabupaten*) and districts (*kecamatan*, BI), were established all over the archipelago, a process called *pemekaran* (BI), or blossoming. As part of this development the Central Sulawesi *kabupaten* of Morowali was established by Law No. 51 in 1999,<sup>11</sup> together with the regencies of Buol and Banggai Islands (Aragon 2007: 62).<sup>12</sup> The majority of Protestant Mori people in the region had high hopes for *pemekaran* and expected a general improvement of conditions with a government now located close by in the new capital of Kolonodale. But with the erection of the *kabupaten* most political offices went to Muslim Bungku officials and left Mori frustrated about insufficient political management in the mainly Protestant *kecamatan* of the regency. When in 2004 the capital was moved from Kolonodale to Bungku in the south, the feeling of disenfranchisement was great among those living in Kolonodale and its surroundings (Aragon 2007: 61). In 2012, the area was struck by regional riots in Kolonodale since the northern part of the regency under Mori initiative aimed to become an independent *kabupaten*. The head of Morowali regency, *bupati* (BI) Anwar Hafid, re-elected for a second period in 2012, had promised during the election stage to support the splitting of the regency. However, when the parliament held his closing session in Jakarta on 14 December 2012, it only announced seven new autonomous regions,<sup>13</sup> Northern Morowali was not one of them, and its advocates still had to wait until the House of Representatives reified their decision in a third session on autonomous regions. Meanwhile in the city of Kolonodale riots broke out (Sangadji 2012). A couple of months later, with the decision of 12 April 2013 the regency was finally divided into *Kabupaten* Morowali and *Kabupaten* Morowali Utara (Northern Morowali). Since Wana people inhabit only the northern part of *Kabupaten* Morowali the

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<sup>11</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 51/1999 tentang Pembentukan Kabupaten Buol, Kabupaten Morowali, dan Kabupaten Banggai Kepulauan.*

<sup>12</sup> Before this establishment Morowali was under the regency of *Kabupaten* Poso.

<sup>13</sup> Mahakam Ulu (East Kalimantan), District of Malacca (Nusa Tenggara), Central Mamuju (West Sulawesi) Sea Banggai (Central Sulawesi), District Tailabu Island (North Maluku), District Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir (South-Sumatra) and East Kolaka (South-East-Sulawesi) (Sihite 2012).

decision to establish an independent North Morowali region will probably affect the situation for Wana greatly.<sup>14</sup>

In the following I will primarily speak of *Kabupaten* Morowali in its pre-2013 administrative constellation, since most of my data were collected prior to the regency division.

### 1.3.3 Wana: Terminology

In early Dutch colonial literature, people inhabiting the uplands extending from Central Sulawesi to South Sulawesi were commonly subsumed under the term Toraja, or sometimes Toradja. The root of the term stems from the Makassar term *to raja*, meaning people from the north, or, in a more common explanation, from the Bugis term *to ri aja*, meaning people from the uplands or from above. It was used as an opposite of the term *to luu* or *to lau* (Bugis), meaning coastal people (Roth 2005: 494). The term achieved such a wide popularity that it was still used in more current sources (e.g. Holmgren and Spertus 1989, see Aragon 2000: 52). However, based on differing local terminologies and terms, most scholars today choose to oppose such a generalization when referring to Central Sulawesi uplanders.<sup>15</sup> Whereas the Southern Toraja have chosen the term as a self-referential term, the Central Sulawesi upland groups do not use the term for themselves.<sup>16</sup> From the Dutch colonial side it was the missionary A.C. Kruyt who began to use the term instead of the former expression *alfur*, a Ternate term meaning forest or wilderness, which was used by Europeans as a general term for all East Indonesian people who were neither Hindu nor Muslim (Aragon 2000:52).<sup>17</sup> An upland–lowland distinction was thus employed in early denominative terms and also in early accounts of Central Sulawesi. In the early 20th century, the linguist Adriani described the region as consisting of only two main features: The narrow coastal strip inhabited by Muslims, and the “almost

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<sup>14</sup> A member of the DPRD (Regional Legislative Council for Provinces) even told me in an interview that eventual plans existed to give Wana people their own sub-district once the Morowali Utara project succeeded.

<sup>15</sup> Aragon lists a number of scholars, e.g., Pakan (1977) and Masyhuda (1977). See also Weber (2005).

<sup>16</sup> According to Bigalke, in the 17th century Bugis and Makassar groups used the term as a general appellation for upland people in Central and South Sulawesi (2005).

<sup>17</sup> The adoption of often derogative lowland terms for upland groups by Europeans was a common practice, and not only in Central Sulawesi. The terms Karen, Orang Ulu, Ifugao, Dayak, Montagnards, and Batak were all invented through the same process (Reid 2010: 46).

uninterrupted forest girdle [woudgordel] [...] the territory of the uplanders, where one is entirely among Toraja” (Adriani 1901: 235, quoted in Henley 2005: 409–10). A.C. Kruyt divided the Toraja into three groups: South, West and East Toraja; this division was taken further through Kaudern with the categories Palu and Koro Toraja, subdivisions of the West Toraja (Aragon 2000: 53; see Map 4).<sup>18</sup>



**Map 4** Distribution of the West Toradja, the East Toradja and the Saadang Toradja (Kaudern 1925: 166).

Among the many upland groups in Central Sulawesi, only few are referred to with the rather negative connotation of *suku terasing* (BI), meaning isolated tribe. Aragon,

<sup>18</sup> Today, in an extremely simplifying manner and based on geographic conditions or linguistic patterns one can assess twelve main ethnic groups in Central Sulawesi: Kaili, Tomini, Kulawi, Pamona, Lore, Mori, Bungku, Saluan, Balantak, Banggai, Toli-Toli and Bual (Sangaji 2007: 322).

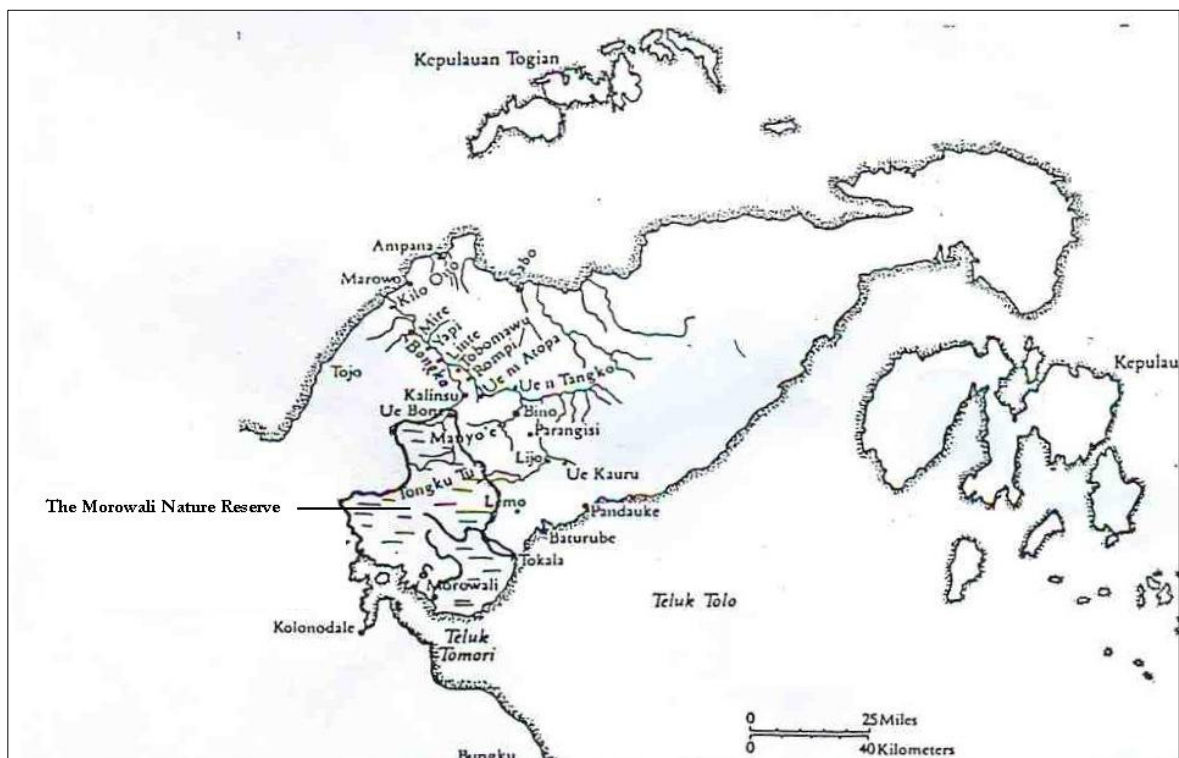


working on the Central Sulawesi upland group of the Tobaku, notes that the term is generally not applied to the Christianized Tobaku, but is instead rather used to refer to other groups like the Lauje and the Wana (Aragon 2000: 327). Li, researching among the Lauje in Western Central Sulawesi, states however that the Lauje are generally not perceived as “truly indigenous” since they “are not especially exotic and have no serious competitors for their hilly terrain” (Li 2000: 162). Wana people serve as representing the more extreme end of the upland or indigenous continuum here: “[t]here are other groups in Central Sulawesi, such as the Wana, who better fit the bill” (Li 2000: 162). The term *wana* itself must be regarded in a similar line with the term Toraja mentioned above. Although the term *wana* itself has no other connotation in the Wana language than describing themselves and their land (*tana wana*), in the Pamona language *wana* means forest. Jane M. Atkinson, who conducted research among the Wana of the Northern region around Ulu Bongka (Map 5), concludes from this: “The Wana may have taken as a name for themselves a term applied by outsiders to the inhabitants of the rugged forest interior” (Atkinson 1979: 5). For Central Sulawesi, Wana in general serve the idea of the truly indigenous group that is particularly exotic, lives extremely remotely in the upland forests, relies completely on indigenous medicine, is illiterate and ignorant of Indonesian language, relies upon a highly primitive subsistence-based agriculture, has no clothing or shoes, and lacks religion – just to mention some of the stereotypes I met in discussions with government officials or other people living in the lowlands, in nearby Kolonodale or far away Palu, all of them pointing towards highly important matters of marginality and marginalization processes relevant for Wana today.

Wana adherence to their own belief system is another highly important marker of marginalization developments, especially in an interreligious context. Today, a number of Wana mainly living in the lowlands have converted either to Islam or Christianity – the two dominant religious sections in the area around the Morowali Nature Reserve. Still, the majority continue to follow their own belief system, especially those Wana residing in the upland region. Against a continuing pressure to undergo religious conversion from the outside, Wana have developed their very own notion of *agama Wana*, Wana religion. Thus, since religion is such an important part of Wana identity I will in the following refer only to those Wana who continue to follow their own belief system with the term “Wana”. Whenever I will need to highlight the ethnic rather than the religious component

of what it means to “be Wana”, I will add the specific religious profession, as there are also Christian and Muslim Wana living in Taronggo.

Furthermore, the living conditions for Wana are neither static nor do all Wana live and work in the same setting. In the following I will portray three analytical regions that I use to differentiate between the varying living conditions Wana in the *Kabupaten* Morowali nowadays have to face: First, Wana within the Morowali Nature Reserve; second, Wana at the border of the nature reserve; and third, Wana in the lowland village of Taronggo. These categories of course are just part of a raw picture and are not necessarily fixed since Wana in these different regions face multiple challenges.



**Map 5** The Wana area, with special focus on Atkinson’s research area in the North (Atkinson 1989: 327).

### 1.3.4 Wana within the Nature Reserve

Most Wana today live in the Morowali Nature Reserve – the largest nature reserve of Central Sulawesi, covering an area of 225,000 ha of the Eastern peninsula (Map 6). Comprising various forms of ecosystems like grassland, mangrove or montane forests rising up to 2,600 m above sea level and lacking any infrastructure, the nature reserve is difficult to access. According to a WWF study from 1980, approximately 5,000 people belong to the Wana ethnic group – but the numbers are extremely vague.

Like many other Southeast Asian highland groups the Wana practice swidden horticulture, planting mainly dry rice and manioc in their gardens. A smaller part of their subsistence is drawn from hunting and gathering (e.g. Alvard 2000b). Every year between August and October the swiddens are cut and burned and then, between October and November, newly planted with rice. When turning to other swiddens, each family moves along with the whole household. Regional differences in household formations can be found within the Wana area. Atkinson describes the Wana north of the nature reserve as living in centralized villages (1989: 3) whereas Alvard (2000) points to the Wana around the Posangke region in the center of the nature reserve living in scattered households of five to 20 people called *lipu* (Fig. 1).<sup>19</sup> During my first research stay I was able to visit the Posangke region myself, but never found households with less than 10 people.<sup>20</sup>

Alvard, referring to Atkinson (1989) and A.C. Kruyt (1930), describes those Wana people living in the upland area of the nature reserve as rather isolated compared to their coastal neighbors: “They have maintained relative isolation from much of the outside world, and most adults speak no or very little Indonesian, have little or no interaction with the cash economy, and maintain a traditional religious belief system” (2000a: 429). In contrast to this I observed an extensive resin trade, meaning that people walk for very long distances to the southern settlements like KeaKea that have access to boats to reach the city of Kolonedale on a regular basis. The resin trade (and for the people living in the mangrove

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<sup>19</sup> In order to enhance readability, all photographs in this thesis are listed at the end of each referring sub-chapter. See also: Table of Figures.

<sup>20</sup> In contrast to Posangke, the southern area of Kayupoli encompassed six households each with two to 15 people, in which two houses were isolated from the rest located on the other side of the Morowali River. Further south, in Kea Kea and Marisa, rather centralized villages of up to 15 houses can be found, as is the case, as described by Atkinson (1989), for the Ue Bone region.

regions also rattan trade) plays an important part in the current Wana economy and shows intense interaction with people outside the reserve.



**Map 6 The Morowali Nature Reserve and Taronggo (Source unknown; rearranged by Grumblies).<sup>21</sup>**

<sup>21</sup> The village east of Taronggo, called Posangke, is a lowland village, not to be confused with upland Posangke within the Nature Reserve.

The question of isolation itself is a highly controversial topic that should not be too easily concluded from geographical isolation and ascribed to communities – I will come back to this topic later. Living in a nature reserve has several effects on the community living within its boundaries. Officially, the Indonesian state does not allow any people to reside within protected areas. However, in the Wana case a local NGO, Yayasan Sahabat Morowali, was able to reach a form of consent with the officials in Palu, allowing Wana to stay within the Cagar Alam as long as they do not contribute to its destruction. This requires a very restrictive lifestyle that is mandatory for Wana people who wish to stay within the reserve. Occasional visits by members of local forestry offices guarantee that inhabitants shy away from cash-crop production like coffee or cocoa. Their swidden agricultural system is accepted by outside officials and is not persecuted; still, Wana, especially those participating in cash crop cultivation or in wood or rattan trade carefully watch the visits from outsiders since their status remains unclear. The meaning of restrictions caused by the status of a nature reserve is most clearly visible on the boundaries of the reserve, where Wana living right at the border of the reserve can combine swidden agriculture and cash crop production.

### **1.3.5 Wana at the Border of the Nature Reserve: Salisarao**

Although the amount of research focusing on the Wana remains low, the area of Kayupoli and Kea Kea as well as Posangke and even Uewaju now and then become the target of tourists, the occasional anthropologist or documentary filmmakers. All of these destinations lie within the nature reserve and are to some extent accustomed to visits from mostly European outsiders; Kayupoli is a tourist spot, although rarely frequented, with a number of guides from Kolonodale and other areas of Sulawesi bringing visitors to the area – it is also the target of a US-based semester abroad organization, bringing a group of more than 20 students to Kayupoli every year.<sup>22</sup> Searching for the “ultimate indigenous experience” visitors seldom take a trip outside of the nature reserve’s borders although the geographic conditions are the same. Salisarao, one of my research locations, is such an area, located directly in the mountainous region at the boundary of Morowali Nature

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<sup>22</sup> Where there be Dragons. Accessed 13th December 2015.  
<http://www.wheretherebedragons.com/programs.semester.php?action=detail&programLabel=islandsofindonesia>.

Reserve, south of Posangke and north to the village of Taronggo. According to Wana living in Salisarao, no non-Indonesian visitor had ever set foot on their terrain until my own fieldwork started in Salisarao. Even Indonesian visitors do not pay attention to Salisarao although it is conveniently located within walking distance of Taronggo – a place where most visitors take an occasional rest on their way further north. Since it became one of my research sites, I asked a member of a local NGO from Kolonodale about the reason for the Salisarao tourist neglect. Although the NGO had been an active organization for many years helping and advocating Wana within the nature reserve, they themselves had never paid attention to Salisarao Wana. The NGO member asserted they “were no longer traditional” and therefore not worth the interest – or support. “They were modern”, he insisted, and, according to the NGO’s designated goal, which is to “maintain Wana unique culture” (Lahadji 2001), Salisarao Wana had moved too far from their “ancestors’ ways”. What he meant was their participation in the modern economy, their reliance on Western medicine, their changed lifestyle, their mobile phones, their close connections to their Taronggo lowland neighbors, and so on. I did not find the difference between Wana living inside and outside the nature reserve to be as striking as the source from Kolonodale did. Wana in Salisarao, just like their inner-reserve neighbors, live in dispersed settlements, have no access to infrastructure or electricity and have to hike a great distance to reach the village of Taronggo (Fig. 2). Wana outside the nature reserve however have the opportunity to engage in a broader cropping system, planting cash crops like cocoa or, more recently rubber, peanuts or coconut palms for the production of copra. The nature reserve’s restrictions do not apply for them. Their involvement in cash-crop cultivation and the decreasing importance of the swidden farming cycle has led outsiders, such as the source in Kolonodale, to come to the conclusion that Salisarao Wana are less “backward” than their semi-nomadic neighbors within the reserve. Planting cash crops seems to have a significant impact on perceptions of indigeneity. As Li states for the Lauje in the Western part of Central Sulawesi, growing cocoa has turned them from “primitives” into “real farmers” building up a long-term investment (2002: 421). Since cocoa has “the lure of modernity” (Li 2002: 421), Salisarao Wana have become for some – i.e. tourists and their inner-reserve relatives – just as my source mentioned above, “too modern”. For others, however, Wana following the lure of modernity and planting cocoa or copra have not turned Wana “backwardness” into “modernity”: Their lowland neighbors and state officials continue to perceive Wana in Salisarao as “backward”

uplanders (see Chapter 4). This distinction becomes highly meaningful when discussing marginalization processes among Salisaro and Taronggo Wana.

### 1.3.6 Wana in the Lowland Village of Taronggo

Hiking down the Salisarao mountains (Fig. 3), one reaches a natural border between upland and lowland (as analytical categories) – the Soelato River (Fig. 4). Usually traversable for an adult Wana, in rainy times the Solato water level significantly increases and the surrounding regions are subject to major flooding. Without a bridge or a boat – neither available in the area – no person can cross this natural border. Here, the question of geographical isolation enters, at least partially, center stage. South of the river bend lies the village of Taronggo, my second fieldwork location. This refers to the community of Taronggo, a village with state administration and road access, where Wana live together with Christian and Muslim neighbors. The small rural community is the last village on the road from Baturube, the capital of *kecamatan* Bungku Utara. Baturube can be reached from Kolonodale only by ferry, which takes around six to eight hours. From there it takes another hour by motorcycle to reach Taronggo. The road ends in the village. Thus, traffic in Taronggo is very low and only a small number of outsiders visit the village. Taronggo is an interethnic as well as an interreligious community. The religious majority are Protestant Christians,<sup>23</sup> mainly living in the south of the village, its administrative center (Fig. 5).<sup>24</sup> Second in terms of number are those adhering to the Wana belief system: Wana who have resisted a religious conversion, most of them living in wooden pile houses in the north of the village, at the very end of the road (Fig. 6). The Muslim community takes the third place in numbers, most of whom settle at the entrance of Taronggo in the southeast. Further, few members of a Pentecostal church also live in Taronggo.

In 1930, the missionary A.C. Kruyt already mentions Taronggo as a newly built *kampung Wana* (BI, hamlet), as part of a colonial initiative that aimed at moving upland groups like the Wana from the upland terrain to centralized villages. A.C. Kruyt hints at the fact that

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<sup>23</sup> Due to the predominance of Protestantism in the research location I will in the following often use the term Christian as equivalent to Protestant Christian. As a matter of course I will always explicate whenever I am speaking of other Christians, for example Pentecostal.

<sup>24</sup> It consisted of around 72 households in 2011, 27 of them Protestant Christian and 25 of them Wana, 16 Muslim households, three Pentecostal and one Catholic household.

the Wana were unwilling to be resettled and only stayed in the *kampung* when there were visitors from outside such as government officials around.<sup>25</sup> Today, Wana have settled for more than two generations in Taronggo, whose inhabitants' roots lie in the area of Posangke and Ratobae, both within the nature reserve, and Salisarao. Most of Taronggo's residents are ethnically Wana, but many of them have married other ethnic people, like Mori, Bugis or Torajan (see Chapter 4).

Taronggo today is a village with a full administrative apparatus – the administrative head of the village is the *kepala desa* (BI). In the year 1979, the New Order government, inventing a new village administrative structure and unit as the lowest level of governmental organization, submitted a new legislation. From that year on, the authority of every village was ascribed to a *kepala desa*. As in other villages throughout Indonesia, Taronggo was attributed with an outsider *kepala desa* who did not speak the local language.<sup>26</sup> The current *kepala desa* is a Christian from Uemasi, Bungku Utara, married to a Muslim woman from Baturube. No administrative position in Taronggo today is occupied by Wana.

Given the various religious affiliations found in Taronggo, the village is home to a Christian Protestant church – the largest building in the village – which belongs to the Central Sulawesi Christian church (*Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah*, BI), the main Christian church formation in Central Sulawesi. There is also a small mosque in the Southeastern entrance to Taronggo and a Pentecostal church building that is currently in expansion planning, although the Pentecostal community is marginal in numbers. Plans for the erection of a *rumah adat* (BI), a house for Wana local custom,<sup>27</sup> are irregularly

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<sup>25</sup> Since the era of A.C. Kruyt the *kampung* of Taronggo has three times changed its location; currently it has for almost thirty years been located at the area of the former Wana *kampung* Uemasi, a *kampung* that had a school in the past but was relocated to the east, and took its name with it to the place of the current *kampung* of Uemasi.

<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Law 5 (*Undang Undang Republik Indonesia 5/1979 tentang Pemerintahan Desa*) insisted on an appointed village consultative assembly (LMD; *Lembaga Musyawarah Desa*) and village community resilience board (LKMD; *Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa*) under the authority of the *kepala desa*. In 1999 a new Law (*Undang Undang Republik Indonesia 22/1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah*) was passed and defined the unit *desa*, formerly a territorial unit, as a legal unit. Further, the new law made the unit *desa* more autonomous from broader governmental entities and paid more respect to local structures and customary regulations. Additionally, the LMD and LKMD were united in the structural unit of BPD (Badan Perwakilan Desa), which is, at least according to the law, elected by the villagers. BPD and *kepala desa* are supposed to work together and decide on financial, organizational issues, i.e. the village government. The BPD itself can terminate the legislature period of the *kepala desa* (Antlov 2003: 198–99).

<sup>27</sup> The term *adat* (BI) has ambiguous meanings. It can be translated as local right system but also as culture, customs, traditions or values. For a discussion of *adat* in relation to *agama*, religion, see Chapter 4.3.2. For a general discussion of *adat* in Indonesia see Davidson and Henley (2007).



discussed but so far have not been realized. Taronggo is also home to an elementary school, the *sekolah dasar* (BI), also called SD, where the village's children, regardless of their religious profession, can go to school. For medical care, the government has erected a stationary medical center, a small house supposed to function as a home for a nurse.<sup>28</sup> In case of medical need, people also turn to one of the three local kiosks to buy medication, or visit the *puskesmas* (*Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat*, BI), a local community health station, in Baturube – an hour's motorcycle drive away. The closest hospital can be found in Kolonodale, which from Uewaju up in the mountains involves an approximately four-to five-day hike, and from Posangke a two- to three-day hike. For people from Taronggo it means driving first to Baturube and then crossing the Tomori Bay by ferry. Despite the strenuous route to the hospital, transportation costs are relatively high for the Taronggo community and especially for upland Wana.

Most people of Taronggo are peasants, planting cash crops like cocoa and copra; some of them have just recently started to engage in rubber plantation. In the 1990s, a national palm oil company, PT Kurnia, opened a plantation in the vicinity of Taronggo. Taronggo today is enclosed completely by palm oil plantations; the village is nested between the nature reserve to the north (Fig. 7) and the plantation around the settlement itself. Some villagers have working contracts with PT Kurnia while others only work occasionally in the plantation, and others plant their own oil palms (see Chapter 5). The palm oil plantation has become the biggest source of quick cash income for the villagers, with even Salisarao Wana occasionally working a few days or weeks in the plantation, though seldom on a regular basis.

So far no specific research on marginality has yet been conducted among the Wana. Nevertheless, the extensive literature by the US anthropologist Jane M. Atkinson touches relevant aspects on this topic (1979, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1996, 2004). Her conclusions from a two-year research stay between 1974 and 1976 in the area of Ue Bone, north of the Morowali Nature Reserve, mainly cover dimensions of shamanism, religion and gender among the Wana that are very relevant to my own analysis. Although her research location was far away from my own I draw a great deal of my understanding from her insights.

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<sup>28</sup> However, the appointed nurse was only rarely apparent during the time of the field study. Months passed by without the nurse setting foot on Taronggo.

An M.A. thesis by Cynthia Riccardi (1999) submitted at Ohio University deals with agriculture among the Wana of Kayupoli, focusing mainly on the documentation of the swidden cycle. Between 1995 and 1996 the US anthropologist Michael Alvard conducted research on hunting practices and sustainability among the Wana of Posangke (2000a; 2000b). Additionally there are two short articles by the environmental activist and current governmental representative Jabar Lahadji dealing with minority rights and the impact of reserve zones on the Wana (Lahadji 1999, 2001, 2008), and Nasution Camang, director of the NGO Yayasan Merah Putih in Palu, has written a short case study on Wana of the Northern Bulang area (2003). Based on his cooperation with the latter, Marcus Colchester has also written a short overview of the area (2009). The extensive work by the Dutch missionary Albert C. Kruyt, published in 1930, offers highly valuable insights into historical conditions among the Wana (1930). Regarding literature on my specific research area there is only the work by Alvard on the Posangke area; no research has been conducted on Salisarao or Tarrongo.



**Figure 1** Wana house in Posangke, within the nature reserve.



**Figure 2** A Wana lipu in Salisarao.





**Figure 3 The Salisarao Mountains.**



**Figure 4 The Soelato River.**





**Figure 5** House of a Christian family in Taronggo.



**Figure 6** House of a Wana family in Taronggo.





**Figure 7 Houses in Taronggo, the forest demarcating the nature reserve's border.**

## 1.4 FIELDWORK SETTING AND METHODS

### 1.4.1 Entering the Field

In 2010, I entered the field for an initial preliminary research stay. Based on extensive communication with the documentary filmmakers Gerard Nougazol and Martine Journet,<sup>29</sup> who have known the Southern Wana area for more than 20 years, and also further communication with Jane Atkinson, who had helped with important insights, I decided to take a first tour covering the southern region of what Atkinson has called “the Wana region”. Accompanied by Ajeran Donda, a local guide, I passed through a number of Wana settlements located within the Morowali Nature Reserve, starting in the alluvial plain of Kayupoli, where we added Apa Ingus, a middle-aged Wana, to our group. From Kayupoli and KeaKea we hiked to Taronggo, the village mentioned above, where we only rested for provisions and a good night’s sleep – though in the end this would become my main fieldwork location. We left for the North, hiking up the strenuous route through the Wana mountains towards Posangke, located high in the uplands of the nature reserve. In Posangke I got the chance to observe my first healing ritual, the *momago*. This ritual, bringing together a great number of people, played an important part in Atkinson’s studies on Wana shamanism and I was eager to observe it myself. There I met Apa De’e, the head, *kepala suku* (BI), of the Posangke Wana, one of the four Wana sub-clans. Despite his very advanced age, Apa De’e had walked a great distance through the rugged terrain in the upland to take part in the *momago* ritual. I was deeply impressed by his person and was excited when he offered me the opportunity to come back and spend my fieldwork time with him and his family.

After this first initial stay in the Morowali mountains, back in Germany I arranged my actual field research plan, applied for a fieldwork permit with RISTEK (*Kementrian Riset, Teknologi dan Pendidikan Tinggi*), the Indonesian Research Unit, and prepared my equipment for a stay in the mountainous Wana area of Posangke. However, my plans were to change significantly. After I had arrived in Jakarta in September 2010, some problems arose with regard to my securing a one-year research permit for the nature

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<sup>29</sup> The filmmakers Gerard Nougazol and Martine Journet have produced a number of outstanding documentaries on Wana shamanship, for example, “Indo Pino” (2002) and “Gods and Satans” (2005).

reserve where Posangke is located. It was with great sadness that I further received news that Apa De'e had died soon after I had left for Germany.

For the moment I had to reorganize my plans. I quickly decided to begin my fieldwork in the village of Taronggo as a starting point. However, I planned to leave for Posangke as soon as I arranged for another place to stay there.

My initial research question was focused on local knowledge and epistemologies among Wana people and was based on theoretical considerations that I had worked on in my Master thesis. However, the realities I was confronted with when I entered the field in Taronggo, the lowland village, were too unsteady and disruptive to follow such a study. Very soon I noticed that my focus was of no actual relevance, not for my informants, and not even for myself any longer. Most of my early discussions touched upon the topic of marginality and circled around Wana positionings towards the state and in relation to their other-religious and other-ethnic neighbors, around their marginal beliefs and their economic situation, as my interlocutors continually described themselves as “stupid”, “poor” and “helpless”. I therefore adapted my study to the local social, economic and religious realities that were presented to me through my field stay and I decided to write about Wana marginality.<sup>30</sup> Living in Taronggo shed light on the daily forms of marginalization and resistance between the religious “camps” mingled in the village. I was further struck by the difference between Wana living in the lowlands and their upland neighbors in Salisarao, just a few hours' walking distance from the village. I never left for the Posangke Mountains for further research as I had initially intended, for I did not receive an opportunity to renew my Natural Reserve Forest research permit. But, just as Atkinson had written a couple of years earlier, mobility continues to play an important role in Wana culture: Wana from Posangke as well as Kayupoli, Marisa, KeaKea – settlements in the area south-west of the nature reserve – frequently visited Taronggo to sell their resin, to buy coffee, to visit friends, to attend ceremonies and for various other reasons. Because of this mobility I got plenty opportunities to discuss matters with Wana from inside the reserve as well.

I lived in Taronggo with the family of Apa and Indo Dheri and their 7-year-old daughter Udu. Apa and Indo Dheri are Wana who had moved from the upland area of Posangke to

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<sup>30</sup> Tsing describes a similar process of coming to write about marginality; in her research setting among the Meratus Dayak “it was difficult to have a discussion about almost any topic I might want to explore – gender, forest use, ritual etc. – without paying attention to the context of ethnic asymmetry and political status vis-à-vis the state” (1993: 13).



Taronggo a couple of years previously after one of their daughters had died. They had never converted to another, “world” religion but continue to follow their own Wana belief system. Their two elder daughters, one already married and the other going to school in Tentena, are converted Christians. Apa Dheri started a couple of years previously to work for the local palm oil company. Every morning except for Sunday he left early on his bicycle to go to work at the plantation, while Indo Dheri during daytime either stayed at home or worked in the family garden as well as on several fields owned by family relatives in the surroundings of Taronggo. Apa Dheri had already worked for three months as a sporadic assistant for the anthropologist Michael Alvard in the 1990s, so he felt it would be suitable for me to stay at his house. Due to his experience with an anthropologist he had an understanding of what I wanted and what I needed right from the beginning – and he never forgot that my stay had a goal.

As many other anthropologists have described for other fieldwork situations, I was soon somewhat “adopted” by Apa and Indo Dheri and I began calling them father and mother, and they calling me daughter – even though Indo Dheri was only a couple of years older than me. Needless to say, my status as a paying tenant and a privileged white female were often reflected upon by all of us. We openly discussed problems that entered their household with me moving in – jealous neighbors, skeptical bosses, a large number of new pets and frequent visitors were only some of the problems that I brought upon them. I am mentioning this to pay respect to the sometimes over-romanticized notion of “becoming adopted” by a field family. We all knew and discussed this delicate matter but in the end, despite the unequal power distribution, I certainly cannot refer to our relationship without using the word friendship.

I have used my interlocutor’s real names where I believe it would have been their wish. Anonymizing all informants would not have been in the interest of my informants who were amazed by pictures and names they saw in the book by Jane Atkinson as well as in the writings of A.C. Kruyt. However, due to sometimes controversial standpoints and politically hot topics presented in this thesis I have used pseudonyms when necessary. In those cases I have replaced names with typical regional names and details of location, age or gender of my interlocutors will only be revealed if they are of relevance to the content of the statement.

### **1.4.2 Methods**

The thesis is based on a total of 14 months of field research; the first phase took place between February and March 2010, followed by the main field stay from September 2010 until July 2011, and a final visit lasting from March until May 2012.

Most of the empirical basis of this thesis rests on research methods that were of qualitative character. During the first weeks I worked with a field assistant, Ajeran Donda, who had accompanied me from the city of Kolonodale and introduced me to the people of Taronggo and the upland Wana region. Thanks to his occupational status as an occasional tourist guide and sporadic film assistant for the above-mentioned filmmakers Nougazol and Journet he knew the area very well. However, since he was not Wana himself, I early decided to continue on my own and to look for another assistant who lived in the area. However, the politics of doing research in a multi-religious and multi-ethnic community as diverse as the field situation I had entered made me realize that this would be an impossible task. Many interviews I conducted were about highly delicate matters centering on felt dimensions of marginalization and religious difference. Bringing an assistant from another religious or ethnic division would have made many interviews impossible. For example, a number of interviews came to an abrupt halt when an uninvited guest came along and, often unintentionally, disturbed the intimacy of the interview with his presence as an other-religious or simply other-ethnic person. Hence, I worked mainly on my own and only received sporadic assistance for the upland census from a young male Wana.

#### ***Contested Participation***

Participant observation was the main strategic method (Bernard 2006: 343) I used during my fieldwork. However, participation cannot be a neutral endeavor within a culturally and religiously diverse field setting such as my field site. Hauser-Schäublin points to the difficulties of “contested participation” (2008: 45) in polarized communities, where a constant (re-)negotiation of distance and nearness is necessary to be able to participate; participation can be misunderstood as taking sides.

In terms of my housing situation, I located myself in the Wana area of Taronggo. This was a source of surprise at first for other religious members of the Taronggo community and soon became a source of skepticism for some of my Christian interlocutors. Christians in Taronggo believed me to be a Christian myself and I struggled during the first months to position myself neatly within the religious politics of Taronggo, which I only later came to understand (see Chapter 4). While Wana within Taronggo were in the beginning surprised to see me stay with one of them, as they felt their houses were not suitable for my imagined needs and desires, they soon accepted my decision and they would come to visit me without any hesitation. Upland Wana from Salisarao were suspicious at the start, since I lived in the lowlands and interacted with all the people from Taronggo more or less equally. Once they understood my interest in their culture and realized I would not come to the upland region with any missionary goals they also started to come to my place, as I was able to visit and stay with them in their upland houses on a regular basis. Only a few of the wealthier (Muslim or Christian) community members of Taronggo came to visit me where I stayed. Most of the non-Wana interlocutors would not come to my house for interviews or for some small talk where I lived, but instead insisted I should visit them in their own houses. The choice of a living place, the frequency of visits, as well as the places and people I talked to were all part of a negotiation process for the community I lived in and were often a subject of discussion, and thus were deeply affected by social boundaries and fields of power within the fieldwork area, and I had to work out how to wander between the different camps without breaking any social rules – a difficult task.

While Taronggo constituted half of my fieldwork base, the other half was the upland area of Salisarao, a region within walking distance from Taronggo, where Wana live in scattered households instead of centralized villages, have no electricity or road access, and in rainy times cannot cross the river, the natural border between upland and lowland regions in the area. Here, I mainly stayed with Apa Main, the single male leading shaman of the area, or with the families of Indo and Apa Laku, and Indo Ica and her husband Apa nDenda. I hiked at least 4-5 times a week up to Salisarao and I often spent the nights up there. My fieldwork was dual-sited; it gave me the opportunity to see and compare upland and lowland dynamics of Wana marginality and general realities there. In the lowland region of Taronggo my main interlocutors variously represented all the religious sections

within the village as I tried to research Wana marginality from all possible angles relevant for Wana.

### ***Interviews***

The other main method I used in the field was interviews. I conducted a number of structured and standardized interviews, following a question catalogue, but soon I realized that most of my informants were highly skeptical concerning these methods and resisted my attempts with creative attitudes. Thus, it was mainly in long, semi-structured and problem-focused interviews that I ended up gaining the relevant information. A few interviews were conducted in strict privacy, between anthropologist and interviewee only, while most were conducted in the interviewees' houses where frequent visits from neighbors, family and friends were normal; similarly, Barker notes: "Where social ties are dense and privacy is not a priority [...] almost all interviews are likely to be group interviews of one sort or another" (Barker 2012: 56). Consequently, I would also distinguish between a group interview and an individual interview. There were interview situations where visitors appeared, but did not interrupt the content of the interview and were just passive members. In those cases I would not use the term group interview. However, since a large number of interviews went on for hours, often from dusk until dawn, an interview would change its character from single interview to a spontaneous group interview once visitors arrived, only to end with a two-person situation by the end again. I chose interview partners in the beginning following local recommendations, and later based on daily conversations or information that I had gained in an opportunistic manner. I chose a number of central informants based on their expertise and status. Apa Main for example was the main shaman living close to Taronggo, and an expert for discussing questions of religious concern. I also made sure to conduct interviews with Christian and Muslim Wana, and thus had three Christian interview partners with whom I conducted several interviews, as well as two Muslim informants for recurring interviews.

When the situation in Taronggo changed (see Chapter 5), and political and immediate actions were increasingly coming to dominate the daily conversations, I also used focus-group interviews that were related to recent developments, meetings or events. I further conducted focus-group interviews in relation to specific rituals.

## *Language*

Part of my methods, as well as a daily necessity, was the task of learning the local language. Especially with upland Wana, who are seldom fluent in the Indonesian language, it was indispensable to learn their own language. Furthermore, the fact that I was studying Wana language, called *Bahasa Taa*, was interpreted as a sign of respect towards their culture that Wana appreciated very much. I was able to learn Taa with the aid of notes provided by Jane Atkinson in her PhD thesis (1979); a dictionary by Adriani of the Bare'e language (1928), of which Taa, considered by its author, is a subdialect; and especially the huge and indispensable unpublished notes by the documentary makers Nougazol and Journet. Most important was the daily necessity to communicate, and my best teachers were Indo and Apa Dheri with whom I lived. However, time in the field was not sufficient to become fluent in Taa and my interviews were thus dominated by Indonesian language, mixed with small Taa sections. Whenever paragraphs taken from interviews are quoted in the course of this work I will use English translations in the interest of easier comprehension.

It is important to note that most Wana interlocutors were greatly pleased with my Indonesian language skills since they were not as perfect as they had expected. I had started to learn *Bahasa Indonesia* in Germany and took a short but intensive language course in Yogyakarta, but when I arrived in Taronggo my Indonesian skills were still basic. I improved my language skills with the Wana people I spent most time with. The result was astonishing; while I had (and still have) problems understanding well-educated or city-based Indonesians, I can freely take in conversations with Wana who are generally too shy and timid to speak Indonesian with their more educated village neighbors or with visitors from outside. Once they realized that my language was “more like theirs”, they felt encouraged to engage in a discussion with the privileged white female whose Indonesian, to their surprise and often amusement, was “as poor as theirs”. This was an important “ice breaker” for my initial phase of fieldwork. The decision to choose a language became a political tool with respect to the interreligious and interethnic setting I lived and worked in, concentrating on questions of marginalization and marginality. Whether I chose to speak Taa or Indonesian had a deep influence on my discussion partners and made me re-position myself within the social structure. Let me illustrate this with an example with my non-Wana interlocutors: Whenever I traveled to other villages

or cities like Bungku or Kolonodale and accidentally met non-Wana people from Taronggo there, my Wana skills were proudly presented to friends and relatives in the cities. However, when outsiders came for a visit to Taronggo, Indonesian was the language chosen and I was seldom addressed in Taa by non-Wana interlocutors.

### **1.4.3 Fieldwork Politics – Some Preliminary Remarks**

The anthropological “field” is a construct and it is easily asked where the field actually begins and ends, and where its borders lie (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). I believe “my field” started way back in Germany. Since “the field” is hardly a merely geographical location I follow Gupta and Ferguson (1997) in questioning the notion of a clear distinction between home and field. The field started for me in the library of my university where I began researching possible fieldwork sites that would suit my research goal. In order to find answers to my initial research question, which focused on indigenous knowledge systems, I was looking for an area containing the most “other of others” possible, to use Hannerz’ words (1986: 363, quoted in Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 8). Speaking with other academics and Indonesia experts, the picture I – and we – had in mind of my possible field site was similar to the pictures that were presented to me when I came to Indonesia. From Jakarta to Palu and the closer city of Kolonodale, “pictures of the primitive” followed me, and I took a central role in searching for them. The acts of searching for, reproducing and thereby producing pictures of the “primitive” are therefore placeless connections between home and the field; local discourses I heard, wrote down, and took home with me were always intermingled with other local discourses that I had brought to the field. Exchanging and sharing knowledge, experiences, assumptions, generalizations, and questioning them and criticizing them, are not single, independent spheres of either here or there. They are parts of a spaceless field that cannot be easily reduced to an actual, positivist place that is strictly different and apart from the discourses and persons that fill it. Fieldwork, and the role of anthropologists, are thus always a political matter, especially when dealing with marginalization processes. Even though anthropologists should remain neutral and often choose to observe rather than participate too deeply in the community in which they conduct their fieldwork, many struggle with this difficult task – as did I. Although I will draw upon the issue of my own role in the field in detail in Chapter 4 and 5, it is necessary to briefly introduce the contested role of

the anthropologist in the course of this thesis. I had tried to pay respect and attention to all religious and ethnic camps in the community of Taronggo. Wana nevertheless were generally very shy and cautious regarding my presence there. Many assumed I had some missionary attempts, since in the beginning I portrayed myself as a Christian, and I believe there were a number of Wana who did not trust my intentions at all. The general distrust weakened over time and after a few months I felt welcomed and respected by all parties in the village as well as in Salisaro regardless of ethnic or religious belonging.

This changed when I started to take part, at least behind the scenes, in some concrete action against the potential loss of land for Wana from the upland area. In 2010 Salisarao Wana were facing the threat of losing their land for the sake of an expansion of the palm oil plantation and feared they would be resettled to the lowlands. While some lowland neighbors were welcoming this idea as a development initiative, I listened to my interlocutors from Salisarao. All Wana have experienced historical and ongoing marginalization processes. They are not helpless victims who waited for the anthropologist to save them. Instead, they turned to the privileged and therefore powerful outsider for some support – a plea I felt I just had to try to answer. I tried my best to be of support for them and for example initiated network-building activities with a local NGO. While I was supporting the Wana, my situation within the lowland village of Taronggo had changed. A number of my non-Wana interlocutors were not pleased about my support for their upland neighbors for various reasons. The result was that I could no longer easily engage in conversations with some of my former interview partners, and some people started to ignore me. I had taken sides, and so had they.

Although I paid attention to opinions and explanations from non-Wana locals as well as officials and outsiders, I am writing this thesis mainly from the Wana perspective. In the following, I will therefore relate a story in which the reader will doubtless perceive the role the anthropologist plays in its outcome. I “participated” – to a certain extent. Once I had started to do so, my role in the field began to change immensely. Since my research question focuses mainly on the way in which Wana perceive their marginalized standing, this thesis will therefore present a biased perspective. I will come back to this topic of an Engaged Anthropology in Chapter 5 but for now I wish for the reader to keep this situation in mind.

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## 2 MARGINALITY AND UPLAND GROUPS

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### 2.1 THE CONCEPT OF MARGINALITY

Marginality has become a key term in the humanities as well as in the social sciences.<sup>31</sup> Anthropology as an academic discipline has focused from its very beginnings on minorities and marginal communities, while other fields, for example psychology and geography, also have a special focus on the subject, developing scope models for assessing and measuring marginality and scales of marginality. Despite the common interest in marginality, the approaches towards marginality have developed quite differently.

Before discussing the meanings of marginality more closely, a first glimpse at the etymology of the term provides a useful starting point for investigating the concept. “Margin” stems from the Latin term *margo*, which means edge or border. The existence of an edge or border implies a counterpart, the core or center. It displays the relational character of the term margin that has its roots in a dualistic dialectic. This counts for the phenomenon of marginality as well as for marginalization, i.e. the resulting process. Marginality is furthermore a term that exists alongside a great number of terms describing similar relations: for example, “‘border’, ‘frontier’, ‘limit’, ‘boundary’, ‘edge’, ‘periphery’, ‘threshold’, ‘space between’” (Dowdy 2011: 2).<sup>32</sup> Just recently Harms et al. dedicated a section in the HAU Journal of Ethnographic Theory to the idea of remoteness and described the concept as having a quite similar meaning to the way in which I use the concept of marginality within the scope of this thesis:

“remoteness is never fixed; it is not a predetermined and enduring place but a process situated in dynamic fields of power. The condition is always infused with the edgy feeling experienced by people living in a world where the relations of

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<sup>31</sup> A reduced version of this chapter has already been published elsewhere (Grumblies forthcoming).

<sup>32</sup> Dowdy further points to the fact that many fields “employ ‘margins’ and ‘centers’ as conceptual metrics to grasp the hierarchical entailments of socio-historical flux. Moreover, much of this literature unites normative and descriptive methods, thereby giving ‘margins’ a rhetorical charge it often lacks in ordinary discourse. In other words, the margins concept is not simply a way to represent and index social inequality, but can be used to communicate” (Dowdy 2011: 1-2).



inside and outside, near and far, proximate and remote are always contested” (Harms et al. 2014: 364).

Although a great variety of terms similar to marginality have been developed, anthropological literature remains surprisingly vague concerning the meanings of marginality. Rösing even asserts that although cultural anthropology has a very close connection to marginality due to its focus on indigenous communities, “the field could not care less about the concept, which is a rather surprising fact” (2000: 89).<sup>33</sup> Marginality has been a matter of analysis in anthropological studies from the beginning of the subject’s history and is treated in a variety of ethnographies and articles. Yet anthropological literature has so far kept a strategic distance from a general methodology towards marginality as a concept and instead most authors assess marginality with a specific focus on local relations and regional concepts. Röttger-Rössler and Stodulka assert how anthropological studies tend to highlight specific “situated contingencies of marginality” (2014: 16). What is lacking, it is claimed, is a more general theoretical insight into marginality; “As an inherently anthropological topic, it is surprising though that marginality has rarely been scrutinized conceptually beyond the particularities of its respective ethnographic setting” (2014: 16).

Nonetheless, revealing the concept’s genealogy as an emerging focus of anthropological studies shows that a profound conceptualization of marginality and margins is a tool of analysis within the discipline. In the following I will show how marginality entered the anthropological domain as a theoretical contribution. Since the term is widely used in other disciplines it is therefore necessary first to briefly assess the genealogy of marginality itself as a term and its application in sociology and geography to assess the quite different ways in which marginality entered anthropological discourse. I will then show how marginality is conceptualized as an anthropological field, tracing its disciplinary development and entanglement with other analytical markers like center and periphery; yet the representation of “marginality theory”, as undefined as the field is, can at best be partial. In order to analyze the construction of marginality within the context of Wana dealings with their own socio-cultural positionings within the Indonesian society in the rest of this thesis, I will then show how marginality is an integral part of

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<sup>33</sup> She bases her observation on the lack of references to the term marginalization in indexes in anthropological literature, which “reveals a conspicuous absence of the concept” (Rösing 2000: 89). The argument that the (non)existence of a concept in textbook indexes can be used as a reliable indicator of the relative importance of a given subject in a theoretical field remains, however, unconvincing in my opinion.

anthropological elaborations of upland–lowland relations, and will further assess the specific Indonesian context.

### **2.1.1 The Birth of a Concept**

Robert Park is generally considered the “father of marginality” and related concepts. In his seminal article “Human migration and the marginal man” (1928) he describes migrants as marginal people who are cast between two cultures. Focusing on American Jewish immigrants, Park concentrated on the psychological problems that would occur through a position “at the margins” of society as he asserts: “It is in the mind of the marginal man – where the changes and fusions of culture are going on – that we can best study the processes of civilization and of progress” (Park 1928: 893). His initial ideas were extended by Everett Stonequist, an American sociologist and student of Park, who wrote the influential book “The Marginal Man” (1937) and concentrated on the situation of second- and third-generation American Jewish immigrants as well as African American immigrants. For Stonequist marginality was closely intertwined with the category of race as presenting one of the ideal types of marginal person. The traits of marginality cast within “mixed racial ancestry” according to Park portray a complex position for the “marginal man” whose location within a society becomes thereby highly conflicted:

“The most obvious type of marginal man is the person of mixed racial ancestry. His very biological origin places him between the two races. Generally he has distinctive physical traits which mark him off from both parent races. He also frequently possesses some characteristics of manner, thought and speech which are derived from both lines of his ancestry. Because of these peculiarities the mixed blood presents a special problem for the community: what is to be his place in the social organization?” (Stonequist 1961 [1937]: 10–11).

Stonequist’s marginal man is cast between the wish to integrate himself into the new culture and the resistance coming from the new society towards him. According to Stonequist and Park, such a marginal position may result in a personality disorder, since marginality could easily be “manifested in the changed type of personality which it produces” (Park 1928: 887), the outcome of emotions raised by the negative experience. Of course, from a current perspective, Stonequist and Park deserve heavy criticism – not only for the inherent essentialist positioning but also for generalizing a marginal person,

relating to a much narrowed version of the person who stands on the other side of the marginality spectrum. Similarly, Deegan (2005) argues, referring to Park and Stonequist:

“They assumed that the hegemonic view of white, able-bodied, capitalist, and heterosexual men was the standard, ‘normal’ experience. Within a competitive society, however, only a small number of white men fit the image of capitalist success, political power, youth, heterosexuality, and health that is idealized. The marginal person is, therefore, the most typical person in American life” (2005: 220).

Despite this quite essentialist positioning, the genealogy of the term marginality starts with Park and Stonequist, who had opened the door for a new generation of scholars dealing with various aspects of marginality. Stonequist and Park conceived of marginality as a situation between two or more cultures, describing the point of contact, where both cultures meet and overlap, where hybrid identities are “cast between two fires” (Stonequist 1961 [1937]: 101) and are “poised in psychological uncertainty between two or more social worlds” (Stonequist 1961 [1937]: 8). It was only later that the idea of marginality was used, fashioned in an oppositional dialectic, to describe a position at the edge relative to a center instead of focusing on the situation of individual in-between-ness.

### **2.1.2 Sociological Approach**

Stemming from these early considerations of marginality a major approach towards the concept became established within social science research. The model developed by Park and Stonequist was replaced by the term “marginal situation” by Dickie-Clark (1966), who criticized the earlier approaches for not clearly differentiating between marginal personality and marginal situation, the latter not necessarily leading to the former, “especially as it affects the structure and the functioning of groups” (1966: 1). For Dickie-Clark,

“the marginal situation is a special case of hierarchical situations. What makes an hierarchical situation marginal in character, is any inconsistency in the ranking of individual or collectivity [...] such inconsistency is the essence of the marginal situation or what might be called sociological marginality” (1966: 185, see also Dunne 2005: 13).

This new approach argued that the idea of marginality was not as simple and one-dimensional as it had been portrayed in the original writings of Stonequist and Park, but was rather a complex and multifaceted condition (Dennis 2007: 2763). The heyday of marginality theory within this approach in sociology and political geography can thus be seen as set in the 1960s when the concept was mainly discussed with respect to two dimensions – cultural marginality and economic marginality – studied mainly by scholars working on Latin America. At that time this was a new form of marginality theory that “emerged at the shatterbelt of two conflicting paradigms” (Ward 2004: 184) called dependency and modernization theory.<sup>34</sup> In Latin American studies the concept was generally applied to inland migrants who lived at the edges of big cities and presented an idea of absolute marginality towards a system that was utterly capitalistic. With increasing hyper-urbanization the growing demand for jobs was not satisfied. People at the margins of these cities, left without jobs to make a living, were considered a hindrance to national progress and useless for the goals of monopoly capitalism (Munck 2013: 748). Against this background marginality in its theoretization was criticized deeply by Perlman, who revealed a very new perspective towards the concept based on her extensive sociological study on poverty in favelas around Rio de Janeiro, called “The Myth of Marginality” (Perlman 1976). Countering central ideas of modernization theory, she highlighted how the concept of marginality was used to justify claims by the state to remove the “urban poor” from Brazilian favelas. The idea of the poor as excluded from the mainstream and profoundly different from the rest of society had been backed up by social scientists and had helped to legitimize government policies to remove them from the favelas, she claimed. In this view, Perlman described the idea of marginality as a “a material force as well as an ideological concept and a description of social reality” (Perlman 1976: 15). Perlman however showed that favela residents were very well

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<sup>34</sup> The basis of modernization theory was a capitalist economic system, in which the “modern industrialized state” was the result of a linear historical process consisting of different phases of development. According to this scheme “underdeveloped countries”, cast in a prehistoric stance, will have to pass through these phases to reach the level of “developed” countries. Hence marginality was caused by and explained through a specific cultural condition. According to the theory, countries of the South were given a “promise of a better future to the new ruling classes that were accumulating tokens of Westernization” (Rist 2002: 109). A counter point of view was given by so-called dependency theory. In this interpretation the problem was identified in terms of the integration of the South into the world-market-system. Marginality is in this view the result of colonial as well as post-colonial structures, with an emphasis on economic reasoning. It is the inextricable link between development and underdevelopment which makes the countries of the South dependent on the North; or, in other words, the existing structures benefited from the desire for development. Both modernization and dependency theory received heavy criticism and lost soon their initial importance.

integrated into the society economically as well as politically, but were by these means simultaneously victims of repression and exploitation, culturally stigmatized and socially excluded from a closed system (1976: 195; 2005), but not at all marginal to the society. Perlman's critique had a huge impact on marginality studies and the term came to lose its significance for scholars working on Latin America who were turning more and more to the "the less 'toxic' (see Sachs 1992) concepts of social exclusion, inequality, injustice, and spatial segregation" (Perlman 2005: 11). However, the sociological approach to marginality continued in some way to mingle in the shadows of supposed meanings and fuzzy interpretations, critiqued by many sociological scholars as an extremely vague concept, or, as Cullen and Pretes make clear, "leaving these terms [i.e. marginality and marginal regions] open to manifold definitions" (Cullen and Pretes 2000: 215).<sup>35</sup>

The sociological approach, generally shared for example by geographers, economists and sociologists, conceives of marginality in a positivistic understanding as something differing from a social norm. Marginality here is considered backward compared to the general social mainstream, either in political, economic or social life. Grasping the field of marginality in such a sense usually aims at improving a specific disadvantaged community and implies a drive for applied research. Researchers following this approach usually seek "quantitative indicators of marginality [...], while others have tried to use a survey approach to come up with qualitative indicators" (Hussain 2009: 4). The sociological approach towards marginality differentiates profoundly from anthropological concerns with it. Valentine even points out that the two approaches towards marginality rarely reference one another, and displays this fact as "a sad example of academic segregation" (Valentine 1994: 36). However, while sociological approaches to marginality have certainly influenced anthropological concerns at least in some ways, the concept has entered anthropological discourse in a quite different way.

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<sup>35</sup> In the same line of critique, this danger of an unclear meaning of marginalization within the sociological approach has been presented by del Pilar and Udasco, who have reviewed research approaches towards marginality in geography and social science, showing "that there is no agreement in the social science literature about the meaning of [it]" (Del Pilar and Udasco 2004: 5). Their outcome showed that there was no common connection between any of the approaches they studied. For the authors the result is clear: "This is clear evidence that marginality lacks construct validity. [...] As a scientific concept, marginality cannot work if it has multiple levels of meaning. However, this is just what has happened. [...] [T]he construct lacks validity" (Del Pilar and Udasco 2004: 11).

### 2.1.3 Anthropological Approach: Marginality as Social Construction

In anthropology the notion of marginality is nowadays generally based on an approach towards marginality as a social construction. A great number of anthropologists draw from the idea of marginality as socially constructed to write about essentializing and fixed categories such as center and periphery, questioning the power of a naturalized center and studying the relationship between margins and centers, which mutually define and co-create each other (Hussain 2009: 5).<sup>36</sup> This is the approach I will focus on in the course of this work.

In the beginning of the discipline's history, anthropology as a subject needed to find its own specific "intellectual space" (Rapport 2014: 12) to strengthen its position as an academic institution. Grounded in a scheme of evolutionary development, the first anthropological authors were studying marginal communities as a way to understand how Western societies had developed over time. Marginality here was connotated as an earlier stage of human progress. When later theories made space for new conceptualizations of culture and cultural diversity, anthropology continued searching for alternate communities while confirming essentialist notions of the "primitive" and the "civilized", largely ignoring interrelations between supposed centers and their peripheries (e.g., Hussain 2009: 6). Focusing on the "primitive other" (Fabian 1983) as the academic substance of the discipline, early anthropologists like Malinowski thus produced a vast amount of anthropological literature in a naturalist fashion, invented and inspired by Malinowski's rhetorical genre, which closely resembled other "studies of nature" (Rapport 2014: 12).<sup>37</sup> Following a realist style to present indigenous communities, "the Trobrianders were naturalized, and thereby marked as an uncivilized part of nature, something to be dominated, tamed and transcended by modern civilisation" (Rapport

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<sup>36</sup> Hussain also points towards psychological scientists who determine the concept as a way to cope with individual responses to the dominance of a system, while political geographers highlight the meanings of borders and frontier relations within a center-margin approach, taking "marginality as residing in certain stereotypical beliefs and their markers, such as race and ethnicity [...]. Marginality is studied as a deviation from the norm, but the norm itself remains unquestioned" (Hussain 2009: 5).

<sup>37</sup> Early anthropological concerns with the "savage, primitive mind", e.g. Lévy-Bruhl *The "Soul" of the Primitive* (1928) or Lévi-Strauss' *The Savage Mind* (1966), aimed at searching for differences in mind between people from varying background: "Do non-Western peoples think differently from Western people and, if so, how?" (Dove et al. 2007: 130). Dividing between Western-scientific and local traditional knowledge systems is reified in the rise of the interest in local knowledge in the 1980s (Dove 2000), continuing until today.

2014: 13).<sup>38</sup> Just as Malinowski himself has propagated: “the final goal, of which an Ethnographer should never lose sight [...] is, briefly, to grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realise his vision of his world” (Malinowski 1961 [1922]: 25).

When increasing numbers of critical voices protested against colonial and imperialist constellations around the world, anthropology started to reflect upon its own history nested within the colonial project. Triggered by Asad’s “Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter” (1973) anthropology set the ground for a self-reflective mode of writing. Post-colonial thinkers were on the rise, like Said (1978), who pointed out how the “Orient” was nothing but a mere projection of the West, a construction, simultaneously reaffirming its authority and power while homogenizing those cultures that were traditionally subject to exploitation by the “West”. As one of the most influential post-colonial writers, Spivak paid some critical attention to marginality as a concept; for her, as she writes in 1993, it was a “buzzword in cultural critique” (1993: 55). Drawing upon Foucault’s work on sexuality, she claims:

“One must not suppose that there exists a certain sphere of ‘marginality’ that would be the legitimate concern of a free and disinterested scientific inquiry were it not the object of mechanisms of exclusion brought to bear by the economic or ideological requirements of power. If ‘marginality’ is being constituted as an area of investigation, this is only because relations of power have established it as a possible object” (Foucault 1978: 98; textual modification added by and quoted in Spivak 1993: 59).<sup>39</sup>

For her, the conceptualization of margins and the inclusion of those who are marginalized within a center-based discourse have to be perceived as mere constructions of the center (1988). Postcolonial ideas were further developed when Homi Bhabha put forward the view of hybridity “that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (1994: 5). Hybridity as an ambivalent concept, and thus enabled a view of permeable borders between dominance and subordination, between the self and the other. Its mutually constructed character thus portrayed a new notion of culture and the position of

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<sup>38</sup> However, Lewis points to the fact that Malinowski was in fact analysing indigenous groups within their relation to market centers in his work “The Dynamics of culture change” (Malinowski 1961, see Lewis 1998: 724).

<sup>39</sup> Original quote by Foucault: “One must not suppose that there exists a certain sphere of sexuality that would be the legitimate concern of a free and disinterested scientific inquiry were it not the object of mechanisms of prohibition brought to bear by the economic or ideological requirements of power. If sexuality was constituted as an area of investigation, this was only because relations of power had established it as a possible object” (Foucault 1978: 98).

margins as a field of hybridity. Subaltern studies were nevertheless also criticized for their dualistic notion of domination and subordination. Dei for example points out how postcolonial studies largely failed to pay attention to specific historical settings in which marginalized spheres were situated:

“Postcolonial theory dehistoricizes and homogenizes human identities as totally/completely fragmented, multiple and transient. In so doing, postcoloniality negates/repudiates the repressive presence of collective oppressions, colonial exploitations and group marginality, as well as the shared histories of collective resistances of marginalized groups” (Dei 2000: 116).

However, within the so-called literary turn (Scholte 1987) anthropology focused on a new conceptualization of margins and other essentialist categories as fundamentally socially constructed. Appadurai pointed towards “the anthropological construction of natives” (1988: 36) and Gupta and Ferguson indicated that the anthropological field, and thus space, is never a natural category but rather is socially constructed, and is the result of what they call powers of difference. They put a new focus on questions contesting the meaning of and entanglement between margin and center, such as: “how are spatial meanings established? Who has the power to make places of spaces? Who contests this? What is at stake?” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 11). The idea of margins as social constructions can be found in a number of anthropological studies (e.g., Tsing 1993; Li 2000; Hussain 2009), stressing the dynamics nested within the term marginality. Tsing also draws her theoretical considerations from postcolonial thinkers like Fanon, Bhabha and Spivak, as a highly important field of reflection; she even refers to “the promise of a postcolonial anthropology that goes beyond the re-analysis of its own problematic past depends upon engagement with the questions and challenges raised by those concerned with cultural heterogeneity, power, and ‘marginality’” (1993: 14). For example, bell hooks (1984) has related to marginality based on her own experience and highlights the potential that can be found by taking a marginal position. For her, marginality was a notion she was faced with in her youth as a black American woman in times of US racial segregation:

“To be in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body. As black Americans living in a small Kentucky town, the railroad tracks were a daily reminder of our marginality. Across those tracks were paved streets, stores we could not enter, restaurants we could not eat in, and people we could not look directly in the face. Across those tracks was a world we could work in as maids, as janitors, as prostitutes, as long as it was a service capacity. We could enter that



world but we could not stay there. We had always to return to the margin, to cross the tracks to shacks and abandoned houses on the edge of town” (hooks 1984: ix)

Later on she overcomes the negative assumptions of being in, or being part of, the margins. She regards the margin no longer as a space of “deprivation” as she calls it, but instead as a productive field of agency, or in her own words, as a “site of radical possibility, a space of resistance” (hooks 1990: 341). It is in this sense that the margin becomes its own space of power – why would one wish to leave it behind? Instead, hooks takes the marginal space and transforms it into a tool of “counter hegemonic discourse” (1990: 341). Marginality, then, is not something “one wishes to lose, to give up, or surrender as part of moving into the center, but rather as a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes one’s capacity to resist” (hooks 1990: 341). It is this potential of marginality, which makes it such an attractive heuristic tool for anthropological discourse. Deconstructing the authority of centers is thus best engaged from the site of the margin. Anthropologists have focused on how people living in the margins have found their very own ways to deal with power constellations palpable at the periphery, giving them meaning, challenging them and reconstituting them in their very own fashion. Marginality has thus gained new importance and significance through the work of anthropologists who have presented margins as sites from which processes of marginalization can be analyzed and understood (cf. Hussain 2009: 11). While postcolonial ideas made way for marginality’s entrance into anthropological academia, the notion of center vs. periphery also became a topic of intense debate within the field, along with a closely related and highly important topic related to the ideas of margins as constructed phenomena (e.g., Douglas 1966; Ortiz 1969; Tambiah 1977).

Drawing deeply from Weber and Parsons, the British sociologist Edward Shils postulated a periphery that is marked by its distance from a center, which is characterized as a conundrum of concentrated power. For him, every society draws upon a center that affects and impacts people who are living within its radius. Individuals relate to the center as a point of reference and positioning that constitutes membership in the society. Belonging to a society is not only a question of physical location within a certain territory, nor is it sheer adaptation to the expectations of people sharing the same environment, but rather it is established through one’s relationship with this central core. The center is the pivotal place of a symbolic societal system, “the order of symbols, of values and beliefs, which govern the society” (Shils 1982: 93) and thus serves as a

general point of orientation for individuals on the periphery. By this means, the belief in a center gives meaning to a society:

“It is the centre of the order of symbols, of values and beliefs, which govern the society. It is the centre because it is the ultimate and irreducible; and it is felt to be such by many who cannot give explicit articulation to its irreducibility. The central zone partakes of the nature of the sacred. In this sense, every society has an ‘official’ religion, even when that society or its exponents and interpreters, conceive of it, more or less correctly, as a secular, pluralistic and tolerant society” (Shils 1982: 93).

Robert Dunne by contrast points to a variety of centers. He shows that marginality is not a one-dimensional phenomenon, but instead people are always subject to one or several centers relative to which they may be marginal, while at the same time they may also be integrated into one or several other centers (Dunne 2005: 15). Communities who are distant from a center can therefore only be portrayed as marginal to a certain extent. Marginal groups can thus be included in a range of local centers, which differ from the societal center, or, Dunne adds, “perhaps even a local centre that is marginal in relation to the societal centre” (2005: 23). Consequently Dunne’s conclusion comes around succinctly: “marginality is not an absolute” (2005: 15).

Shils’ above-mentioned rather simplified and static vision of a center and its periphery indicates the idea of the state that needs to be addressed when considering the margins. Steedly (1999) draws upon the connection between marginality as a theoretical starting point and its entanglement with the state; she has pointed out how the state has become a “must” in anthropological writing, especially among anthropologists working on Southeast Asia. Culture, she argues, is considered “as an attribute of the state – as an object of state policy, an ideological zone for the exercise of state power, or literally a creation of the state – whereas the state itself is comprehended in ways analogous to totalizing or superorganic models of culture” (1999: 433). With the rise of state-centered anthropological focus, marginality became an even more important analytical angle:

“The idea of marginality offered an important corrective to the anthropological yearning for a bounded, autonomous place for culture, outside the circuits of global capitalism and state power. It insisted that even the most isolated locales were shot through with – indeed, one might say constituted by – power and influence emanating from dominant centers located elsewhere” (Steadly 1999: 443).

However, Steedly also points to the danger of analyzing minorities through a state-centered lens; thereby neglecting people at the periphery as fundamentally marginalized. “[E]verything comes through the state or its subsidiaries/surrogates”, Steedly writes (1999: 443); a phenomenon that becomes highly meaningful for the Indonesian context, as I will show in the following subchapters.

Strongly connected to the notions of center, periphery and the state is the concept of power – who has full power and who has only limited power at his or her disposal? It is important to note here that power and authority by this means are not reduced to state apparatus alone. Foucault has highlighted the necessity of avoiding an equation between power and sovereignty, “if we wish to analyze power within the concrete and historical framework of its operation”, (Foucault 1978: 90) since it hinders a useful inquiry. Power, for him, is “the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization” (1978: 92). He further distinguishes between power, i.e. force relations, and “Power”:

“Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. And ‘Power’, insofar as it is permanent, repetitious, inert, and self-reproducing, is simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities, the concatenation that rests on each of them and seeks in turn to arrest their movement. [...] [P]ower is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society” (Foucault 1978: 93).

Likewise, Ferguson shows that it is not always the state that is exclusively exercising power; he moreover states that within center and periphery relations the notion and origin of power is not a clearly distinguishable scheme:

“The place from which power is exercised is often a hidden place. When we try to pin it down, the center always appears to be somewhere else. Yet we know that this phantom center, elusive as it is, exerts a real, undeniable power over the whole social framework of our culture, and over the ways we think about it” (Ferguson 1990: 9).

This phantom center, let me add, is part of an interdependent complexity between center and margin, in which power is never exclusive. This entanglement is discussed by Shields in his book “Places on the Margin” (1991) in which he asserts that spaces obtain a specific ranking position in relation to other places, some of them relatively marginal, and also, importantly, other groups, some of them likewise relatively marginal, all of which are part of a culturally determined ranking scheme. The constitution of margin and center

thus underlies a classification of high and low spaces. Accordingly, all features that designate a space, place or culture belong to this scheme of categorization of social relations, objects, beliefs and practices. Shields also refers to Said's concept of Orientalism, which placed margins on the "edge of civilization" and revealed the "positional superiority" of the center (Said) that determines the "symbolic exclusion" of the margins (Shields): "one which puts the High in a whole series of possible relationships with the Low without ever losing the upper hand" (Shields 1991: 5). However, as I mentioned earlier, the interdependence of spaces in this scheme relegates power to a relational concept; drawing on insights from Stallybrass and White (1986), Shields points out that the High is in a constant need of the Low, and that the High in some part includes the Low, portraying a binary relationship between margins and centers that are deeply entangled by social, political and economic ties. He asserts the notion of marginality as social construction: "The social 'Other' of marginal and low cultures is despised and reviled in the official discourse of dominant culture and central power while at the same time being constitutive of the imaginary and emotional repertoires of that dominant culture" (Shields 1991: 5). To be part of the margin, living in it and being assigned to it, being marginalized and experiencing marginalization continually indicates a certain symbolic exclusion from the center,

"[b]ut social, political and economic relations which bind peripheries to centers, keep them together in a series of binary relationships, rather than allowing complete disconnection. In this way, 'margins' become signifiers of everything centers deny or repress; margins as 'the Other', become the condition of possibility of all social and cultural entities" (Shields 1991: 276).

The center therefore needs a counterpart, a mirror, displaying, portraying, representing and reconstituting the former's own character as center. This is clearly visible in the relationship of the Indonesian state to its very own margins in specific historical constellations, as I will show in the following. So far, I have presented some general implications crucial for the understanding of the concept of margins, marginality, marginalization, and concurring neighboring terms. Marginality can thus be defined as a dualistic concept that includes a center and its peripheries, both constituted by mutual relationship and subjected to entanglements of power within the sphere of relationships, not only to each other but also to other centers and margins.

## 2.2 LOCATING MARGINALITY AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN UPLANDS

Before we turn to the idea of marginality as conceptualized by Wana themselves, it becomes necessary to shed some light on the category of “upland people” in general to show its own deep entanglement with marginality constructions within the Southeast Asian and Indonesian context. Since marginality, as an overall notion with which upland communities are associated, is itself a dualistic term as portrayed above, the associated center always plays a significant role in constituting a marginal region and marginal peoples, and thus shaping processes of marginalization. Taking an analytic position in the margins consequently offers the valuable opportunity to comprehend the goals, mechanisms and functions of the center, its multiple modes of power operating to constitute itself and its peripheries.

After elaborating on the main research questions and themes underlying anthropological studies on upland communities in Southeast Asia, I will therefore focus on the emergence of a dualism that I portray as an “upland–lowland gap” in Indonesia, and on the constitution of the Indonesian uplands as a realm of marginal groups. For a discussion of marginality within the Indonesian context it is necessary to shed some light on central patterns and state developments that deeply affect upland groups and that are of relevance for the analysis of marginality among Wana people. Historical developments therefore serve as a starting point for identifying structural disadvantages for people living in the uplands. In a second step territorial entitlements are a vital point of analysis: Land rights are of particular importance for upland people who are often subject to struggles over land with local neighbors, the state and companies. Territorial claims therefore display analytical markers of marginalization processes, but also depict the role of agency connected to it. The emergence of upland people as “indigenous people” in the so-called *masyarakat adat*<sup>40</sup> movement is another issue drawing deeply on marginality conceptualizations and a new form of articulation of self-government. One aspect mainly ignored in studies highlighting indigenous peoples of Indonesia concentrates on

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<sup>40</sup> *Masyarakat adat* is a political term that can be translated as indigenous people, customary community, “people who adhere to customary ways” (Li 2001) or *adat* community. The term gained importance for Indonesia’s indigenous peoples movement, which I will discuss in detail in Chapters 2.2 and 5.5.

marginality according to religious categories. Since most of these points will receive detailed attention in the subsequent chapters where they are best placed so as to explain local relations and development, I will in the following outline a general perspective on these processes for upland groups, in order to situate Wana constructions and relations of marginality within the broader scheme of upland marginality in Indonesia and Southeast Asia in the course of this work. If we now turn to the idea of marginality among upland groups we have to see it as one aspect of a dualistic, complementary interrelationship with lowland concepts, as I have made clear in the first part of this chapter.

### 2.2.1 Establishing an Upland–Lowland Gap

Upland groups in Southeast Asia are often perceived as categorically different from lowland people. Portrayed as so-called “backward animists”, upland peoples’ alleged distinctiveness is subsumed for instance under features such as a particular agricultural system, a special religion, or social stratification. Burkard (2007), taking up this notion, has tried to bring together some of those stereotypes commonly related to upland–lowland categorical units in Indonesia, reproduced for example on the one hand by government discourse and on the other hand by several NGOs’ conceptualizations:

Lowland	Upland
Commercialization, market production	Subsistence production
Settled agriculture	Shifting cultivation
Individual land titles	Ancestral lands/use rights
Dominance of wet rice cultivation	Dominance of non-rice annuals (maize)
Agrarian structures (green revolution)	Nature conservation vs. degeneration
Disparities in individual land ownership	Community based resource management
<i>Agrarian change</i>	<i>Environmental change</i>
<i>Affiliation with world religion</i>	<i>Animism</i>
<i>Fluency in national language</i>	<i>Local language</i>

**Table 1** Taken from Burkard (2007: 4); rows set *italic* added by Grumblyes.

Such stereotypes as categories of upland and lowland are constituted in a specific naturalizing and essentializing manner and, as Li points out, are “theoretically moribund and empirically unsupported” (Li 1999d: xvi). The upland domain is often displayed as opposed – and often inferior – to the lowlands. Both terms function as epistemological meta-categories whose definite existence of course remains highly questionable; the conceptual dichotomy between both can easily be related to other modes of dichotomies within the sphere of cultural designation, for example between local and scientific knowledge, which is likewise questioned by various scholars (e.g., Agrawal 2009; Aikenhead and Ogawa 2007; Ellen 2004; Escobar 1995; Hunn 1982; Nygren 1999). Contrasting the two displays a conceptual dichotomy, which Ellen calls

“another manifestation of what anthropologists have called ‘the great cognitive divide.’ Even though the opposition between primitive and civilized thought has fallen under the weight of the evidence [...], the apparent need to divide the world into just two ways of thinking persists” (2004: 411).

The conceptual division between upland and lowland falls within the same cognitive divide, just as does the division between margin and center.<sup>41</sup> The terms upland and lowland thus need to be conceptualized in quotation marks to hint at the underlying stereotypical nature of these categories. Apart from this conceptual dichotomy, the upland regions of Southeast Asia are continuously marked and stressed by their pluralistic patterns and cultural diversity, and most importantly, as Cramb makes clear, by their marginal standing: “Despite this heterogeneity, the uplands are frequently depicted as sharing the characteristic of marginality, in the multiple sense of that term” (Cramb 2007).

In geographical terms, Li refers to Allen giving a definition of the uplands as a category: “uplands could be defined as containing a core of ‘hilly to mountainous landscapes of steeply inclined surfaces and the table lands and plateaus lying at higher elevations’” (1999d: xvi, citing Allen 1993). The contrasting counterpart is the category of the lowlands, indicating valley fields, riverside or coastal plains where irrigated rice farming

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<sup>41</sup> This essentialism is for example easily traceable in terms of agricultural difference: Swidden cultivation is also sometimes practiced in lowland areas while irrigated rice farming can be found in upland regions, for example in Java (Cramb 2007: 7).

is practiced.<sup>42</sup> The distinction is furthermore a local category, used throughout Indonesia, but is also quite common for the rest of the Southeast Asian mainland; likewise, academic literature as well as development-oriented writers tend to rely upon the same dichotomy (Li 1999d: xvi).<sup>43</sup>

The categorical distinction between upland and lowland areas was not always the main criterion for explaining diversity in Southeast Asia. King and Wilder (2003) show vividly how the analytical framework for coping with Southeast Asian complexity has set the stage for an evolving dualistic concept of upland and lowland criteria. Furnivall (1948) was one of the first authors who tried to make sense of ethnic diversity in colonial Indonesia and Burma while developing an analytical grid that focused on the market as a point of reference. Migrants and local people meeting at the market were deemed to maintain ethnic distribution and hierarchies through the predominance of commerce and trade (King and Wilder 2003: 194). Later, scholars writing on post-colonial and post-war Southeast Asian societies still focused on the aspect of migration and the large numbers of immigrants to explain pluralism, but it was during that period that a new category was introduced to academia to explain identity in this regional context,

“that is the relationship not so much between indigenous peoples and immigrant Asians, but between indigenous plains and valley dwellers, the majority of whom were wet rice cultivators and members of the great civilizations and state structure of South-East Asia (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Hispanized Roman Catholicism), and the minority interior or hill people who were predominantly forest-based shifting cultivators, hunters and gatherers” (King and Wilder 2003: 194).

Through this development the popular and still very powerful categorization of “lowland peasants” and “upland tribespeople” was born. King and Wilder quote Kunstadter as the first scholar who, in the course of his writings on *Southeast Asian tribes, minorities and*

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<sup>42</sup> Allen especially underlines the significance of water irrigation management as a feature of lowland agriculture: “In Southeast Asia the term [upland] is often used rather loosely to refer to unirrigated land but, if water is available, it is possible to irrigate almost any land, even steeply sloping land [...]. Nor is altitude a useful criterion; if “uplands” imply steeplands, or hill and mountain country, they may begin at sea level, Irrigable land of low relief may be found at over 2,000 meters above sea level [...]” (Allen 1993: 226).

<sup>43</sup> Upland people in Southeast Asia, sometimes called non-state peoples (Steinberg and Chandler 1987), received special attention for example in the work of R. Burling (1965) *Hill farms and and padi fields. Life in Mainland Southeast Asia*, in LeBar, Hickley and Musgrave (1964) *Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia* or the already cited two volumes by P. Kunstadter (1967) *Southeast Asian Tribes, Minorities and Nations*. Special attention to swidden agriculture is paid in Spencer’s (1966) *Shifting Cultivation in Southeastern Asia* as well as in Geertz’ (1963) *Agricultural Involution* and Conklin’s (1961) *The Study of Shifting Cultivation*.



*nations* (1967), introduced an academic focus on the upland–lowland distinction. Further, Leach added to the great interest on upland communities with his work on Burma and strengthened the difference in social organization and ecology between “hill people” and “valley people”, the former designated as “patrilineal and hierarchical” and the latter as having “a non-unilineal kinship organization linked with charismatic despotism” (Leach 1960: 51). He stressed that “the coexistence is not a *necessary* one” (1960: 51). Instead, in his explanation, upland people in Burma were strongly influenced by China regarding their kinship and trade system, while the lowland “peasants” had borrowed their social stratification and political system from Indian influence. Leach was not hesitant to underline the alleged sharp distinctiveness of both categories: “it is very clear that the process of interaction [...] has not been one of simple cultural diffusion. Hills and Valleys stand in radical opposition and there is evidently a certain level at which Hill culture and Valley culture are totally inconsistent with one another [...]” (Leach 2000: 239).

Ethnic terms that were used by lowland populations in Southeast Asia and applied to upland people have grown into generally used terms, but all too often they bear negative connotations, e.g. “‘savages’, ‘barbarian’, ‘primitives’, ‘slaves’, ‘hicks’ or ‘hillbillies’” (King and Wilder 2003: 198). Ethnicity for upland Southeast Asia is often closely connected to aspects of boundary making: where hill people are defined as primitive upland barbarians by their lowland neighbors, the ethnic boundary making between upland and lowland groups becomes highly meaningful and powerful.<sup>44</sup> Leach for example has already asserted that highland Burmese Kachin identity – which, he declared, is very distinct from that of lowland people (see above) – was mainly formed and shaped in relation to their lowland Shan neighbors, “so that importantly the Kachin define themselves and are defined as ‘other than Shan’” (King and Wilder 2003: 198-9). Burling made a very powerful distinction between hill farms and padi fields, stating as his basic argument that the one signifying marker of diversity in Southeast Asia was the difference between upland and lowland people (Burling 1965: 4).<sup>45</sup> Geertz has talked about *sawah* (BI) and swidden, highlighting the difference between both systems – “the contrast between such a terrace – an artificial, maximally specialized, continuous-

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<sup>44</sup> For discussion of ethnic boundaries see Chapter 4.4.3.

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of swiddens as a category of alterity, used to signify the “poor Third-World peasant destroying nature” see Dove et al., who note: “Western deprecation of swidden agriculture is not so much a function of its geographic, historic and technological distance as it is part of a political effort to make it distant” (2007: 134). Already in the 1960s Conklin was able to show and cement the sustainability of swidden agriculture (1961). See also Sillitoe (2007: 2).

cultivation, open-field structure to a swidden plot could hardly be more extreme” (Geertz 1963: 28). Geertz postulated the still popular distinction between Inner and Outer Indonesia according to the use of swidden or *sawah* agriculture, for him the cause of an uneven population allocation, and “the ineluctable social and cultural quandaries which followed from it” (1963: 37). Geertz’ as well as Burling’s clear-cut distinction<sup>46</sup> is part of the aforementioned classical divide in academia.

In other regions the dichotomy received attention as well. Gellner for example invented the term “marginal tribalism” to describe the social structure of the ethnic groups of High Atlas in the Maghreb. He described how Berber people decided consciously to refuse incorporation into the rest of the state, an active decision they made out of the “inconveniences of submission [that] make it attractive to withdraw from political authority and the balance of power, the nature of the mountainous [...] terrain [which] make it feasible” (Gellner 1969: 1–2). Important here is that Gellner refers to marginality among the Berber not with reference to geographical, cultural, economic or religious reasons; instead he asserts: “Such tribalism is politically marginal. It knows what it rejects” (Gellner 1969: 2; see also Scott 2009: 30).<sup>47</sup> This political line separating “tribal group” and “non-tribal” entity is taken up by James W. Scott to underline the distinction between valley and hill groups, for Scott a difference between the “governed” and the “ungoverned”: “the linkage between being civilized and being a subject of the state is so taken for granted that the terms *subject peoples* on the one hand or *self-governing peoples* on the other capture the essential difference” (Scott 2009: 31). James W. Scott reconstitutes the dichotomy between upland and lowland as a historical development. His infamous book *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (2009), focusing on upland–lowland relations, evoked quite a lot of academic interest. Scott tries to give a general definition to commensurate the characteristics of upland people:

“Hill societies are, as a rule, systematically different from valley societies. Hill people tend to be animists, or, in the twentieth century, Christians, who do not follow ‘the great tradition’ salvation religions of lowland peoples (Buddhism and Islam in particular). Where, as occasionally happens, they do come to embrace the ‘world religion’ of their valley neighbors, they are likely to do so with a degree of

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<sup>46</sup> A similar argument was made by Burling (1965).

<sup>47</sup> Gellner makes another important, but outdated, distinction here between primitive and marginal tribalism, where the latter refers to groups connected to larger state systems and the former to groups displaying self-contained units (1969: 9).

heterodoxy and millenarian fervor that valley elites find more threatening than reassuring. Hill societies do produce a surplus, but they do not use that surplus to support kings and monks. The absence of large, permanent, surplus-absorbing religious and political establishments makes for a sociological pyramid in the hills that is rather flat and local compared with that of valley societies. Distinctions of status and wealth abound in the hills, as in the valleys. The difference is that in the valleys they tend to be supralocal and enduring, while in the hills they are both unstable and geographically confined” (Scott 2009: 21).

This definition or generalization is certainly critical: Distinguishing between lowland *sawah* and upland swiddens portrays one of the stumbling blocks of the manifold critique Scott’s recent publication has unraveled. For example, Dove et al. blast Scott’s argument for essentializing the upland lowland division and thereby ignoring the fact that often the categorical units overlap with people practicing both types of agriculture (Dove, Jonsson, and Aung-Twin 2011: 87–88).<sup>48,49</sup> Scott portrays upland groups in mainland Southeast Asia and their current situation, identity and culture as a result of their own escape from the state – fleeing into the mountainous regions of Zomia, the hilly interior region of Mainland Southeast Asia. Almost all aspects of upland life – religious beliefs, social structure and organization, and agriculture – can be viewed, Scott argues, through an upland–lowland lens, hence constituting uplands as an eternally intermingled counterpart of lowland regions. In an argument quite similar to the one given by Cramb (see above), Scott explores a general marginal character for the Zomia region of mainland Southeast Asia: “Zomia is marginal in almost every respect. It lies at a great distance from the main centers of economic activity; it bestrides a contact zone between eight nation-states and several religious traditions and cosmologies” (Scott 2009: 14). Even if Zomia does not refer not to insular Southeast Asia, Scott’s elaborations can readily be related to the Indonesian context as well.<sup>50</sup> For Scott, the upland people of Zomia are concentrated where the state is no longer potent. Scott writes: “Virtually everything about these people’s livelihoods, social organization, ideologies and (more controversially) even their largely oral cultures, can be read as strategic positionings designed to keep the state at

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<sup>48</sup> However, Scott makes clear that he is trying to grasp markers significant for upland and lowland regions, but he is also shying away from a mere over-essentializing gesture: “Swidden[...] which requires more land and requires clearing new fields and occasionally shifting settlement sites, is *far more* common in the hills” (Scott 2009: 18; italics added by author).

<sup>49</sup> Just for example, Wana people have made an economic surplus and used it to pay tribute to kings and rajas as far as the Kingdom of Ternate.

<sup>50</sup> Li however asserts for the Central Sulawesi Lauje that in contrast to Scotts assertion for mainland Southeast Asia they did not perceive of themselves as culturally distinct from their lowland neighbours (Li 2014).

arm's length" (Scott 2009: x). However, what does it mean not to be governed nowadays? General stereotypes of upland people seem to serve for their lowland neighbors as what Scott calls "civilizational discourses about the 'barbarian', the 'raw', the 'primitive'" (Scott 2009: x), to him, merely other terms for "not governed" or "not incorporated in state activity". According to Scott, upland people voluntarily escape state influence and enter (or remain in) a "barbarian" state. "Ethnicity and 'tribe' begin exactly where taxes and sovereignty end" (2009: xi), he postulates. Although Scott's influential and widely discussed thesis shall not be of major concern for this theoretical construction, the idea of marginality as a choice will play an important role in analyzing Wana marginalization in the upcoming chapters and especially within the sphere of Wana self-marginalization.

### 2.2.2 Marginality and Upland Groups in Indonesia

In Indonesia, the category "upland" is non-exclusively determined by a mountainous geographical location, but is also extended to apply to upstream or upriver regions as well as regions in the hinterland. Li lists the term *pelosok* (BI) as circumscribing roughly the social aspects of being upland people, the English translation referring to "the boondocks". Another, more popular term, and highly interesting in terms of questions concerning center-periphery relations, is *pedalaman* (BI), meaning people living in the interior, i.e. far away from centers (Li 1999d: xvi). In my regional fieldwork setting however, the most often used term was simply *orang gunung* (BI), mountain people, used by both upland and lowland people to describe, for example, Wana from Salisarao, but also applied to Wana living in the lowland village of Taronggo, where the stereotypical picture of "being lowland" did not match most Wana individuals making a living in the area – they in some way remained in the category *orang gunung* even though some of them had never actually lived in the mountains.

In Southeast Asia, distinguishing between upland and lowland people has a long tradition as I have shown above; the same counts for Indonesia: "The lowland/upland distinction is an ancient one within Indonesia itself, finding expression directly in the myths and rituals of probably the majority of Indonesia's pre-colonial peoples, not just as a means of distinguishing one group from another but also of underpinning status differentials within groups" (Kahn 1999: 81). Tania Li's book *Transforming the Indonesian Uplands* (1999b)

is the first edited volume that focuses explicitly on the Indonesian uplands, and was written as an answer to Hart et al.'s *Agrarian Transformations: Local Processes and the State in Southeast Asia* (1989) – a study dealing exclusively with lowland Southeast Asian case studies. Tania Li's academic works have become, next to those of Anna Tsing, guiding research lines for scholars interested in upland–lowland relations in general or in questions of relations between state and indigenous peoples. In her introduction to the 1999 volume, she explicitly focuses on the aspect of marginality – in terms of power and production – among upland groups. By this means, the relational character of the term “marginal experiences” becomes palpable. As I have mentioned earlier, a margin cannot stand for itself but connotes a dualistic dialectic. The same accounts for the phenomenon itself, i.e. marginality, and the process resulting from it, i.e. marginalization. Therefore a conceptualization of the Indonesian uplands as marginal must lead to the logical conclusion that the uplands and lowlands, as categorical units, define and mediate each other. Furthermore it has become clear that marginality is a social construction. Now, turning our focus to the category of upland people in Indonesia we face the social construction of marginality, which deserves special attention while analyzing the Indonesian uplands as a marginal area. In this context, Li makes out three central implications:

- 1) Uplands and lowlands need to be analyzed and perceived as existing within “one single analytical frame”. Both are parts of the “same integrated system” (Li 1999a: 1–2), which is why both deserve and require analytical attention;
- 2) As I have already shown above, marginality is a relational term that cannot be seen as a natural, ontological whole, but must be understood as socially constructed;
- 3) Finally, uplands and lowlands are not all equal partners. Marginality is always the result of unequal power relations, “the constitution of margins and centers is best understood therefore as a hegemonic project, subject to contestation and reformulation. [...] the cultural, economic and political projects of people living and working in the uplands are constituted in relation to various hegemonic agendas, but never are they simple reflections of them” (Li 1999a: 2).

As applies to all generalization attempts, often simplifications and essentializations are made which are then ascribed to a category that is just as great as the unit of the Indonesian uplands. On the one hand, the uplands in Indonesia are often characterized with negative assumptions, describing hill people as primitive, lazy, backward, stubborn and ignorant. On the other hand those same people often are depicted as keepers of special knowledge concerning the environment and conservation. However, the various attributes associated with what is actually meant by the category upland are not easily put into a common framework; consequently, mutually contradictory models have emerged to grasp this situation (see above). Moreover, what is often called tradition in the upland context must be read as “the outcomes of marginalization” (Li 1999d: xvii).

### **2.2.3 Historical Perspective: Marginality in the Uplands**

The uplands were not always the peripheral analytical unit of the archipelago. As Li reminds us, Indonesia’s interior regions were for a long time known and feared for their spiritual power. But with the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago power became increasingly allocated to coastal settlements and Muslim communities.<sup>51</sup> A gap emerged between those who became Muslim or chose to live close to Muslim communities along the vast Indonesian coasts, and those who lived in the upland regions of the islands (Li 1999a: 4). The rise of maritime trade relations around the 15th and 17th century supported a great number of these political centers, enabling them to attain significant power and size – for example, kingdoms such as Aceh, Melaka, Brunei, Makassar, and Ternate. Lowland coastal centers depended on trade with upland or upstream communities, also called *hulu* (BI), meaning upstream, and *hilir* (BI), meaning downstream relations (Andaya 1993). Access to the interior, usually geographically difficult to reach, was often possible by river, and offered a suitable solution for transporting products from the interior to the coast for trade with imported goods by inter-maritime dealers (Andaya 1993). Due to their access to the sea and their position at the mouth of the river, most coastal states were able to assert some political control over upstream communities.<sup>52</sup> Owing to the increased importance of maritime trade the focus

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<sup>51</sup> Exceptions are the kingdoms of Minangkabau and Mataram, both located inland (Li 1999a: 4).

<sup>52</sup> However, there were also occasional upland–lowland relations that presented a different picture, as Andaya reminds us. In some cases upstream communities were authoritative powers because the lowland

was consequently turned away from social or cultural similarities relative to a common terrain – either upland or lowland – and instead placed on inter-coastal relationships and ranks, thereby determining and emphasizing a “marked social distinction between ‘people of the littoral kingdoms and the barbarian population of the tribal interior’” (Li 1999a: 4, citing Henley 1989: 8). Reasons for living in the uplands might include the motive of escaping lowland domination by coastal centers, for example by slavery and the slave trade, and also the lure of the high yield of upland farming (Li 1999a: 4). While the upland regions generally served as a point of escape from authoritarian rule they also offered a form of wealth in form of forest products or minerals for example that were (and remain) valuable for national and international markets and trade. This point of income was a precious source for coastal authorities. Various trade arrangements and agreements had been established throughout Indonesia. As Wana were involved in trade networks with coastal powers and had to pay tribute to Sultans from Ternate and Bungku (see Chapters 4 and 5), other regions like Tana Toraja in South Sulawesi experienced a close cooperation between coastal regimes and upland elites, resulting in the enslavement of upland groups (Bigalke 1983; Li 1999a: 7). In some upland or upriver areas, people resisted lowland claims, “thus in economic and political matters the relationship between upland and lowland systems has long been marked by tension” (Li 1999a: 8). Coastal regimes relied often on upland products, but relations and social order were multifaceted rather than egalitarian. By contrast, upland communities were perceived as “inferior and treated in a derogatory way” (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 13).

In a closely related generalization, Li points to a common lack of historicity for upland groups in Indonesia, nested in an evolutionary scheme often applied to Indonesia’s upland sphere: History functions as a marker used to deepen or emphasize the gap between upland and lowland, with people belonging to the former portrayed as lacking any “historical development”, manifested in their current state of “backwardness”. Here, a unilineal development from tradition to modernity is applied to an Indonesian context under colonial and post-colonial New Order government, where Java, the “showcase of development” (Tsing 1993: 23), sets the terms for measuring progress and modernity ranking. The Indonesian uplands, part of Indonesia’s outer islands’ “unorganized periphery” (Tsing 1993: 23), accordingly “are deemed marginal because they have failed

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states were suffering heavily from malaria in the coastal swamplands or were often subjects of coastal attacks (Andaya 1992: 92).

to change, ‘develop’ or modernize. [...] [T]he difference observed at the margins confirms the distance that the center has progressed” (Li 1999a: 5). Thus, “traditional” elements of upland groups should not be depicted as mere traces of a past, but rather as markers of “processes through which diverse cultural forms are generated and maintained” (Li 1999a: 5). Numerous studies however have been published showing the long histories of inclusive lowland–upland trade networks and relations as well as intervention from external rulers, the state etc., who were partly responsible for upland change, thus negating a “lack of historicity” for the Indonesian uplands.<sup>53</sup> However, traditions that are specific for upland people have to be regarded as the result of constant change, and not its opposite. Neither is this change solely due to the influence of outsiders, nor can it be reduced to a simple choice between modernity and backwardness, state and local community. Instead it must be perceived as “the result of creative engagement and cultural production” (Li 1999a: 5). Thus, the “traditionalization” of the Indonesian uplands is a process that does not necessarily result in marginalization, but instead “exclusion depends upon assessment of the ways in which ‘tradition’ and its associated images are taken up by various players, including uplanders themselves, in the formation and contestation of policies, practices and identities” (Li 1999a: 10). Despite the fact that the term “traditionalization” is socially constructed, significant historical experiences underline Li’s argument. Joel Kahn describes processes of culturalization of the Indonesian uplands: He uses the example of the Minangkabau of West Sumatra to explain the process of shaping, transforming and evolving imaginations of distinct cultural features that are nonetheless products of a biased upland–lowland relationship. According to Kahn, inequality among Indonesia’s people is nowadays interpreted mainly in the form of cultural difference, and not with reference to varying access to sources of power or resources, but is instead “read [...] as problems in intercultural relations” (1999: 83). The second half of the 19th century brought significant transformations for the Indonesian uplands. Economic and political changes brought about new power constellations, often resulting in further disadvantages for upland groups and “the formation of power matrices linking peasants, village élites and Dutch rulers” (Kahn 1999: 101). According to Kahn, part of the roots of the cultural constitution of difference can be found, inter alia, in the establishment of the Leiden School of *adat* law studies (Kahn 1999). Van Vollenhoven, the school’s founder and professor at Leiden University,

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<sup>53</sup> See for example Kenneth George (1996), Jane Atkinson (1989), Anthony Reid (1985), Anna Tsing (1993) and Robert Hefner (1990).



was one of the leading figures constituting various *adat* rights groups in Indonesia. In a comparative attempt to analyze the differing law systems in the Philippines, the Malay Peninsula, Madagascar and the Indies, he described between 1906 and 1918 around 19 Indonesian *adat* law regions or circles.<sup>54</sup> The Leiden School can serve as an example of the changing perception of the Dutch East Indies in times of colonial rule by colonial administrative personnel and lawyers (Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann 2011: 174) and scholars like van Vollenhoven (Kahn 1999: 89). Both of these groups began to explore Indonesian exceptional culture and to lead away from the sole guiding principle of modernism and Westernism as a tool to deal with the archipelagic diversity:

“contrary to the assumption that civilisational narratives always and everywhere characterised the discourse of European colonial rule in Asia, a counter- or anti-evolution-ism [sic!] began increasingly to inform the way the Dutch represented their colonial subjects in the first decades of this century. It led them [...] to a view of relations between themselves and their subjects as intercultural relations first and foremost” (Kahn 1999: 89).

For example, Henley and Davidson consider van Vollenhoven’s perspective as similar to that of current “international advocates of indigenous rights” (Henley and Davidson 2008: 825).<sup>55</sup> By this means, the Leiden School can be seen, according to the authors, as early protectors of customary land rights (Henley and Davidson 2008: 825).<sup>56</sup> Kahn’s main argument however can be found in the discovery of culture as a categorical unit that would serve to explain difference among the archipelago’s people:

“this period witnessed the development of a new language for understanding human diversity in the Netherlands Indies: a language of culture and multiculturalism. Consequently, Dutch scholars and colonial advisors as well as certain members of the local rural élite began to understand social interaction in the colony, and even in the empire as a whole, as instance of intercultural interaction” (1999: 101).

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<sup>54</sup> His results are compiled in the three volumes of *Het adatrecht van Nederlandsch-Indië* (1918-1933).

<sup>55</sup> Exemplified through the Leiden School’s invention of the *beschikkingsrecht* – the allocation law that would serve every *adat* community to avail themselves of land from their own terrain. For a detailed discussion of *beschikkingsrecht* see Burns (2007).

<sup>56</sup> Kahn however also hints at another root of the “cultural turn” and turns to the Minangkabaus’ own interpretations of modernity and culture in their setting and experience. Therefore, indigenous dealings with difference were not a reaction of Dutch scholarly interest, but had happened way before the Leiden school, as a response to the modernization dictum they had experienced, firstly through secular initiatives calling for progress and, secondly through advocates of Muslim reforms. Islamic modernism in West Sumatra resulted in allegations of un-Islamic practices and defenders of the Minangkabau tradition. Thereby the indigenous conceptionalization of what cultural difference represents was born (Kahn 1999).

The interest in cultural diversity and thus upland groups of the Indonesian archipelago had been quite low until van Vollenhoven took charge; “until the middle of the nineteenth century the Dutch knew next to nothing about the *adat* law of the Javanese and other Indonesians whom they had been ruling for such a long time” (Fasseur 2007: 51). Acknowledgment of *adat* law communities by the colonial state was part of the colonial Ethical Policy, beginning by the end of the 19th century, focusing on “the issues of education, emigration and irrigation” (Arizona and Cahyadi 2013: 46) and thus the moral development of the Indonesian population. Subsequently, upland communities, habitually living in dispersed settlements in the hilltops, were often forced to resettle to centralized lowland villages where they were compelled to practice wet-rice cultivation. The new recognition of different *adat* laws was a further tool to help to rule the outer islands indirectly “through the local elites and in the absence of the colonial authorities” (Arizona and Cahyadi 2013: 46).

All these pre-colonial constellations and colonial interventions had significant effects on Indonesian upland groups with regard to questions of territorial claims and authority that are still traceable in current legal arrangements today.

### **2.2.4 Marginality and Territorial Entitlements in the Uplands**

In colonial times, the state of Indonesia was deeply concerned with a territorialization of their colonial subjects, with maps functioning as a central source of power (Anderson 1983). Li cites the example of lowland Java by the end of the 19th century, where most *desa*, villages, were born out of territorialization efforts by the colonial government: “everybody was set in place”, freezing the agrarian social structure in the ‘harnessed construction’ of the *desa* community” (Li 1999a: 13, citing Breman 1980: 41).

#### ***Land Rights***

When land became the most important resource for the colonial project in the 19th century, the state put all its focus on the territorialization of the archipelago and its inhabitants (Li 1999b). With the Agrarian Act of 1870 all land not under private

ownership was ascribed the status of land under state domain, the so-called *domeinverklaring* principle, thereby in direct control of the Dutch colonial government; it “allowed the colonial authorities to take over any land which did not appear to be in use and to lease out such land for other uses” (Cleary 1996: 41). In general this meant that forest use and swidden agriculture became illegal (Li 1999a: 13). Direct outcomes were the alienation of land formerly under the tenure of indigenous groups, often upland groups. Although the act also provided the opportunity to respect customary land rights of local authorities, in practice Dutch claims were given priority and all land that was perceived by the authorities as uncultivated became a source for colonial production, thus making forest use and swidden agriculture – a cultivation system that involves letting land lie fallow – an illegal practice (Li 1999b: 13), an interpretation that cast a shadow that still lies over current Indonesian communities (Fitzpatrick 2007: 133). Many upland communities thereby lost the right to cultivate land that had traditionally been under indigenous land tenure. Kahn shows that between 1870 and the 1920s more than 110,000 hectares of Minangkabau land in West Sumatra, declared “waste land”, suddenly became official state land that was available mostly for European companies for tenure periods of max. 75 years (Kahn 1999: 93) – the initial goal of the Agrarian Act.

But the 1870 Agrarian Act was just the opening of a long chain of unjust land allocation in Indonesia.<sup>57</sup> Already implemented in the Agrarian Act of 1870, land rights remained, and still remain, a highly important issue relevant for marginality among upland groups. In this sense, “the agrarian issue of legal control over local land by the nation-state constitutes perhaps the most resented usurpation of local rights” (Acciaioli 2007: 308). After the colonization era, unjust treatment of swidden cultivators and minorities especially in the uplands continued. Under Dutch colonial rule Batavia (Jakarta) had evolved as a center of trade, while former political centers located “at the newly constructed geographic and commercial peripheries in the archipelago’s eastern islands” (Röttger-Rössler and Stodulka 2014: 12) lost importance. The island of Java also played a central role in the fight for independence before and after Japanese occupation. After independence, state interventions that aimed to bring order to the “barbarian hinterlands” of the archipelago, still lacking *pembangunan* (BI), development, are clearly observable in the spheres of the *transmigrasi* (BI) program and other resettlement schemes, and most

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<sup>57</sup> In the beginning, the first state domain principle was applied to Java and Madura alone, but it was soon also enacted for other provinces like Manado and Sumatra (Galudra, Fay, and Sirait 2007: 2).

importantly in the constitution and negotiation of land rights and their effects for upland people. In 1960 Sukarno, who became the first Indonesian president in 1945, inaugurated the Basic Agrarian Law (*Undang-Undang Pokok Agraria*), which put an end to legal pluralism and “established a single, unitary land law that represented a ‘classic’ form of agrarian reform legislation for the times. It promoted land to the tillers and ceilings on private landholdings based on quality and location of land (with different ceilings for irrigated land and dry fields or uplands)” (Peluso, Afiff, and Rachman 2008: 381).<sup>58</sup> Most importantly, it declared all land that was not in private ownership again to be state land. The result was that indigenous communities sharing communal land ownership according to *adat* rights, called *hak ulayat* (BI),<sup>59</sup> were now working on state land to which they only had usufruct rights, *hak pakai* (BI).<sup>60</sup> By this formulation customary land rights were subordinated to national goals while the overall sovereignty over the land remained with the state (Acciaioli 2007: 312). All *adat* land that was not under permanent cultivation was therefore “virtually ‘up for the taking’, without compensation” (Wallace 2008: 203). Although two years later a new regulation<sup>61</sup> added to the law that *adat* rights could be

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<sup>58</sup> Under the Basic Agrarian Law a number of land regulations were formulated, among them ownership (*hak milik*), exploitation (*hak guna usaha*), building (*hak guna bangunan*), the right to use land (*hak pakai*), lease (*hak sewa*), the right to collect forest products (*hak memungut hasil hutan*) and the right to open up land (*hak membuka tanah*). A number of further, temporary and special rights are formulated in the Basic Agrarian Law. For a detailed discussion of the Basic Agrarian Law see for example Wallace (2008), Gold and Zuckermann (2015), Fitzpatrick (1997; 2007), Hooker (1975) or Haverfield (1999).

<sup>59</sup> *Hak ulayat*, customary land rights, can be described as the Indonesian version of the Dutch colonial right of *beschikingsrecht* (Acciaioli 2007: 309), see Chapter 2.2.3. The right to land of indigenous communities was formulated in the Basic Agrarian Law as follows: “Hak ulayat (the village adat right of disposition over land cultivated or claimed as waste by its members) and similar rights of adat law communities, in so far as they still exist in fact, must be exercised in such a way as to accord with national and state interests based on national unity, and so as not to contradict laws and other regulations which are of a higher order” (UUPA Art. 3, translation by Hooker 1975: 291-2, cited in Acciaioli 2007: 311). By this formulation the Basic Agrarian Law recognized *hak ulayat* not as land rights but as mere national interest. It excludes *hak ulayat* from the aforementioned land rights that are subject for registration such as *hak milik* or *hak pakai*. It thereby offers no option to differentiate between state land and *adat* land, leaving all uncultivated *adat* land “virtually ‘up for the taking’, without compensation” (Wallace 2008: 203; e.g., Haverfield 1999; Fitzpatrick 1997: 186).

<sup>60</sup> *Hak pakai* generally describes usufruct rights. A person can gain the right to cultivate a specific area of state-owned or privately owned land to which he is obliged to cultivate it continuously; otherwise the land will go back to the state after a duration of five years. *Hak pakai* can be passed on to someone else or can be sold. A major disadvantage can be found in the fact that it is only temporary and the government can claim it back anytime (UUPA Art. 41-43; cf. Rössler 1997: 155). By contrast, *hak milik* portrays ownership and includes a legal certificate. *Hak milik* is not temporary limited and can be sold, transferred or bequeathed as well as mortgaged (Art. 20 and 26; cf. Rössler 1997: 155). Rössler has pointed out that in his research context locals usually would not differentiate between *hak milik* or *hak pakai*. The idea of ownership was not linked to a legal certificate but rather to the fact that the land was cultivated. Further, land ownership by means of *hak milik* was very rare since the price of land exceeded local possibilities (1997: 155-6).

<sup>61</sup> Regulation of the Minister of Agrarian Affairs 2/1962 (Peraturan Menteri Pertanian dan Agraria 2/1962 tentang Konversi Hak Adat).

transferred into private ownership (*hak milik*, BI), the procedure came out as time consuming and costly because of a general “dysfunction of the registration system itself” (Haverfield 1999: 57) so that only very few land areas were registered under private ownership (Haug 2010: 87).

Suharto, who came to power in 1966 and reigned until 1998, became a master of ruling with his New Order regime and intensified the centralistic government with the promise of fast economic growth for the nation. The materialization of rule accomplishment in the form of the Basic Mining Act of 1967<sup>62</sup> and the Basic Forestry Act of 1967<sup>63</sup> – both implemented only one year after Suharto’s initiation as president – increased the opportunities to accomplish more and more rule over land and minorities by the state.<sup>64</sup> The Basic Forestry Law declared all the forested land in the entire archipelago to be under the control of the Indonesian state, represented by the Department of Forestry in Jakarta. Under Sukarno, forest control had been in part the responsibility of the central governments and in other parts of the provincial governments. Until 1967 provincial governments had the authority to grant forest concessions up to 10,000 hectares and to manage forestry and other natural resources in their respective regions – they were not obliged to report to the Department of Forestry in Jakarta. The 1960 Basic Agrarian Law had further weakened the latter’s influence since it paid, in some sense, respect to customary land rights. However, Suharto changed the game, and all authority over Indonesia’s forest land, more than 74 per cent of the overall territory,<sup>65</sup> was ascribed to the Department of Forestry in Jakarta (Gunawan 2004: 72). The consequences for swidden agriculturalists and forest dwellers were undeniable, as expressed through Article 17: “The enjoyment of *adat* rights, whether individual or communal, to exploit forest resources directly or indirectly ... may not be allowed to disturb the attainment of the purposes of this law” (Ross 2001: 168).

Since among the Indonesian uplands “cadastral surveys and land titles are almost unknown [...] and territorial control is exercised most directly through forest law and policy” (Li 1999b: 14), authority over upland land was therefore mainly exercised

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<sup>62</sup> *Undang Undang Republik Indonesia 11/1967 tentang Ketentuan-Ketentuan Pokok Pertambangan.*

<sup>63</sup> *Undang Undang Republik Indonesia 5/1967 tentang Ketentuan-Ketentuan Pokok Kehutanan.*

<sup>64</sup> Other New Order laws on natural resources focused on natural gas, irrigation and fisheries.

<sup>65</sup> A plan from 2006, the Indonesian Long-term Forestry Development Plan, declares 127 million hectares, that is, 67 percent of the entire land territory, to be forest land, divided into the four categories of production, protection, conservation, and conversion, and the additional category of “other land” (McDermott, Cashore, and Kanowski 2010: 171).

through the Forestry Department. With the downfall of Suharto and the enactment of regional autonomy, Law 22/1999 transferred a great amount of political power to local authorities. While those aspects considered “strategic”, for example foreign affairs, remained under central control, natural resources and conservation, among others, were subjected to regional responsibility (Resusodarmo 2004: 107).<sup>66</sup> With the revision of the law, the new Forestry Law 41/1999<sup>67</sup> became the main piece of forestry legislation (McDermott, Cashore and Kanowski 2010: 171). In general, it continued the line of the Basic Forestry Law of 1967 through the ongoing declaration that 65 per cent of the country’s terrain was state forest. However, changes brought about through the process of *reformasi* (BI) also can be found in relation to the Forestry Law 41/1999: Law 22/1999<sup>68</sup> on Regional Autonomy gives a somewhat contradictory regulation through the establishment of a

“non-hierarchical distribution of authority among the federal, regional, district and local levels, in some contradiction to the strong central government role asserted in Forestry Law 41/1999 [...] leading to considerable conflict among the various levels and branches of government, and resulting in various incongruencies such as the granting of overlapping forest concessions and development of conflicting forest practice laws” (McDermott, Cashore and Kanowski 2010: 171).

Despite the reformation process through which Indonesia has transformed its political system within only 15 years from a highly centralized state to one of the most decentralized nations in the world, forestry legislation still remains weak. This ambiguous legal framework underlines what Dunne (2005, see above) has postulated as the plurality of margins and centers. While customary land rights are subject to national law, with the invention of regional autonomy they had also become subject to regional law, leading to a confusing and complex situation regarding land rights. The new governments succeeding Suharto still lacked serious efforts to back indigenous people’s rights. The effects are particularly relevant for those people living in forest areas, like Indonesia’s upland population, just like the Wana in Morowali regency who were facing a serious threat of land loss during the time of my research due to palm oil plantation expansion plans.

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<sup>66</sup> The situation became further complicated with a government regulation 6/1999 that gave districts the authority to hand out small-scale timber licenses for areas of max. 100 ha, but only in areas where no large-scale concessions had previously been issued (Resusodarmo 2004: 112).

<sup>67</sup> *Undang Undang Republik Indonesia 41/1999 tentang Kehutanan.*

<sup>68</sup> See also Chapter 1. Law 22/1999 on Regional Government mainly aimed at reorganizing political power within the country. While tasks like the legal system and religion were still regulated as the national government’s concern, authority over fields such as health or education were shifted to regional governments.

Upland marginality plays a significant role in this context. For example when upland peasants or swiddeners are suddenly in urgent need of land certification to defend their land against newcomers who often share good relations with local officials, patronage becomes an essential tool of power in this context – the stigma of the “unproductive *orang gunung*” is not a helpful card to be played in land disputes or to profit from patronage, as Wana continuously experience (see Chapter 5). Li sums this context up: “Patronage is one way in which the categories center and margin are articulated” (Li 1999a: 19). Without any legal documentation of land ownership and in a context where local governments and individuals do often interpret the legal situation quite freely, local communities like the Wana, who do not know their rights, are not well equipped to resist land claims by the government (see Chapter 5). Rule over the Indonesian uplands is thus accomplished through the role – and rule – of forests.<sup>69</sup>

A new trend in forest- and land-rights regulations that is deeply connected to an indigenous peoples’ movement within the country, the *masyarakat adat* movement, is currently drawing more attention to indigenous communities’ legal rights over land. Because the legal situation regarding their land remained unclear, Wana have recently become involved in the politics of the so-called *masyarakat adat* movement as well. The constant danger of land loss and enforced resettlement has led several Wana to establish new networks with several NGOs. The acquisition of the status of *masyarakat adat* brought with it a new attitude towards their position as a marginalized people, leading to what might be called empowerment through marginality. The process of decentralization and democratization after Suharto’s downfall inaugurated a new era for formerly marginalized peoples and “offered the opportunity to the indigenous peoples (*masyarakat adat*) and to the government to recover the injustices and dispossessions which these people had suffered” (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 7). By means of marginality this process reconfigured the idea of power and the notion of opportunity tremendously. I will come back to this development in the following sub-chapter as well as in Chapter 5.6. For now, it is important to note that deeply connected to the *masyarakat adat* movement is a new trend in forest- and land-rights regulations that focuses more on customary land rights. In 2013 the Indonesian Constitutional Court implemented a new decision that demarcates a big turning point in the history of land rights for indigenous communities. On May 16

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<sup>69</sup> Although, as Li reminds us, here trees are of minor importance since a significant part of the alleged 65 percent of state forest is not covered with trees.

2013, the Indonesian Constitutional Court announced in Decision No. 35/PUU-X that customary forests are no longer declared state forest. This case was based on a petition by AMAN (Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago) and two indigenous communities filed in March 2012 (Arizona and Cahyani 2013: 53). It basically objected to the Forestry Law of 1999 which ignored customary rights of local communities to land and forest in favor of issuing concessions over natural resources to commercial enterprises. With the state's decision, approval by customary landholders thus became mandatory, and AMAN celebrated the decision as the return of rights to around 40 million indigenous communities in Indonesia (Butt 2014: 59). Although this decision was celebrated as a milestone for indigenous communities its outcome remains vague. Butt asserts that the result has to be regarded in a rather pessimistic manner since Indonesia's Court has only narrow formal power; it cannot induce its regulations to national parliament. It rather can, jurisdictionally, review statutes against the constitution. Most cases that affect indigenous communities are challenging "statutes granting the state legal authority to issue concessions. However, that authority is usually exercised by way of subordinate regulations – most commonly ministerial decrees or local government bylaws" (Butt 2014: 71). A second reason can be found in the fact that the court so far has not paid attention to the "practical difficulties facing traditional communities to achieve formal 'recognition' of their status as such" (Butt 2014: 72).<sup>70</sup>

### ***Relocation***

For the New Order regime, upland people and indigenous people in general "sullied the modern image Indonesia sought to project to the outside world" (Henley and Davidson 2007: 10). Cultural variety that had gained attention during the colonial period was now backed away from as somewhat pejorative, and upland communities were no longer perceived as symbols of diversity but were instead combined under an "overriding common cultural pattern – that is by their alleged 'primitive' nature" (Colchester 1986: 91). The government aimed for modernity and invented a new strategy to make sure that

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<sup>70</sup> The Jakarta Post noted that "[u]nder Environment and Forestry Ministerial Regulation No. 12/2015, which was issued in March, the percentage of areas dedicated for local people increased to at least 20 percent. While technical details of the regulation are still being formulated, the association is worried that the government would require its members to reduce the size of their existing industrial forest area to fulfill the 20 percent quota for use by local communities" (Amin 2015).



the nation followed by classifying possible hindering factors in this process: “a ‘by-product’ of this dynamic development was the creation of categories of marginal peoples: people [...] who refused or were refused the experience of modernity” (Kuipers 1998: 15). Indigenous communities received a new entitlement in this period as *suku terasing*, a term created by the government in 1976, and meaning isolated tribe. In 1987 it was replaced by *masyarakat terasing* (isolated community) (Duncan 2008). As I have stated above, a center is generally in constant need of its periphery since it is the supposed fundamental difference between the center and a margin that forms the center’s pre-eminence in the first place. Both are therefore deeply entangled with each other not only by economic and political but also symbolic means. The margins, according to Shields, portray the opposite of the center, i.e. all those aspects that the center tries to repress (1991). During the New Order the marginality of upland groups in this regard was interpreted as a certain ‘backwardness’. Opposed to Suharto’s objective of development and modernity, the marginality of upland groups was therefore marked by socio-cultural aspects that included for example swidden agriculture in contrast to state-promoted wet rice cultivation, a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle that opposed the national idea of permanent settlement units, and the lack of an officially recognized religion, with upland groups characterized by their adherence to indigenous belief systems.

Probably the most drastic example of accomplishing rule over upland groups is therefore the praxis of resettlement. Resettlement programs in the name of development during the New Order regime were a common picture in Indonesia, to quote Li’s account from 1999: “The target group is expected to move from isolation and backwardness to the status of ‘ordinary villagers’ culturally normalized and enmeshed in the regular system of village administration and national development” (Li 1999c: 302). During the New Order regime these resettlement initiatives were a common procedure in Indonesia and aimed at the transforming supposed “isolated” and “primitive” uplanders into modern citizens of the Indonesian nation-state by assembling them into centralized, administrative villages, following the national idea of *pembangunan* (Li 1999c: 302). The roots of this program can be found in colonial strategies to move upland groups to the lowlands, and was then, in 1950, revitalized through DEPSOS, Indonesia’s Department of Social Affairs (Haba 1998). Haba shows four different types of such programs under way in Indonesia in the 1980s. For example, one resettlement program was aimed towards shifting cultivators (*peladang berpindah-pindah*, BI) under the guidance of the Forestry Department while

another, called the Program for the Development of Social Prosperity of Isolated Communities (*Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Sosial Masyarakat Terasing*, PKSMT) (Duncan 2008: 86), targeted “‘remote’ or ‘isolated’ people (*masyarakat terpencil* or *masyarakat terasing*). Remote or ‘isolated people’ are officially defined as a ‘people or a group of people whose habitats/residences are located 24 hours or more in traveling time from a provincial capital city measured by using public transportation’” (Haba 1998: 2). The latter program was retitled by 1999 as the Program for the Development of Social Prosperity of Geographically Isolated Customary Law Communities (*Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Sosial Komunitas Adat Terpencil*, PKAT) and its goal was formulated as that of helping more than one million people “that the government feels need special assistance” (Duncan 2008: 87) in development.<sup>71</sup> State programs affecting upland groups throughout Southeast Asia and Indonesia are often subject to failure, and many groups heavily resist such measures, as I will show in the course of this work (Chapter 5). But although state power is not endless, upland people on the other hand are also not general opponents of the state. Aspects of citizenship such as identity cards or land certificates are often desired objects among upland people; further, many wish for school education, road access, hospitals, government jobs or the opening of plantations as a source of income. A romanticized notion put forward by many NGOs, or popular images depicting “isolated tribes” who refuse claims to modernity, do not match the lived experiences of many upland people; nor does the imagination of “helpless victims” living in the Indonesian uplands portray detailed accounts. However, these popular notions serve a goal:

They are simplifications necessary to the critique of state policies, which rely, as noted above, on equally simplified representations of upland lifestyles and ecology. Instead of a dialogue between the state and its critics, a mirror effect simply inverts the categories (wise swiddener/destructive swiddener, valuable traditions/backward traditions) leaving the categories themselves essentialised and fundamentally unchanged (Li 1999a: 23).

Likewise in Central Sulawesi resettlement programs have a long history and are a common picture for Wana people as well – they remain a government objective, of which Wana are all too aware. Colonial as well as recent resettlement initiatives continue to

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<sup>71</sup> Duncan notes the renaming from *terasing* to *terpencil* has its roots in the meaning of distance; while *terasing* implied to be “isolated from the society’s mainstream”, the term *terpencil* connotes a rather geographical isolation, “removing the stigma of having been left behind developmentally and shifting the blame to geographical barriers that hindered previous efforts” (Duncan 2008: 91).

leave their mark on Wana relations with the government as well as with companies; I will return to this aspect later (see Chapter 5).

Yet another form of relocation that was established during the New Order was the *transmigrasi* program. Within this initiative under the Suharto government, more than 6.8 million people were resettled between 1969 and 1994 from the densely populated islands of Java, Madura and Bali to Outer Indonesia's islands (Weber 2005: 89).<sup>72 73</sup> Through the exploitation of natural resources and labor, the government apparatus moved closer to the uplands, bringing with it "the administrative and coercive machinery of the state" (Li 1999a: 16). In Central Sulawesi and Morowali regency, intra-Sulawesi migration has however affected the local circumstances more profoundly than did migrants from Bali or Java. Buginese migrants and other Southern-based Sulawesi inhabitants have increasingly moved to the resource-rich central province of the islands, searching for sources of income and land. Competition between locals and migrants is a matter of concern for transmigrants as well as inner-island migrants, where local hierarchies define power constellations and often influence access to resources and land and are often sources of conflict in Central Sulawesi (Acciaoli 2001; Aragon 2001; Li 2000). In a similar way Li's argument points to the regulation of spontaneous settlement, especially in border areas, which has as its goal the extension of state rule even in the fuzzy periphery: "once newcomers have been organized into administrative units (*desa*), their daily activities can be monitored and regulated through the various village committees and institutions specified in law" (Li 1999a: 16).

### **2.2.5 Upland People as Indigenous People: *Masyarakat Adat* Movement**

When in 1993 UNESCO declared the Year of the Indigenous Peoples, Indonesia's indigenous communities also began their first moves towards official recognition of their

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<sup>72</sup> Boomgard points out that the praxis of locating Javanese population to more sparsely populated islands was already part of the colonial program; it was called "colonization" and had "the stated aim of improving the exploitation of the 'natural riches there'" (Boomgaard and Gooszen 1991: 55, see also Weber 2005: 89).

<sup>73</sup> Just recently the government inaugurated a new transmigration plan, encompassing the replacement of four million people within five years "to bolster employment opportunities and create new villages in Indonesia" (The Jakarta Post 2015).

rights and status as *masyarakat adat*. From 25-29 May 1993 the “Workshop on the Development of *adat* community and legal resources and natural resource management in the forestry sector” was held in Tana Toraja (Tyson 2008: 74). Already in the 1980s, the Indonesian Forum for Environment – Friends of the Earth Indonesia (*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia*, WALHI) started discussing the legal situation of indigenous rights, at that time still under Suharto’s regime. With the 1993 workshop, an initial set of goals for a new emergent development for the archipelago was initiated, and resulted in the first indigenous activists network, called the Indigenous Peoples Rights’ Advocacy Network (*Jaringan Pembelaan Hak-Hak Masyarakat Adat*, JAPHAMA), while simultaneously leading to similar formations all around Indonesia. Ongoing discussions and activists’ organization finally culminated in the First Congress of the Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago, held in Jakarta in the year 1999. This meeting was also the birth of the nation’s biggest *masyarakat adat* organization, called the Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago (*Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*, AMAN) (Arizona and Cahyadi 2013: 43-44). The end of the New Order regime in 1998 initiated a number of reformatory regulations towards democracy and decentralization for the Indonesian nation-state. This opened the door for a new era of formerly marginalized peoples; it “offered the opportunity to the indigenous peoples (*masyarakat adat*) and to the government to recover the injustices and dispossessions which these people had suffered” (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 7). After decades of indigenous communities voices going unheard, AMAN’s use of the slogan ““If the state does not recognise us, we will not recognise the state” in 1999 made it clear that indigenous peoples had organized themselves and had become a powerful organ in the new era of *reformasi* (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 7). The choral response to this slogan, echoed numerous times, “Hidup masyarakat adat! ‘Long live indigenous people!’” (Acciaioli 2007: 295), also signified another important change. With the 1999 formation of AMAN, Indonesian indigenous communities found a new promising term under which to subsume the variety of different groups that saw their rights and claims formulated by the new umbrella organization: *masyarakat adat*. According to AMAN, *masyarakat adat* defines “communities that live on the basis of their hereditary ancestral origins in a specific customary territory, that possess sovereignty over their land and natural riches, whose socio-cultural life is ordered by customary law, and whose customary institutions manage the continuity of their social

life” (AMAN, quoted in Acciaioli 2007: 299).<sup>74</sup> The category “*masyarakat adat*” is deeply infused with claims to indigenous rights and recognition of communities that have suffered various forms of marginalization; it is thus a political term that offers multifaceted meanings, hopes, expectations and claims for communities that declare themselves to be *masyarakat adat*, diverse as they are; “most of them are no longer nomads roaming through the forests and living only from what nature offers them as the term in its original and romanticizing sense suggests” (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 12). While upland groups like the Wana can easily be acknowledged as “upland groups” and as *masyarakat adat*, the latter was, until a couple of years ago, a broadly unknown field of political engagement to them. Wana entered the *masyarakat adat* movement in 2011; it was a political decision born out of land-rights issues. It offered them a new opportunity to fight against their marginalization in economic terms; marginality in this context received another meaning that I will come back to in Chapter 5.

### **2.2.6 Marginality and Marginalization According to Religious Categories**

It becomes clear that the amount of research on upland marginalization in Indonesia is rich, and categories of socio-economic and political effects of marginalized standings among upland people are broadly covered. Upland marginalization processes in Indonesia meanwhile continue, not only in terms of land rights, but also for example in terms of indigenous peoples’ struggles for an official recognition of local belief systems. The role of religion is often ignored in studies focusing on upland–lowland relations – in Indonesia and in general – thereby neglecting one of the most critical aspects of marginalization relevant to Wana people.

A number of studies focusing on religion among indigenous groups in Indonesia point to Christianized or Islamized uplanders who combine their old belief system with a newly acquired world religious belief (e.g., Duncan 2003; George 1996). For example, Duncan shows how the Forest Tobelo in Northeastern Halmahera had resisted religious

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<sup>74</sup> For a discussion of the development of the category *masyarakat adat* see Acciaioli (2007), Moniaga (2007) and Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann (2011); for a legal analysis of the term see Arizona and Cahyani (2013).

conversion for a very long time, then finally gave in in the course of the efforts of the US-based New Tribes Mission (Duncan 2003).<sup>75</sup> Schiller, among others, describes how in 1980 the Ngaju Dayak in Central Kalimantan have managed to get their belief system – formerly Kaharingan, now Hindu Kaharingan – acknowledged as a section of Hinduism through a government “world-religion” certification process (Schiller 1997). In Central Sulawesi, Aragon portrays the – as she calls it – dialogue between Tobaku belief system and Christian missionaries and their formulation of an “indigenized Christianity” (2000). In these examples, religious affiliation becomes an important category of agency that is, nonetheless, less important for upland marginalization processes. The edited volume by Tania Li (1999a) for example, touches upon the issue of religion or religious conversion only briefly. For Wana though, as a non-converted group, religion becomes a highly politicized marker of identity in regard to marginality-related issues since religious association is closely intertwined with a Wana self-marginalized positioning and socio-religious hierarchies.

Indonesia has a long history of religious influences. Today it is the country with the world’s largest Muslim society, but it cannot be considered an Islamic state. Instead, religious pluralism offers other religions, such as the group of more than 30 million Christians, an equal standing within the society. When Indonesia became an independent nation religious freedom became an important topic. Generally, the Indonesian state follows the principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, “Unity in Diversity”, including in a religious sense. The Constitution of 1945 states the following concerning religion:

- (1) The state is based on the belief in the One and Only God.
- (2) The state guarantees each and every citizen the freedom of religion and of worship in accordance with his religion and belief.<sup>76</sup>

A similar statement is made in the national principle of the *Pancasila*, manifested as the preamble of the 1945 Constitution. It comprises five pillars that function, according to a New Order interpretation, as “the source of the Indonesian soul” (Platzdasch 2009: 182). The first pillar designates the belief in *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, the Belief in One God, thereby declaring Indonesia to be “neither an Islamic state nor a secularist one” (Beck 2002: 216). After the downfall of Suharto and on the onset of Indonesia’s *era reformasi*

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<sup>75</sup> See also Chapter 4.

<sup>76</sup> *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945* (The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia of 1945).

religious freedom continued to be a state concern, and was reinforced in Law 39/1999 on Human Rights, stating that:

- (1) Each person is free to profess his/her religion and to worship according to his/her religion and belief.
- (2) The state guarantees all persons the freedom of religion, each according to his/her religion and belief.<sup>77</sup>

In 2001 the Second Amendment of the Constitution inserted a new section on “Fundamental Human Rights” – religious freedom is especially of concern for Article 28E and I:

- (3) Each person is free to worship and to practice the religion of his choice, to choose education and schooling, his occupation, his nationality, his residency in the territory of the country that he shall be able to leave and to which he shall have the right to return.
- (4) To uphold and protect human rights in accordance with the principles of a democratic and law-based state, the implementation of fundamental human rights is to be guaranteed, regulated, and laid down in laws and regulations.<sup>78</sup>

Based on this generally neutral and open condition for religious freedom it is easy to make the assumption that indigenous groups with an indigenous belief system should face no difficulties within the Indonesian state. However, the same constitution also places the above-mentioned religious freedom within a context of political stability. In Article 28J (2) issues of morality, security and public order are given preference over the stated fundamental human rights from the same article:

“In exercising his rights and liberties, each person has the duty to accept the limitations determined by law for the sole purposes of guaranteeing the recognition and respect of the rights and liberties of other people and of satisfying a democratic society’s just demands based on considerations of morality, religious values, security, and public order.”<sup>79</sup>

On an international level too, the Indonesian state affirms religious freedom. Through the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

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<sup>77</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 39/1999 tentang Hak Asasi Manusia* (Law 39/1999 on Human Rights), translation by Crouch (2012: 548).

<sup>78</sup> *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945* (The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia of 1945), translation by Crouch (2012: 548).

<sup>79</sup> *Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945* (The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia of 1945), translation by Crouch (2012: 548). The same paragraph was already implemented in Law 39/1999 on Human Rights as article 70, which “allows for permissible limitations on the right to religious freedom” (Crouch 2012: 548).

(ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Indonesia emphasized tolerance towards religion. Both of these agreements were then turned into Indonesian law, through Law 11/2005 and Law 12/2005.<sup>80</sup> All of these agreements indicate that the Indonesian state is committed to religious freedom at the international, constitutional and domestic scale (Crouch 2012: 549). However, taking a close look at the internal dynamics of religious regulations reveals a slightly different picture.

The declarations in *Pancasila* and the Constitution imply a monotheistic imperative regardless of confession, but omitted to provide a general definition of what could be regarded as religion. The Ministry of Religion, which was founded in 1946, strove to find a definition of religion and anticipated an Islamic understanding of it, thereby allowing Muslim voices a significant role in “framing and shaping all the debates about religion” (Picard 2011: 13). These definitory attempts culminated in the curtailing of religious freedom through the so-called Blasphemy Act of 1965<sup>81</sup> – the presidential Decree No 1/PNPS/1965<sup>82</sup> on the Prevention of the Misuse/Insulting of a Religion. By this decree the idea of “insulting a religion” was officially articulated by then President Sukarno and was initially influenced by the fear of a communist threat. In Paragraph 1 the exclusivity of the term “religion” within the Blasphemy Law becomes plain as it officially acknowledges only six religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. The choice of these six religions is explicated through the “historical basis” of these confessional categories within Indonesia. The next sentences nevertheless assure the legal existence of other religions (*agama-agama*) such as Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Shintoism, and Taoism, which are, as specifically mentioned, not forbidden (*dilarang*, BI). Instead they are guaranteed the same rights as other religions as long as they abide by Indonesian law. Blasphemy is very much an ongoing concern of Indonesian public opinion – a recent example from January 2012 is the fate of civil servant Alexander Aan, who was jailed for posting on his Facebook page the sentence

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<sup>80</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 11/2005 tentang Pengesahan Kovenan Internasional Tentang Hak-Hak Ekonomi, Sosial Dan Budaya* (Law 11/2005 on Ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights); *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 12/2005 tentang Pengesahan Kovenan Internasional Tentang Hak-Hak Sipil Dan Politik* (Law 12/2005 on Ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights).

<sup>81</sup> Four years later, in 1969 it was given, through President Suharto, the official status of a law.

<sup>82</sup> *Penetapan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 1 Tahun 1965 Tentang Pencegahan Penyalahgunaan dan/atau Penodaan Agama* (Presidential Decree 1/1965 on the Prevention of the Misuse and/or Insulting of a Religion).



“God does not exist”. The problem, it was stated by the Dharmasraya Police Chief, was “that Alexander had used the Koran to highlight his atheist views. ‘So it meets the criteria of tainting religion, in this case Islam’” (Pasandaran 2012).

Albeit the strict regulation of the original Blasphemy Act of 1965, religious pluralism in daily practice was however far more free than what was formulated in official state rule. This changed when Suharto came to power. Against the background of the 1965-1966 massacres of members of the communist party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, PKI), religious affiliation received new significance. Religion became a marker of “unsuspiciousness” when the fear of being associated with communism – and therefore a danger to the state – was great among Indonesian citizens. Citizens were obliged to announce their religious confession via their official identity cards and atheism was declared prohibited (Picard 2011: 14). In 1969 Suharto changed the Decree on Blasphemy into law, thus “turning state-sanctioned religions into mutually exclusive categories, putting increasing pressure on heterodox views to conform” (Picard 2011: 14). This also included indigenous groups whose beliefs were excluded from the official definition of *agama*. Since a number of upland groups relied on their own belief system and had not converted to one of the religions recognized in the Blasphemy Law, the official state decree on managing religious affairs became especially relevant for people who “do not yet have a religion” (*orang yang belum beragama*, BI). Henley and Davidson make this clear for the interpretation of the *Pancasila*’s meaning for indigenous people,

“as proscribing [...] all the traditional polytheistic or ‘animist’ beliefs of those marginal, formerly tribal groups, subsequently identified as *masyarakat adat* or indigenous peoples, which had not yet converted to Islam or Christianity. [...] ‘Lacking religion’, these groups were regarded as vulnerable to communism and other forms of sedition. Many were literally forced to make an immediate choice between Islam and Christianity” (Henley and Davidson 2007: 10).

The authors quote a regional official in West Kalimantan: “I don’t care which religion they have [...] as long as they have one” (Henley and Davidson 2007: 10).

All issues connected to those officially recognized religions became subject to the Ministry of Religion. Indigenous religions however were considered *aliran kepercayaan* (BI, mystical beliefs) and since 1978 were subordinated under the Ministry of Education and Culture. The definition of *kepercayaan* as culture or custom also designated indigenous beliefs further as belonging to the arena of tradition, a sharp contrast to state-oriented goals of modernity when Suharto’s government aimed for the development

(*pembangunan*) of the Indonesian nation. Thus, adherence to one of the six officially recognized “world religions” functioned as a marker of modern citizenship and juxtaposed traditional, and therefore “backward”, *kepercayaan* while religion was further “associated in nationalist culture with education, cosmopolitan orientation, sophistication, and progress” (Atkinson 1983: 688). Up until today indigenous belief systems are still not officially recognized religions and are still handled as spheres of culture rather than of religion. Wana people as well as other upland groups are thus subject to ongoing discrimination because they are continuously perceived as people without a religion and therefore as “primitives awaiting conversion” (Aragon 2003: 33). Moreover, “Wana failings to match the ideal of a progressive citizenry are summed up for nationalist Indonesians in the fact that the Wana lack a religion” (Atkinson 1983: 688). As Saputra claims for the Indonesian state: “[H]ome grown animism has always been given a devil’s image” (Saputra 2012). Consequently, religious conversion to either Christianity or Islam is a central subject for perceptions of “civilizatory modernity” among upland people in Indonesia. Most upland Wana have effectively managed to oppose conversion attempts made by colonial governments, their lowland fellow citizens, or current missionaries. In my research findings, this condition of marginalization processes according to religious boundaries was especially relevant in Taronggo, the lowland research location. Taronggo is the geographically closest full administrative village to the upland area of Salisarao, and is populated by an interreligious community. Non-converted Wana, Wana who have converted to a “world religion”, and Christians and Muslims all live together. In this interreligious context as well as among upland Wana, Atkinson’s analysis of how Wana religion is shaped alongside this outside pressure, although written long before the downfall of Suharto’s regime, remains meaningful today: Wana

“are acutely aware of and sensitive to the way they are regarded by others more powerful than themselves. What they call *agama* [religion] Wana represents a self-consciously constructed response to the judgments of the dominant society. This response builds on the images of what constitutes a religion that the Wana have received in their dealings with Muslims and Christians” (Atkinson 1988: 53).

Religious marginalization is thus a highly important aspect of the question quoted above, of “how rule is accomplished” and how power is exercised, which I will discuss in depth in Chapter 4. It is another political project intended to implement control and to extend

national citizenship to upland people in Indonesia, deeply affecting Wana who are living in interreligious and other settings.

## 2.3 INTERIM CONCLUSION

Marginality has become a standard relational term in anthropological discourse to guide debates on social and economic inequalities. The works of scholars like Li, Shields and Tsing have revolutionized the idea of marginality, revealing the potential that marginal spheres have to resist and counteract hierarchical center–periphery relations. Shields has shown how the “social definition of marginal places and spaces is intimately linked with the categorization of objects, practices, ideas and modes of social interaction as belonging to the ‘Low culture,’ the culture of marginal places and spaces, the culture of the marginalized” (1991: 4-5). Marginality thus offers a way to analyze power relations in an interrelational setting between a center and its peripheries, and the way in which aspects of a given continuum are perceived by both ends. Within the Indonesian context, territorialization, historicity, and the dynamics of politics are important issues for the investigation of marginalized regions all over the archipelago. People’s socio-religious, economic and political environments among the Indonesian uplands are comprised by, and related to, hegemonic schemes, which constitute them as peripheral. However, the margins have never been solely reliant on a supposed center but always managed to find their own ways independent of nationalist agendas, thereby continuously reformulating center–periphery relations. Considering marginality as an essential concept for Wana in Morowali Regency, I believe it is the politics of state power on the one hand, and the performance of marginality on the other hand, that significantly shape hierarchical relations between marginal and central entities. Although, as I have shown above, the upland–lowland distinction is a social construction, and its connotations have been guiding points of reference in early attempts to categorize Central Sulawesi upland people (see introduction). It is in the Indonesian uplands that we can simultaneously observe how state intervention and local agency come together and how categories become permeable. In the sense that “the conflation of overlapping dimensions of marginality produces an apparently ‘natural’ fact, masking social and economic processes and the operation of power” (Li 1999a: 33) the Indonesian uplands, as a historically depicted marginalized

region, are confronted with aspects of cultural and structural marginalization processes that shape, define and transform a group's identity as marginal.

In the same framework Wana are imagined, perceived and described as marginal people by their neighbors, state officials, NGO activists, tourists and anthropologists. They have lived at the edges of the state and at the borders of the realm of cultural citizenship, where they have developed a sophisticated notion of their marginalized standing, as I will show in the following chapters – always in interaction with outsiders and state programs. Wana living in Central Sulawesi to a certain extent and in certain ways do fit the stereotypical picture commonly found in the Indonesian context for upland groups. A deep analysis of Wana living in upland areas and trying to find a neat positioning in the lowlands, underlining the hybridity of exactly these categories, touches upon the common features of marginality typical in the Indonesian uplands, but further adds another category to the topic: Religious marginality and the performance of marginality (see Chapter 3 and 4).

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### 3 COSMOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF A MARGINAL STATUS

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*“Kita taw bea – We are a stupid people (orang bodoh, BI); kita taw masi yasi – we are a pitiful people”*. This verbal expression was a sentence that I heard frequently from my interlocutors. It followed me throughout my time in Taronggo and Salisarao. Wana used this self-denigrating illustration habitually, in daily conversations, in interviews and meetings. “We are stupid people” or often the singular form, “I am stupid, I know nothing”, were phrases that took me a while to understand its deeper meaning. At first, I believed it to be a notion of mere timidity and politeness, used to excuse oneself for missing knowledge or information on a specific topic simply because a lack of formal education. I also had thoughts about whether it could be a general self-denigrating habitus as an ethnic minority just like de Vidas has witnessed among the Teneek in Mexico. The Teenek describe themselves as “‘less than nothing,’ ‘smelly,’ ‘dirty Indians,’ ‘idiots,’ ‘cowards,’ and [...] ‘very timid’[...] we are stupid” (Vidas 2004: 290,121), accepting their marginal stand within the Mexican society as an ontological given. I also came to believe it to portray feigned ignorance as a sort of resistance against government and outer, unwanted influences – similar with what Scott had in mind when he talked about “the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups”<sup>83</sup> (Scott 1985: 29). Not knowing how to vote, how to participate at a community meeting for example, could be interpreted as a way of refusing state interaction. In a sense of resistance, ignorance can be a useful tool for marginalized groups to defend one’s interests; it “require[s] little or no coordination or planning; [it] represent[s] a form of individual self-help; and [ignorance] avoid[s] any direct symbolic confrontation with authority or with elite norms” (Scott 1985: 29). All three interpretations deserve some consideration in the course of this thesis (see Chapter 5). Similarly to Scott’s assertions, the above mentioned Teenek marginal standing within the Mexican nation can also be understood as a rather potent and powerful chosen societal positioning: “the Teeneks place themselves outside other social groups, renouncing any eventual emulation of them because they cannot conceive,

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<sup>83</sup> Scott understands under these weapons forms of daily resistance like “foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth” (Scott 1985: 29).

structurally, the possibility of envying them. They thus affirm their specific (although negative) identity in relation to the Others, which can also be understood as a language of resistance” (Vidas 2004: 174). However, Wana verbal expressions of a self-denigrating status yet portray another meaning, which became clear to me by listening to cosmological narratives that Wana were sometimes eager (and sometimes hesitant) to tell me. Although their self-deprecation was also nested neatly between notions of resistance and politeness, it rather finds its explanation and causal derivation in the cosmological foundation of Wana marginal standing.

Cosmology is a term frequently used in anthropological studies and describes a rather vague notion of worldview, belief, symbols and rituals stories but also an important influence on social practice. Cosmology has been applied as a concept to explain “the theory of the universe as an ordered whole, and of the general laws which govern it. In social anthropology, the meaning of cosmology [...] is closely connected to the empirical study of religions” (Barnard and Spencer 2002: 129). Thus, it is deeply connected with the idea of cultural classification and structure; Lévi-Strauss’ writings on cosmology were highly influential and inspired a wave of interest in cosmology in anthropological studies. Lévi-Strauss distinguished social structure between two systems of order, first the “order of elements” encompassing kinship and marriage rules, and second an “order of orders”, “the formal properties of the whole made up of sub-wholes, each of which corresponds to a given structural level” (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 333). The latter can be divided further into lived-in orders like the political and thought-of orders including religion and myth,

“mechanisms which can be studied from the outside as a part of objective reality. But no systematic studies of these orders can be undertaken without acknowledging the fact that social groups, to achieve their reciprocal ordering, need to call upon orders of different types, corresponding to a field external to objective reality and which we call the ‘supernatural’. These ‘thought-of’ orders cannot be checked against the experience to which they refer, since they are one and the same as this experience. Therefore, we are in the position of studying them only in their relationships with the other types of ‘lived-in’ orders” (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 312–13).

Stressing the heterogeneity of orders for a given society, he stirred wide interest in the study of cosmologies for means of theorizing human mind. Southeast Asia in particular became a field of structural analysis of indigenous cosmologies. In Indonesia, through the structuralist Leiden school, a special tradition emerged out of early Dutch academic interest on empirical data on the country. Its outcome, Barnard and Spencer note, is still

traceable today: “ethnographic accounts from Indonesia cannot ignore this Dutch tradition. Whether the focus is on kinship, ritual, house construction, or even on social change, most find it impossible to discuss cultural and social practices without relating them in some way to indigenous cosmologies” (Barnard and Spencer 2002: 198). Examples for anthropological research dealing also with indigenous cosmologies are the work of Elizabeth Traube *Cosmology and Social Life: Ritual Exchange among the Mambai of East Timor* (1986), Gregory Forth who offers a detailed analysis of Nage cosmology in Eastern Indonesia (1998), Rössler who discusses ritual practice among the Makassar of Gowa, South Sulawesi (1987), Aragon who examines pre-colonial cosmology in Central Sulawesi (2000) or Atkinson who explains Wana belief in a divided reality with cosmological narratives.

It is these cosmological narratives and understanding that deeply embed and explain Wana marginal standing as one central factor. In Wana creation myths, a specific millennial theme explains their contemporary situation as *taw bea*. In this chapter I will therefore show how Wana construct their current state of desolation as a temporary stance of marginality. I choose two of these powerful narratives that demonstrate how Wana first explain their poverty and misery as an ethnic community and second how they have conceptualized their past as a Golden Age, the so-called *tempo baraka*.<sup>84</sup> Further, nested within the *baraka* narrative Wana believe in the reversal of their current pity in a retributive logic by expecting a return of the Golden Age in the future. This millennial emphasis offers a powerful and highly significant scheme for Wana articulations of their marginality. Then, I will show how specific agents of Wana cosmology function as brokers of these two temporalities of Wana marginality and thus portray bridges between the golden past and golden future. To conclude this chapter, I focus on Wana performance of marginality as a specific form of self-marginalization that results from Wana cosmological explanations of their current standing.

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<sup>84</sup> The Wana probably have adopted the term *tempo*, meaning fate or time, from *Bahasa Indonesia*, itself a loanword from Portuguese, the lingua franca of the archipelago between the 16th and 19th century that left manifold traces on the Indonesian national language. *Baraka*, meaning power, is in itself an Arabic term (see also Atkinson 1979). For a discussion of *baraka* see Chapter 3.1.4.

### 3.1 COSMOLOGICAL NARRATIVES

Wana shamanship and concurrently Wana cosmology and epistemology has already been described and analyzed by Jane Atkinson. In her study she chose to focus on the most central Wana healing ritual, the *mabolong* – in the Morowali area called *momago* – and unwinds its double function as religious ritual evoking parts of a divided reality Wana refer to and further as a political stage that serves the affirmation and reaffirmation of power and political authority (see Chapter 4). Atkinson's writings were evidently central to my research but since my study questions were of different concern, I was, in the beginning not genuinely interested in Wana cosmological explanations of the world. It took me a couple of weeks to realize that what Atkinson has referred to as cosmological narratives were still of uttermost importance for Morowali Wana. Before I portray Wana cosmological narratives, let me first clarify my overall understanding of Wana cosmology within the context of this chapter and the conceptualization of Wana mythology for elaborating on Wana marginality.

Atkinson recalls her first “intimation” with Wana cosmological realms during her first weeks of fieldwork in a chat with one of her informants, Indo Lina; “Looking out at the dense forests covering the mountain flanks that faced us, Indo Lina told me that those forests were full of “people” (*tau*) who for some reason were not seen, people who lived and farmed like the people here, but who kept themselves out of sight” (Atkinson 1979: 36–37). What the anthropologist first understood as people who had fled to the forests and now seemed to live in the mountains, she later realized, was a first insight into Wana understanding of their surrounding; these people Indo Lina had mentioned were *taw bolag*.<sup>85</sup> *Taw bolag* or sometimes called *taw bolagi* are invisible people living in the Wana forests that are of the same shape and appearance like Wana. Only sometimes they become visible, mostly for shamans and only when they want to. I recite this episode from Atkinson's research because her perplexity about the way Indo Lina spoke about the *taw bolag* is helpful for understanding Wana cosmology, the research situation, and change in Wana cultural explanations;

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<sup>85</sup> Atkinson uses the spelling *tau* (see also Camang 2003), whereas Journet and Nougatrol use the term *taw* just like my informants who were literate – a version I prefer simply out of habit and that I use in the following.



“the terms in which Indo Lina described these people were [...] terms by which ordinary Wana settlements might be described. It was only later that I could be sure that these hidden people were not humans [...], but a spirit population whose characteristics were drawn from the Wana social world” (1979: 38).

I stumbled over the *taw bolag* more or less by accident. One night during my first weeks in Taronggo, I was talking to Apa nTina about dogs and their ability to sense *measa*, a general term for a number of Wana demonic spirits. Apa Ensi was sitting next to us. Apa nTina told me that one-day he went with a friend and his three dogs in the forest to search for *soga* (resin). After a long day of collecting *soga*, they were surprised by nightfall; it went dark and they had not managed to get home in time so they had no choice but to sleep in the woods. The forest is home to a variety of powerful beings that Wana usually fear – except for shamans or those who wish to become one. After they had lied down and finally managed to get to sleep, they were suddenly woke during the night by the dogs loud barking. Alarmed and afraid they got up to see the dogs yapping angrily. To the humans’ relief, the dogs were wagging their tails and were in fact highly excited in a friendly way. Apa nTina explained: The dogs had seen *taw bolag*, he said simply. Recalling what I had learned about them from Atkinson, I was eager to receive more details about them, but Apa nTina made it hard to obtain any specific particulars. It was only later, when I was in the upland region of Salisarao that people talked more open about the *taw bolag*. In retrospective, I believe Apa nTina had in that moment refused to talk about the *taw bolag* in detail, since a) he had not known me too well at that time and b) the presence of another person hindered him. The interreligious situation of living together door to door with Christians and Muslims shaped not only the research situation to a great extent (see also Chapter 1 and 4) but also Wana presentations of cosmological explanations and the way they are or are not eager to talk about it (Chapter 4).

The notion of the *taw bolag* served Atkinson as an introduction of her access to Wana cosmogony. The *taw bolag*, just like other spirits that populate the Wana area, are agents of a hidden realm in Wana cosmology. For Wana the world is divided into “ordinary and hidden realms” (Atkinson 1989: 38) that people can differently have access to. While people may experience usual diseases or accidents like breaking a leg, these incidents can also have a deeper hidden cause and are perceived of as results of intervention on human bodies by spirit agents. These, to use Atkinson’s term “extraordinary” diseases can be seen and cured only by shamans who by their special competence and powerful

knowledge gain access to these hidden realms of the world. Just like the notion of *saruga*, heaven, that for Wana exists as a separate afterworld once attached to earth (see Chapter 4), these hidden realms of the earth are part of Wana cosmology. Wana perceive of their world as a divided realm, or as Apa Jendi asserted: “There is this world that everyone can see, and then there is this other [place] that only people can see like *taw walia* [shamans] during a *momago*, or when you are alone in the dark, in the forest, or sometimes when you do not expect anything”. Wana separate the reality to which everyone has access and those spheres of reality that is limited in access. Against this background, cosmological narratives gain an important status: it is in these stories and other “conventional narratives [...] that outline typical sequences of action involving extraordinary dimensions of reality, people can discuss and interpret events with reference to hidden sources” (Atkinson 1989: 41). For understanding the cultural meaning of marginality from Wana perspective, so-called *katuntu*, powerful creation myths become therefore meaningful in a twofold way. First they are prevailing narratives demonstrating Wana cosmological understanding of the world while they further explain the construction of Wana current socio-cultural as well as political and economic positioning.

### 3.1.1 Conceptualizing Creation Myths

These *katuntu* are potent stories of a time long gone; Atkinson calls them cosmogonic tales. They can also be called creation myths, since they usually present a somewhat sacred description about how humans and the world were created. Thus, Wana *katuntu* easily fit the category of a myth as “a sacred narrative explaining how the world and man came to be in their present form” (Dundes 1984: 1). Before turning to the two relevant creation myths necessary to understand Wana conceptualizations of their marginal standing, let me first clarify the meaning of myths as analytical categories explaining marginality.

Segal (2005) gives an overview over the various theoretical approaches concerned with myth; that is myth and philosophy, myth and religion, myth and ritual, myth and literature, myth and psychology, myth and structure and myth and society. Based upon a comparative study of these approaches, Segal analyses a unifying matter for all disciplines concerned with the study of myths. He makes out three major questions

relating to origin, function and subject matter of the myth. The first question on origin asks how and why a myth occurs. The question for function concentrates on the reasons and circumstances a myth is persevered; “the answer to the why of origin and function is usually a need, which myth arises to fulfill and lasts by continuing to fulfill. What the need is, varies from theory to theory and from discipline to discipline” (Segal 2005: 372). The subject matter often asks for the myth’s referent; that is whether a myth is interpreted symbolically or rather literally. Broadly speaking, 19th century academics were mainly concerned with the study of myths and chiefly concentrated on the representation of the natural world within mythical accounts. For example, James Frazer und Edward B. Tylor both formulated a clear cut border between religion and science (Nader 1996: 4) and interpreted myth as part of religion and excluded from the realm of natural science; instead a myth serves as “an explanation of a physical event” (Segal 2005: 339) which is not based on scientific but on spiritual assumptions or as Frazer claims, “from the earliest times man has been engaged in a search for general rules whereby to turn the order of natural phenomena to his own advantage” (Frazer 1993: 50). For example, the physical event of rain or a volcano eruption is interpreted as the will of a godly being or a deity. Such an explanation would be part of the area of magic, the “bastard sister of science” (Frazer 1993: 50). Both, Tylor and Frazer saw myth as oppositional to science, the latter interpreted as modern whereas the former is associated as a primitive practice. According to 19th century evolutionist thinking, one had to cling to science and give up belief in myth to become modern. A different position took the 20th century theorists, where both was possible: one could be modern but at the same time could also keep hold of myth. Even though they criticized former theorists inter alia for declaring myth as false, they nonetheless did not try relativizing science.<sup>86</sup> Instead, they kept on “accepting science as the reigning explanation of the physical world” (Segal 2012: 118) and tried to grasp myth quite differently. The most influential of 20th century scholars reinterpreting the function of myth, however, were Bronislaw Malinowski and the historian of religions Mircea Eliade. Both argued that myth is about physical or natural phenomena but that it is also

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<sup>86</sup> According to Segal 20th century theorists concerned with myth can be distinguished into three groups of theorists. One subsumes scholars like Freud and Jung theorizing myth as neither explanation nor claiming a necessity to read myth literally; for them a myth’s function is solely the experience of the human mind and its subject matter is exactly this mind. The second group is lead by Rudolf Bultmann and Hans Jonas. These scholars do not take a myth’s subject matter as the natural world; instead it can be the world’s influence on people or also people themselves and thus a “myth is not to be read literally” (Segal 2012: 118). The third group is described above.

further about social phenomena and institutions like law or custom (Segal 2012: 119). Malinowski for example distinguished between legend and myth on the ground that a myth becomes relevant when a ritual, a ceremony or a social and moral rule is in need of justification (Malinowski 1973: 89). For Eliade, myth (and rituals) serve the return to an original place and time, while “imitating the exemplary acts of a god or of a mythic hero, or simply by recounting their adventures, the man of an archaic society detaches himself from profane time and magically re-enters the Great Time, the sacred time” (Eliade 1960: 23). While both scholars perceive of myths as a “a narrative resurrection of primeval reality” (Eliade, quoting Malinowski, 1960: 20), the latter sees the spiritual power of myth as a source of knowledge and experience while the former highlights the social power of myth as part of social interaction (Mader 2008: 135). Winzeler has collected a number of characteristics of myths that I recite here:

- 1) Myths is a story rather and a statement of belief or doctrine
- 2) It includes personalities that may be human, animal, or supernatural, or a combination of these, who do things or to whom things happen.
- 3) It is a story that is not just known but ‘believed’ and is regarded as important and sacred
- 4) It has no known author or authors; myth is different in this way from religious revelation and prophecy, to which it may otherwise be similar.
- 5) It involves events or activities that are in some way extraordinary, ‘larger than life’, if not necessarily supernatural, and cannot be confirmed or disproved (Winzeler 2008: 104).

A general definition of myth, against the background of numerous disciplines focusing on it, is not an easy task. The most simple, and for my intention the most intriguing definition is the one by Dundes mentioned above, myth as “a sacred narrative explaining how the world and man came to be in their present form” (Dundes 1984: 1). However, as we will see in the course of this chapter, general characteristics of Wana myths can differ from one to another. I will come back to this definition later and we will see in the following how Wana *katuntu* matches with or differs from this definitory attempt.

***Wana myths: Katuntu or Creation Tales***

Atkinson mentions for her research that some *katuntu* were “popular accounts with wide currency” (Atkinson 1979: 64); today they are still popular but people are highly careful to speak about them or even retell them when they are not sure about their audience (see above).<sup>87</sup> Apart from Christian or Muslim critics, another danger comes along with citing *katuntu*. These stories possess special power that can cause fatal damage when told in the wrong setting. To prevent this, a *duku* or *lango*, a ritual offering tray used also in a number rituals, would be needed for retelling these stories in order to concentrate powers towards a specific point “that have dispersed to the ends of the earth” (Atkinson 1989: 43). Then, if one would find a person who can tell the complete cosmogonic corpus the recitation would take seven days and seven nights and the earth would answer with an immense earthquake. However, most people only know fragments of *katuntu*, and Atkinson notes, that the entirety of these stories presents “an ideal that my sources believe once existed but does no longer. [...] Wana make no pretense [...] of full knowledge of cosmogonic stories, nor do they go to lengths to judge ‘narrative competence’” (1989: 43). I had a similar impression during the course of my research but the longer I stayed people started referring to one single Wana individual from Kayupoli within the nature reserve who, despite earlier assumptions, was said to know the complete corpus. Curious as I was, I managed to meet him a couple of times – Kayupoli is a day’s hike away from Taronggo and Salisarao – but according to him, time was always scarce so we never started the recitation of the full corpus. Whether or not narrative competence and competition is an issue of difference between Wana from the North in Atkinson’s research site and those from my research region or whether my example is just related to a single individual from Kayupoli is not easy to answer. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that Kayupoli is the tourist “hot-spot” for Morowali Wana; most outsiders interested in Wana culture usually visit Kayupoli and its surroundings. Further some minor research conducted there<sup>88</sup> and the work of the documentary filmmakers Nougazol and Journet (Journet and Nougazol 2002, 2005) include a number of interviewing techniques and approaches focusing in detail on religious accounts,

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<sup>87</sup> Atkinson (1989: 44) calls these stories of a time when wishes would become true *katuntu*. During my research, the meaning of *katuntu* appeared to be extended to all stories of a magical and powerful past.

<sup>88</sup> For example (Nurfanyiwu 2000; Sudaryanto 2005).

shamanic interpretation and Wana cosmology. Thus, it could be assumed that narrative competence has become an issue in areas with greater fluctuation of outsiders and people willing to pay for cosmological stories, in a sense of a commodification of culture.

A Wana *katuntu* is described by Atkinson as “a story of an earlier age characterized by magical powers which is sung in a distinctive way” (1979: 385). *Katuntu* presented to me, however, were never sung but instead eloquently told by knowing people.<sup>89</sup> Although a *duku* (ritual offering tray) was not necessary for me listening to *katuntu*, the situation however required a special setting. Only a few people were usually present, it was typically dark in the night and dinner had been served; a certain amount of rice wine, betel and cigarettes were necessary ingredients for telling *katuntu*. People capable of reciting *katuntu* were usually older people, women and men alike, although women usually were seldom openly claiming *katuntu* knowledge. Interestingly, younger Wana often did not know about the difference between general story-telling from the past, in the sense of history, and *katuntu*. Here is a short extract of an interview I took with Indo nSerli, a young upland woman and Apa nDenda, a well-respected Salisarao elder. In the following section I was asking about *katuntu*:

Me: Oh, I thought there is a difference between history (*sejarah*, BI) and *katuntu*.

Indo nSerli: No, history (*sejarah*) is the same like *katuntu*, there is no difference between telling a story from the past and *katuntu*...

Apa nDenda interrupts her

Apa nDenda: Ha, it's like that: *katuntu* is, ya, a little different between *katuntu* and history; the former (*katuntu*) relates to the history of the world and how it all began (*si'i sejarah dunia dari mulanya*). From there, people began to spread their stories; the stories from this time are called *katuntu*.

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<sup>89</sup>Nougarol (n.d.) also hints to the root of the verb as *tuntu*, meaning *cerita* (BI), to tell and give the following example sentence: “Na tuntu wesi'i-wesi'i = dia cerita begini-begini” (BI: s/he was telling this and this).

Some parts of *katuntu* that were portrayed to me were of secret nature and some special names that I got taught obtained specific powers. Of course, I will not sketch them out in the course of this work.<sup>90</sup> Instead, I will present only a short section of these stories that are relevant for Wana marginalization and I will begin with an account concerning the creation and the shaping of the cosmos. In a second step I will present versions of the narrative of the Golden Past.<sup>91</sup> Both serve as an explanation for Wana current marginality and poverty.

### 3.1.2 *Kaju Parambaa*: The Felled Tree

In the beginning, the world was only water. Then Pololoisong, a mythical figure, came down from heaven and placed a small amount of earth in the ocean, enough to set out a tree. This first piece of earth is, in Wana accounts, the seat of the world, *tunda'n tana*, where everything began, located at *gunung* (mountain) *Loyong*, close to Uewaju in the North. This tiny portion of earth became the foundation of the land. Pololoisong went back to heaven to ask *Pue*, God or the Owner, for permission to plant a tree. *Pue* granted him the right, thus Pololoisong returned to earth and put the first tree in the ground, the mythical *kaju parambaa* (big tree). Once the tree had grown a little, Pololoisong returned to heaven and asked *Pue* for a pair of chickens to take to earth and set free. The chickens started to scratch the ground, as is their habit, and thereby expanded the ground a little. But it was not enough. So Pololoisong went another time to *Pue* and returned with a pair of pigs, that he used to plow the ground by means of enlarging the earth. Another time he left for a pair of birds. However, the earth was still too small and the tree, *kaju parambaa*, had grown fast and had become too tall for the tiny earth. Again, Pololoisong made his way to heaven and asked for permission to fell the tree. *Pue* granted him the right to cut *kaju parambaa* but gave him an important advice: The tree was not to fall with its tree top on the waterside but on the tiny piece of earth. Pololoisong went back to earth and began to fell the tree; once he had already worked on one side of the tree and then started with the opposite side, the former had already grown back. Eventually, Pololoisong managed

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<sup>90</sup> Similarly, Atkinson refers to the incompleteness of the accounts she had collected as well as the stories A.C. Kruyt had collected almost hundred years ago (1989: 43).

<sup>91</sup> Her account and the accounts I collected are in general of similar content.

to fell it completely; due to the great difficulties however, fate took its course' and *kaju parambaa*'s treetop landed on the water. Seven days and seven nights Pololoisong waited, hoping the tree would eventually change back its position to earth, but his hopes were not fulfilled. Because *kaju parambaa* fell with its treetop on the water and not on the soil, Wana people are poor, it is told; wealth is lost to those areas beyond *tunda'n tana*.

In some versions that are told, the treetop was the source of money that could then be easily harvested by people living "over there". A.C. Kruyt has already written down this story in the beginning of the 20th century. Here, it is connected to the story of *wiaa siwangoe*: In the chapter "De Oorsprong de To Wana" (A.C. Kruyt 1930: 414–15) he asserts, heaven and earth were once connected by a liane, the *wiaa siwangoe*. At this time there were two Gods, named Poe ri arantana (Pue ara'n tana) and Poe lamo (Pue lamo), also named Lai and Ndara (see also Chapter 4). Both were brothers who could easily shift between heaven and earth. One day, heaven moved away from earth and the liane broke. Pue Lamo managed to hold on to heaven with the end of his spear and could rescue himself to heaven. His brother, Pue ara'n tana had to stay on earth. Pololoisong, here called Pololoiso, climbed down the liane and set the first tree, here called tree *parambae*. Once the tree had fallen on the water side, Pue Lamo spoke to him: "Now the people shall be poor. They shall beat bark cloth into clothing and enjoy no well-being" (translation taken from Atkinson 1989: 198).<sup>92</sup>

The story of *kaju parambaa* serves Wana as an explication for their marginalized standing. Because Pololoisong had failed to fell the tree according to Pue's advice, Wana remained disadvantaged and poor. In the *kaju parambaa* version Wana marginality is constituted as a permanent condition. This eternal setting serves as an explanation for Wana current situation and the inequality they experience in direct contact with their surrounding neighbors. In some versions, the direction of the tree top is located in Java: "because the tree fell in the water the Javanese became rich and the Wana poor; God had warned us," Apa Ensi told me. Others see the location even further away in the West, "where white and rich people live. If the tree had landed on the earth, maybe you would now be poor and Wana people would be rich", another of my interlocutors, Apa Jendi,

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<sup>92</sup> Atkinson had met similar accounts concerning the figure of Pololoisong, with differences in names. She recites in another context a ritual invocation of a Wana shaman, who uses the word Pololoisong; the explanation here seems to be for narrative intentions solely; "Pololoiso (called variously Palalaeesong and Pololoisong here for rhetorical effect" (Atkinson 1989: 204).



referred to me. In Apa Jendi's explanation, the creation myth explains further the extreme social inequalities Wana experience with reference to the "West". Although the eternal marginality constituted by this narration lacks a millenarian setting, it is however an explanation of poverty where Wana have not actively caused their marginalization. The tree falling to the wrong side is rather interpreted as bad luck, or at least the fault of Pololoisong. Wana actors themselves do not appear at all and thus could not influence the outcome. Furthermore, the interpretation of *pusen tana*, the navel of the earth, as the source – albeit not the location – of wealth for the whole world, including rich islands like Java and the complete Western civilization offers a powerful tale of origin.

The difference between this account and the second cosmological narrative can be found in a specific millenarian setting of the upcoming myth of the *taw baraka* who left Wana in a marginalized standing but also offers them a way out of their current misery.

### 3.1.3 *Tempo Baraka: Past and Future Golden Age*

As I have already mentioned Wana see their land as the navel of the world, *pusen tana*. This land is furthermore, the source of *baraka* (power), *kasugi* (wealth) and *pagansani* (knowledge).

A very long time ago, the navel of the world was home to a special group of people, the so-called *taw baraka*, people of power. These days are also entitled as *tempo baraka*, the time of power. All Wana were able to access and use these sources of power through, as Atkinson has shown, *wali m panto 'o*, meaning "the becoming of the word" in Atkinson's translation (1989: 43).<sup>93</sup> One would just need to close his or her eyes, for example, use a spell called *adi adi* and speak the following words "*adi adi indo dua apa to si aku to momonso, kulepa matak ....*, 'adi adi of mother and father that to me is the true. I (have only to open my eyes)'" (Atkinson 1979: 65) and the wished-for object would appear. In the 1970s, stories stemming from these days had to be sung and *adi adi* in them was used by the protagonists to wish for goods like edible items, houses etc. Forty years later however, these stories were simply narrated. The exact formula as it was cited by

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<sup>93</sup> Stemming from *mewali*= to become and *to 'o*= to say, to speak.

Atkinson was not known among my informants; people just recalled the spell's short form of closing one's eyes and speaking *adi adi*.

However, in Atkinson's words, "the Golden Age was not to last". One day, the *taw baraka*, decided to leave *pusen tana* and go to another place at the end of the world, a process called *joe n tana*. Their departure ended the *tempo baraka*, the Golden Era. Atkinson recalls how the departing *taw baraka* were using a number of utensils to travel to this far away mythical place, some were using hats, others shields etc. Some were becoming stone, *timbuso watu* (stone statues)<sup>94</sup> or other natural landscape features – this is the version most commonly told among Morowali Wana. Then, the *taw baraka*'s *koro uli*, a special part of their soul, would go *joe n tana*, where the others had already gone.<sup>95</sup>

In these accounts, an important individual appears: Parangesong, who is a trickster figure in Wana cosmology<sup>96</sup>; he is also often referred to as *taw mafuti*, a person who lies. This figure is further repeatedly recited in *katuntu* as a person who was "up to no good". In one version, Parangesong used a specific spell to turn a very delicate sort of *ubi wakai*, a sweet cassava plant, into a deadly form of poison. No one could ever eat that plant again. In some versions of the stories concerning Parangesong, he is held responsible for the fact that people have to face a final end through death: In the past, it is told, in times of *tempo baraka*, people would not die the way they do today. They would die for a certain amount of time but could eventually be brought back from the dead through the power of the word, *adi adi*. One day, however, Parangesong felt annoyed by this human feature and used his own magical formula to cause people to stay dead once they have passed away. Atkinson gives a similar account on the temporary condition of human death with people usually reawaking after three days. She brings up a trickster person, Ngkasi, who "cried and stamped in the ground in rage (*mangaru*) when a person died" (1989: 46). After this incident, people would die permanently. Interesting is here the appearance of a trickster figure causing permanent human death, but the difference of the two accounts, where Parangesong intentionally ends the temporary character of peoples' afterlife (my account) and Ngaski, who was mourning and crying and thereby caused the same result (Atkinson's account).

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<sup>94</sup> Atkinson calls it *tompuso*.

<sup>95</sup> Atkinson notes only the word "spirits", but my informants insisted on the special attribute of *koro uli*.

<sup>96</sup> Atkinson calls him Langesong, a name unknown to Morowali Wana.

Parangesong, known as Langesong in the Northern Wana region, is a common figure in accounts that Atkinson and I have collected that share a similar content; for example, Parangesong seduces a demon, *measa*, who formerly was happy to eat the insides of trees and stones: The trickster figure asked the demon whether he would not prefer the insides of people over the insides of rocks because they were more tender. In Atkinson's version, the demon took off to ask *Pue*, God, for permission. *Pue* granted the *measa* the right to feed from human's inside "but only when they are ripe" (Atkinson 1989: 45). Thus, in her version, Wana tell accounts of a demon eating a person's liver once his times has come. The details of the end of this story were not known among my informants, but people indeed blame Parangesong for the fact that *measa* now have developed a hunger for human livers. Parangesong is also held responsible for the hardness of today's daily work. In an account from Atkinson, baskets were able to walk by themselves until Parangesong<sup>97</sup> managed to trick some humans in carrying them with the result that baskets would need to be carried. I heard a similar account on trees; in the past, trees were soft and people could easily grab some wood from them to get firewood or else. After Parangesong used his magic, trees became hard and people would need an axe to cut one down.

Concerning the *tempo baraka*, Atkinson notes that "Langesong did not refrain from badgering the powerful" (1989: 45). She recalls a version where Langesong, seeing a *taw baraka* sitting in a flying boat departing for *joe n tana*, he would call out to him, remarking, *magagang*, on how the things worked normally, "thereby causing those things to lose their efficacy" (1989: 45). Through his call, the boat immediately fell from the sky. The power of the word, *wali mpanto'o* was reversed by Langesong's power. In those accounts I heard, Parangesong, the Southern equivalent to Langesong, was not only disturbing *taw baraka* while departing *tana Wana*, the Wana homeland. Instead, Parangesong was in fact the source and cause of the *taw baraka* exodus. In these stories, Parangesong mainly disturbed the *taw baraka*. He possessed, as some of my interlocutors insisted, more knowledge, *pangansani*, than the *taw baraka*. This fact serves as an explanation why the trickster figure could manage to make flying boats fall from the sky like dead birds. The *taw baraka* finally were so upset by their malicious villain that they decided to leave the earth, departing for a faraway place unknown.

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<sup>97</sup> Here called Langesong.

The consequence the exodus of the *taw baraka* was utterly tragic: The *taw baraka* took along the attributes of the Golden Era: *baraka* (power), *kasugi* (wealth) and *pagansani* (knowledge). In Atkinson's account, *pabriik* (factories) is also another attribute of the *tempo baraka*, serving as an explanation for Wana lacking knowledge to sew clothing, relying instead on bark cloth, *ronto kojo*, "considered by the Wana to be grievously inferior to cotton cloth" (Atkinson 1979: 65). During my research, some people mentioned the parting of a *buku* (book) connected to the *taw baraka* exodus. One of my interlocutors, Apa Jendi, insisted that the *taw baraka* took with them a book that had all Wana *katuntu*, cosmological narratives, and *pangansani*, powerful knowledge written in it. Apa Jendi claimed that it was similar like the Koran or the Bible; this version underlines the reformulation of Wana belief within interreligious dynamics as they can be found today in the research area (see Chapter 4). In another version I heard by Apa nTina the departure of the *taw baraka* is the reason for the current inequality between Wana and the rest of the world nested in the relocation of *pangansani*.

Apa nTina: Well, in fact, they [*taw baraka*] did not really leave this world [i.e. *joe ntana*], they did not really move. When we say they went to the end, I mean it is to the end of the island only. They only went to the end of the island so actually there is still *pangansani* there. Because the *taw baraka* did not carry it all the way with them. They only took it to the end of the island and left it there. Look, there are still people who are rich. But here, on our Wana land, there is no one rich, right? They only went to the beach, and left it there.

Me: On this earth?

Apa nTina: Yes, on the same earth, but at the end of the world they stopped. That is why there are still rich people. And why here is no one rich.

Apa Jendi: Only poor [Wana] people.

The departure of the *taw baraka* however demarcated the end of the Golden Age and opened up a new age of poverty where "powerful knowledge is no longer a commonplace

but limited to a very few”, and ordinary Wana were left behind, “powerless, poor and limited in their access to knowledge” (Atkinson 1989: 44) – *taw bea* as I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. Magical knowledge, wealth or power as well as *pabriik* and *buku* were no longer accessible to Wana people. Therefore, Wana today often present themselves as a poor and pitiful people, *taw masi yasi*, caught in a marginal stance.

However, this positioning is nested profoundly within a millenarian framework, as also Atkinson has called it previously. This framework presents an on-going dialectic between past, present and future that deeply rests on each of these components. The entanglement of different temporalities constitutes the central paradigm Wana situate themselves in their lives: It presupposes and similarly induces faith, aspiration and longing forasmuch as there is hope: Wana believe that one day, their powerful allies, the *taw baraka*, will return to *pusen tana* and introduce a new Golden Era for them. These days will be foreshadowed by a number of events like multiple earthquakes, brutal wars, especially religious wars, a worldwide flood of water and oceans of blood that will color the rivers, as my interlocutors asserted.<sup>98</sup> After all these events, however, Wana will be compensated with the return of the *taw baraka* and the attributes of the Golden Era: *baraka* (power), *kasugi* (wealth) and *pagansani* (knowledge).

This glorious future, notwithstanding, requires a certain and highly important precondition: It is essential for Wana not to break out of their current state of misery in the meantime. Only those Wana who remain in the current powerless state of pity, *kiasiasi*, and have not converted to another religion will be rewarded by the returning *taw baraka* (see also Atkinson 1989: 44).

### 3.1.4 Myths and Marginality

In this cultural construction, marginality is cosmologically constituted as a temporary condition. A departure from marginality is possible with the help of the *taw baraka*, expected to come back one day. This explanation becomes crucial for the marginalized status of the Wana when talking about resistance and empowerment, as I will show in the following course of this thesis. Both myths presented here are similar in the way they are

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<sup>98</sup> Atkinson speaks of a “flood of blood” (1989: 44).

Wana *katuntu* and can be easily categorized as myths. The *baraka* myth further has a specific millennial outcome.

#### ***Millennialism***

The term millennialism, often used in an active form of a millennial movement, has its roots in Christian eschatology that claimed a dogma for the “last days”; it precisely concentrated on the Book of Revelation that predicted the rule of a thousand year lasting messianic earthly realm after the Second Coming of Christ until the days of the Final Judgement. Although the initial meaning of millenarianism was rather specific the term itself was used early on in a rather liberal meaning – in Christian eschatology for example, but also in the way sociologists and anthropologists make use of the terms designating “a particular type of salvationism” (Cohn 1970: 13). In a classic and very influential attempt concerning salvation studies, Cohn has defined millenarian movements perceiving salvation along five central components central to them. First it is a collective movement shared by the believing community, second salvation will take place on earth and third it will happen soon and is thus an imminent event; fourth, it will transform life itself into perfection and fifth, it will happen with the aid of “supernatural agencies” (Cohn 1970: 13). This definition has been expanded by Wessinger who claimed that not all millennial movements do in fact exert a salvation concept that is strictly limited to earth but also on heavenly sphere. Further, the idea of a supernatural agent alone was ousted by the possible assistance of other agents, like “‘history’, ‘progress’ or the ‘consciousness of the people’” (Wessinger 2011: 5). Thus, Wessinger postulates a definition of millennialism that is based on its functional character; millennialism is

“belief in an imminent transition to a collective salvation, in which the faithful will experience well-being and the unpleasant limitations of the human condition will be eliminated. The collective salvation is often considered to be earthly but it can also be heavenly. The collective salvation will be accomplished either by a divine or superhuman agent alone, or with the assistance of humans working according to the divine or superhuman will and plan” (Wessinger 2011: 5).

McVey in her study of religion in Southeast Asia asserts that upland groups like the Wana had, historically, the opportunity to resist superior outside influence, state order or rule and related religious ideologies due to their location in far reachable terrain in the upland,

and thus were “satellites whose distance and inconsequentiality permitted them to maintain an eccentric orbit” (1999: 12), albeit in a marginalized connotation. There are various reasons why these communities did not participate in the new forms of rules; either they could not produce enough surplus to advance further development, or they had been inferior in former struggles for authority. Regardless of the descent, common to most of these communities is according to McVey a cosmological construct that mirrors their unequal standing towards “the greater center, to establish through ideology (an ideology intended as a comfort for their souls if not as a call to rebellion) an equality that everyday experience denies them” (McVey 1999: 13). According to the author, “myths of origin will show their superior descent, and they will claim to be the custodians of old, true values which have been abandoned or distorted by major power” (McVey 1999: 13).<sup>99</sup> Sprenger asserts that upland communities in Southeast Asia usually had four ways of dealing with lowland state religious influence. While upland groups either could implement lowland religious aspects into their own belief system, other chose religious conversion either to the dominant lowland religion or, as many Wana in the research area did, chose to convert to a different world religion, in Central-Sulawesi usually Christianity which has stronger entanglements in the uplands due to colonial constellations (see Chapters Four and Five). A fourth option can be found in a religious transformation through millenarianism, that usually offers an interesting option for groups that can be regarded as marginalized. While Sprenger points to the fact, that mainland Southeast Asia experienced more millennial uprisings, there are nevertheless Indonesian examples like Wana cosmology reveals. The concept of millenarianism “denotes the idea that a catastrophic upturning of the established order is near, often leading to a more just leadership, a Golden Age or the predominance of a previously oppressed group” (Sprenger 2015: 336).<sup>100</sup> Ishii asserts that millenarian initiatives have a specific goal that is not content with the adjustment of current social inequality to an improved level; instead the vision in mind of millenarian tendencies is a complete reversal of the current structure: “What they seek is the collapse of the whole existing order and the realization of a completely new and perfect world” (Ishii 1986: 173; see also Jackson 1988: 136). Ishii, focusing on Thai Buddhist millenarianism also postulates the emergence of a

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<sup>99</sup> McVey related here, among others, to Atkinson’s study of Wana.

<sup>100</sup> For an analysis of millenarian movements and violence along conflict in Eastern Indonesia see Bubandt (2004).

charismatic leader. However, such leaders are not a necessary prerequisite of millenarian movements. According to Jackson,

“Millenarian movements typically foretell or actively seek the complete destruction or inversion of the existing social order, and are often linked with prophecies of an impending time of great social turmoil, in which the rich and powerful will be overthrown, to be followed by an ideal and materially abundant society” (Jackson 1988: 136, see also Baird 2013: 259).

It is important to note that Wana expect a millennial outcome only when they remain in their current state of pity. The Golden Era will start one day but without active involvement of the Wana. The *taw baraka* myth places Wana as agents of a millennial outcome insofar as they need to remain in their current marginalized stance if they want to be part of the future *tempo baraka*. Meanwhile they are obliged to cling to their religion, to their poverty, their powerlessness as well as their absence of knowledge (see above, “we are a stupid people”). Unlike other millennial movements, Wana are not expected to instigate a specific action that will initiate the new Golden Era. Instead a rather passive behavior of stagnation in a temporal marginality serves as the key to participate in the future glory. McVey has noted that marginalized upland communities may focus even stronger on their internal values and social structure; “Indeed, resistance to the sources of inequality as well as fear of the loss of culture cohesion generally encourages strong ideological sanctions against involvement in the market economy” (McVey 1999: 12). In this context the *taw baraka* narrative and its related focus on current marginality may thus serve such a model to deal with state power among historically marginalized communities as the Wana are.

Coming back to the characteristics of myths collected by Winzeler (2008) and cited in the beginning of this chapter, the author’s first and third point deserve some attention: “Myth is a story rather than a statement of belief or doctrine”, Winzeler states in a first account and then, in a third, he asserts that a myth “is a story that is not just known but ‘believed’ and is regarded as important and sacred”. Both Wana *katuntu* I have recited here are “just” stories; they do not represent a religion or a moral set of guidelines in itself. Nonetheless, they are both deemed sacred and powerful and thus are believed. Even so, it is exactly this criterion that explains the profound disparity between both myths. To explicate this in detail, let me come back to Eliade’s theory on archaic myth. For Eliade, myth serves in general three functions. First, a myth gives a detailed explanation of how



the contemporary world evolved, “[m]yth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial time, the fabled time of the ‘beginnings’. In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence” (Eliade 1960: 5–6). Further it serves as a normative initiative – I would add, its narration is the normative regulation, not the myth itself – since the myth “become exemplary, and consequently repeatable, for it serves as a model, and by the same token as a justification, for all human actions” (Eliade 1960: 23). And then, third and most famous of Eliade’s theory, myth serves as a means of transport into an original time (see above). Roughly, I would agree with Eliade’s assumptions. The narrative of the *taw baraka* would eventually serve Eliade’s interpretation of myths as the cosmological return. Through retelling the myth, the narrator and his audience place themselves back in a mythical place of original times full of power and wealth. Here, we can observe a double function of the return – through the narration itself and as Eliade has postulated by “imitating the exemplary acts of a god or of a mythic hero”, people can detach themselves from “profane time”, which is the marginalized standing of the presence and “magically re-enter [...] the Great Time, the sacred time” (Eliade 1960: 23). The same applies analogously for the myth of *kaju parambaa*. Second, I believe, it is the millenarian marker of hope in the narrative of the *taw baraka* that serves the picture Eliade has pointed out. Holding on to one’s expectations of a magical return of the *taw baraka*, the recitation of cosmological settings, origins and fates, the hope is reformulated and reaffirmed. Still, the myth of *kaju parambaa* does not receive its strength through the retelling of a “golden time”. It is an explanation of recent day phenomena and worldly inequality but at the same time it does not offer a version of parity. Therefore I would only agree with Eliade’s third point for the millennial myth of the *taw baraka*.

Nevertheless, even though I label this myth millennial, the *taw baraka* myth itself does not present a millenarian setting. It is rather the form of narration that constitutes a millennial framework. This becomes another fundamental distinguishing feature between the myths concerning *taw baraka* and *kaju paramba*. The difference becomes palpable by looking at the contextual reality of the myth that cannot be found in the myth itself. The quality of millennialism does not lie within the *taw baraka* myth itself. Rather it is the way it is narrated and interpreted by narrator and audience that is accompanied with great expectation. Thus the anticipated paradise becomes in some way the final stage of the myth itself, although it has no original part in it. One could speak of a “becoming myth”

in Deleuze's and Gattari's (2002) sense, exemplified by their example of the wasp and the orchid. In this example, a wasp takes the pollen of an orchid and redistributes it to other flowers. By doing so, the wasp is already part of the orchid in some sense; she is a *becoming-orchid*. Both enter a relation that is described as a rhizome. The *taw baraka* myth itself tells a story, maybe even a history from the past. It is a creation myth depicting a description of a time long gone. It is, in itself, not connected to a different temporality or substance. However, once it is narrated and infused with aspiration, the myth changes its dimensions and thus changes its essential core. It becomes expanded and is now connected to a future sphere; thus it has changed into a "becoming future". This is a process where the myth has started to be less itself, which is a creation myth, while being attributed more and more the character of a future; it is "becoming future", or at least an imagined future. It is in this sense that the creation myth is also a millenarian myth.

#### ***Lost Attributes – (Con)current Attitudes***

The term *baraka* is in itself an Arabic term. Westermarck (1926: 35) notes for the Moroccan context, *baraka* "is used to denote a mysterious wonder-working force which is looked upon as a blessing from God, a 'blessed virtue'" (cf. Venzlaff 1977: 2). For the same context, Geertz ascribes a number of values connected to *baraka*: "material prosperity, physical well-being, bodily satisfaction, completion, luck, plenitude, and, the aspect most stressed by Western writers anxious to force it into a pigeonhole with mana, magical power" (Geertz 1968: 44). Based on these ideas associated with *baraka*, Geertz stresses the connection to the world and refuses a simplifying understanding of the term as a "paraphysical force"; instead *baraka* has a direct appearance in the world as an "endowment – a talent, a capacity, a special ability – of particular individuals. [...] [T]he best [...] analogue for 'baraka' is personal presence, force of character, moral vividness" (Geertz 1968: 44). Concerning the endowment of *baraka* in Morocco, Crapanzano distinguishes two types of special power; one concerns genealogic descent where individuals inherit the *baraka* of their ancestor (in his example descendants of a saint). This is also called "institutional *baraka*" and cannot be lost. The other form is "personal *baraka*", in the same sense as Geertz understands the term it is a quality one has to

achieve and which rests “upon his character, his piety and spirituality, his moral fiber and his therapeutic gifts” (Crapanzano 1973: 73).

Just like *baraka*, the second aspect of the Golden Age, *kasugi*, comes from the Buginese term for wealth (Atkinson 1989: 343).<sup>101</sup> The third aspect, *pangansani*, knowledge, is the only word for knowledge that “is autochthonous conceptually and linguistically” (Atkinson 1989: 343).

I mentioned above how Apa Jendi added to the sources of the *tempo baraka* the idea of a book that got lost as well by the departure of the *taw baraka*. Among Southeast Asian upland groups the concept of lost texts is a common scheme. Scott asserts examples from the Southeast-Asian mainland portraying how upland groups with accounts of lost written sources have “one scheme: the people in question once did have writing but lost it through their own improvidence, or would have had it had they not been cheated of it by treachery” (Scott 2009: 221). Just like for the Karen or the Wa of mainland Southeast Asia, a trickster figure in form of Parangesong is held responsible in this version of Wana *tempo baraka* for losing their book. However, while Scott points to the imminent matter of literacy that is attributed to the lost texts of upland groups, my interlocutor emphasized the religious connection of the book while placing it in line with the Koran and the Bible. Literacy itself was not the central aspect of the account of the book but rather a religious equation in relation to Islam and Christianity. This account nevertheless is as well “powerfully influenced by an implicit dialogue with more powerful groups associated with state and writing is reinforced by its occurrence outside the region as well” (Scott 2009: 222). Entangled in an interreligious framework that I will explain in detail in Chapter 4, the Wana loss of literacy thus receives a cosmological explanation that finds its roots in religiously marginalized standing. The loss of all attributes we find in the *baraka* myth portrays a multidimensional meaning of Wana marginality that encompasses interaction with other ethnic groups, exemplified by the terms *baraka* and *kasugi* stemming its roots from external languages, an inherent Wana cosmological aspect of the loss of Wana *pangansani* as an indigenous concept as well as an interreligious dialogue that places Wana religious setting in one line with other Christianity and Islam. The lost

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<sup>101</sup>The following version of *sugi* are used in Wana grammar; it is a daily term used in everyday talk and not specially ascribed to katuntu: *sugi* / *kasugi* / *kasugimu* / *kasugingku* / *kasuginya* / *mampakasugi* / *masugi* (Nougarol n.d.).

attributes are therefore a highly meaningful marker of current Wana cosmological explanation of their marginality as an ethnic group.

### 3.2 REMAINS OF THE PAST – BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE

In Wana cultural construction of their current state of being, living, suffering, Wana cosmology plays a central role. Wana conceive of their ethnic community as a transformed stage, nested between two complete endings. In the past, a condition of unity experienced an abrupt ending, disturbed in the most extreme sense of Wana being left back. The current state is a mere sad memory of glorious days that have long ceased. Although the misery is great, Wana expect a future change, “a reunion of that which was divided at the original source. In their historical moment, after dispersal and before reunification, Wana portray themselves as existing in a cosmic state of entropy, which, mimetically, their discourse about the past represents” (Atkinson 1989: 42). Atkinson’s approach on Wana cosmological narratives places a special focus on the aspect of separation within these myths, she speaks of a “A Divided Reality” (1989).<sup>102</sup> What Atkinson wrote a number of years ago is still relevant for Wana today. The story of *taw baraka* presents a separation of knowledge, wealth and power from Wana land to another place, the separation of *taw baraka* and Wana, while the *kaju paramba* myth tells a story of separating wealth from Wana land through felling a tree.<sup>103</sup>

These cosmological themes and the stage of expectation are still of the utmost importance for Wana today and their explanation of a marginal standing. The feeling of living in a transitional stage continues to play an important part in Wana culture as is portrayed sharply in the following *tendebomba*, a Wana form of short verses, that Indo Laku made up during a long conversation we had:

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<sup>102</sup> Atkinson asserts that Wana however do not overwhelmingly pay attention to them: “[W]hat is to be treasured and coveted is not the narratives about the division of the cosmos, but instead the words that pass across the partition” (1989: 50). She is referring to what she calls spirit gifts to humans (1989: 53). In my research context though, Wana indeed deeply treasured and coveted these narratives along the millenarian setting described above. Reasons for this disparity in both research findings might be found in the specific setting of my fieldwork locations, where intercultural and interreligious dynamics and constellations seem to have caused a shift in the valuation of millenarian scenarios, as I will discuss in Chapter 4.

<sup>103</sup> Other myths that were central for Atkinson’s research dealing with the theme of separation were for example about the separation of peoples and religions from Wana land (1989: 50).

<i>Aku jewa si'i semo</i>	That is just the way I am,
<i>Masi yasi wuri eyo</i>	Poor and pitiful from day to day, from morning till night,
<i>Jemo mampeya si tempo</i>	I am just waiting for the time
<i>Ratila mantoro lenso</i>	When I can wave my piece of cloth to greet happiness.

The verse form of *tendebomba*<sup>104</sup> is an artistic way of expressing feelings and meanings that many Wana are capable of; the content does not necessarily need to be of serious character but can also be used as a form of game, where one *tendebomba* needs to be replied with another. This highly creative form of amusement also serves political agendas, when people can hide their intentions in sophisticated verses without openly expressing one's meaning. By contrast, the *kayori*,<sup>105</sup> is more authoritative and relates only to powerful stories from the past, *katuntu* (see above). In the above-cited *tendebomba*, Indo Laku expresses her feeling of being caught in the intermediate stage of being and waiting. The only sense she sees in her everyday life can be found in the anticipated change that finally will bring joy to her. *Masi yasi*, a term meaning pitiful and poor (*kasihan*, BI) is often used in conversations about the past and displays a similar meaning like the sentence *kita taw bea* (see above). Atkinson notes *kasiasi* as “a state that elicits pity”, and *masi yasi* as “poor, wretched, pathetic” (1979: 385). Indo Laku underlines the act of waiting as part of her identity, “that is just the way I am”; caught in a pitiful stance and longing for a future that will bring relief. In the context of a transitory waiting stage and a future anticipation, bridges that cross the divided reality Wana live in today play a very important part. One form of these bridges passing the gap between now and then, hidden and seen dimensions, can be found in what I call witnesses.

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<sup>104</sup> Word coming from *tende*, to throw. *Bomba* could be stemming from *bombang*, the word for wave. *Tendebomba* is a form of Wana poetry. Atkinson (1984) describes *tendebomba* as love poetry whereas in my research region *tendebomba* was considered as an artistic way of expressing all sorts of themes, emotions as well as political matters.

<sup>105</sup> Nougatol sees a relation between *tende bomba* / *kayori* and *syair*, a common form of Arabic verse-making of four-liners (n.d.); Atkinson uses the form “*kayori*” (1984).

### 3.2.1 Witnesses of *Tempo Baraka*

Witnesses serve as reminders of the former days of a Golden Era and as markers of hope and anticipation. One form of such witnesses can be found in *timbuso watu*. These are rocks or big stones that can be found scattered all over Wana upland regions. They symbolize the petrified bodies of *taw baraka* who left the Wana homeland (*joe n'tana*) and left behind their bodies. A part of their soul, the *koro uli*, departed while their bodies remained and turned into stone. *Timbuso watu* are sacred places of worship that possess special powers or *baraka*. No strangers are supposed to visit these places and disturb the silence of the places. I felt very honoured when I was one day asked by Apa Yare from Salisarao whether I would like to come with him to see one of these *timbuso watu*. It was a great privilege and I went with him and two other Wana, Indo Felu and Apa De'u, to see the sacred place. The *timbuso watu* was hidden in a small cave and was very well kept in secret from outsiders. Apa Yare and the others were very humble when we entered the place, Apa De'u eventually decided to stay outside because he sensed the strong *baraka* of the site. The *timbuso watu* need to be kept clean and undisturbed in expectation of the great return.<sup>106</sup> Their presence is thus a turned-into-stone-proof of the cosmological narrative of the *taw baraka* and functions as a witness of the millennial promise that lies within the cosmological narrative.

Another witness is a more daily utensil connected deeply to the *taw baraka* myth. One night I was sitting together with several of my Salisarao interlocutors in the house of Indo De'u, a middle-aged Wana woman from the upland. As the time passed by and the morning began to rise we already had talked for hours about the issue of religion, exchanging thoughts and experiences. In the background, Apa Nevi was silently playing the *geso-geso*, a Wana instrument involving a string attached to a coconut shell that functions as a resonance body.<sup>107</sup> Once we touched upon the millennial myth of *taw baraka*, Indo De'u leaned forward to me, touched my arm and told me with strong voice that this music is not just music, but that it is connected to the story itself. She explained: When the *taw baraka* took off for *joe ntana*, the remaining Wana were struck by deep sadness over the loss of their friends. They were crying and in a deep state of desperation.

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<sup>106</sup> Further they become relevant in questions of land rights and resettlement (see Chapter 5).

<sup>107</sup> Atkinson calls this instrument *du'e* (1979: 296).

Thus, the *taw baraka* left them a gift to ease the pain of separation: the *tolali*, a bamboo flute, the *geso-geso*, and the *popondo*. Playing these instruments helped Wana leaving the sadness behind and remembering their lost friends. Thus, it becomes a way of crossing the gap between them, an ongoing connection to the sphere of magical times, to their “powerful friends” that can easily be evoked by everyone capable of playing it. Atkinson does not recall such an interpretation; she makes only one mention of music instruments among Wana in the context of shamans singing about *to lono*, still-born babies. Shamans state the *to lono* are not able to communicate by language but instead rely on playing instruments; girls using the *tolali* and boys using the *du’e* (*geso-geso*). Thus, the *tolali* and the *du’e* “are female and male instruments respectively and their melodies ‘talk’, that is, on them one can play messages of love, longing, loneliness and far-off places” (1979: 296). Even though our accounts diverge in this context, the instruments’ character of expressing emotions such as loneliness and longing are equivalent in both versions. Further, both recount a contextual setting of unwanted separation – through departure and through death. Thus, Wana musical instruments serve as tools to help to come to terms with the effects of a traumatic separation.

Witnesses of a Golden Era like the *timbuso watu* or Wana musical instruments are in themselves equally a lost past and a “becoming future” but also a marker of current conditions that deeply affect Wana cultural standing. Since Wana have to remain in their current marginalized positioning to gain access to the millennial promise found in the *taw baraka* narrative, their presence is signified by pity and poverty. Wana rely on a form of millennial-motivated self-marginalization. In absence of open millennial engagements that directly unify and reify a millennial scheme within a community as it is common for other millennial movements, Wana remain in a waiting positioning signified by a mandatory marginality. Witnesses like the *timbuso watu* or the instruments function in this setting as necessary testimony of past, presence and future promise and thereby continuously reenact the millennial setting referred to by Wana.

Another important bridge between time and realities is portrayed in the figure of the shaman. That night, when Indo De’u told me about the meaning of Wana instruments, she also mentioned another relic of the *taw baraka*, deeply connected to Wana shamanism. They left *pangansani* – one attribute of the Golden Era that, according to Indo De’u, now is partly still evocable through Wana shamans.

### **3.2.2 Shamans as Brokers of Dimensions, Temporalities and Knowledge**

Shamanism, or shamanship, is a central theme in Wana life and culture. I do not wish to elaborate in detail on the question of shamanistic features since I believe most has been said by the great work of Jane Atkinson (1989). However, concerning the question of marginality as a cosmological concept, deeply intertwined with a millenarian outcome, shamanism nevertheless plays an important role. As already mentioned, Wana belief divides the world in two dimensions, a hidden and a current, visible dimension. Mc Vey notes that subsistence communities in Indonesia “are not marked by a division between sacred and profane. Rather, the critical line is between the sphere of man and that of ancestors/spirits, the seen and unseen world” (1999: 6). She asserts further: “Certain people may be recognized as having particular access to the realm of the spirits, and are accordingly appealed to for advice or intercession, but this enhances rather than monopolizes contact with the [unseen] world” (McVey 1999: 6). *Taw walia*, shamans, a core aspect of Wana culture, are such intermediaries between these two worlds as they can shift from here to there, following their spirit friends. Wana shamans do occasionally visit Taronggo; Apa Main who resides around a 20 minute walk from Taronggo across the Solato river is the closest by. There is currently no powerful *taw walia* living in Taronggo; villagers usually either call for shamans from the upland or hike the way up to meet competent healers (see Chapter 4.5).

Atkinson emphasizes that “defining what a shaman is requires examining Wana conceptions of the world and the self, questions of what knowledge is, as well as exploring what shamans can do that others cannot” (1979: 37). Although Wana reality is a divided one, the borders between both realms, hidden and apparent, are fluid. Divided realities refer not only to Wana dimension but also to the individual person, who is divided in some sense, explicated through a number of soul parts and hidden elements within the body;

“the individual is seen to be characterized in a similar way, composed of facets hidden from the ordinary experience and perception of most people. These hidden aspects of the person participate with hidden elements beyond the person in ways that exceed an individual’s awareness or control. This participation can be negotiated only by shaman, aided by knowledge and spirit familiars (the source of



knowledge) who offer access to what is otherwise hidden in the person and in the world” (Atkinson 1979: 121).

Aspects of the hidden sphere, like the *taw bolag*, every now and then become visible. Immediate encounters or exchanges with creatures from the hidden dimension can potentially happen to all Wana and usually do so in the forest. Certain forms of diseases and sickness are recognized to be caused by specific spiritual beings and thus are perceived as manifestations from the other side. Within the framework of separation and hybrid borders Wana shamans play a special role. Atkinson brings it straight to the point: “shamans negotiate not simply matters of physical health, but also social, moral and spiritual concerns as well” (Atkinson 1988: 48).

Thus, on the one hand, shamans function as healers who cure diseases, on the other hand they play a key role for compensating the loss of knowledge and power and wealth (see also Atkinson 1987: 349). They function as intermediaries of knowledge between two spheres, of which one is hidden to most ordinary Wana. Shamans and shamanistic rituals thus become brokers between spiritual realm and Wana agents. Healing rituals, further, thus serve as arenas of ritual practice but simultaneously also present spatial entanglements between now and then, hidden and apparent spheres. Within these dynamics, shamans and their spiritual allies, their *walia*, become agents of normative guidelines that are of special significance for all participants. Thus, they become an important factor analyzing marginality constructions and knowledge politics among Wana. Shamans consequently are important actors within the cultural and religious production of identity, the negotiation of this identity and the concurring scopes of action.

Let me come back to Indo De’u’s explanation of shamans and their knowledge as connected to the time of the *taw baraka*. Shamans in Wana society inherit an important position but they are not considered as being much different from ordinary people. The power to heal is not found within the figure of the shaman itself but associated with external powerful beings that the shaman has encountered and retrieved knowledge from; “being a shaman involves not a different spiritual inner self, but special knowledge of powers in the outside world. Through such knowledge and the associations it brings, a shaman can temporarily undergo changes in his physical and emotional experience” (Atkinson 1979: 121). This special knowledge here is considered as *pangansani* – a term popular within the *taw baraka* myth. The word itself means simply knowledge but it is

used in a different context than its verbal form, *nsani* or *mangansani* which “is used for commonsensical everyday kinds of knowledge, as well as for the esoteric facets of Wana life” (Atkinson 1979: 182). Conversely, *pangansani* is special knowledge and thus not used to refer to everyday forms of knowledge; “[r]ather, it applies to the extraordinary and powerful knowledge of an earlier age and to a highly developed understanding of special knowledge obtained from hidden sources in the world today” (Atkinson 1979: 182). This powerful knowledge is manifested within words, like spells, *do’a*,<sup>108</sup> or names, *sanga*. These forms of knowledge however are not solely restricted to shamans.

*Do’a*, “the preeminent form of powerful verbal knowledge” (Atkinson 1979: 382) are spells or formula that can be learned by anyone. They usually are acquired through relatives or friends who are not reluctant to share their knowledge. Through this praxis some *do’a* have been around for generations. Another possibility to gain this form of verbal knowledge lies within the teaching through a shaman – if the latter is willing to give away. It is said that *do’a* will lose their potential once too many people know its formula and are used too frequently. Thus, it can happen that people eager to teach *do’a* alter the words to some extent. As a result, people can never be sure whether *do’a* received through this option is still potent. The same procedure of studying *do’a* accounts for obtaining *sanga*. *Sanga* simply means name, but in a sense of a genuine name, *sanga koju*. Related to forms of healing and magical knowledge *sanga* portrays the real name of a thing, like the name of a tree, a plant, body part etc. but also conditions like the weather; most importantly *sanga* is usually a secret name. Contrary to ordinary everyday names, the real names are powerful instruments in the sense that their knowledge “gives one influence or control over what bears those names” (1979: 183). The uses of *sanga* are readily summarized by Atkinson:

“For example, the name of the first *measa* [daemon] to descend to earth (*sanga nu measa uyu ng katudu*) may be used to halt the attack of threatening *measa* one meets in the woods. The ‘name of mother and father’ (*sanga indo dua apa*), which refers to the female and male generative organs, can defeat sorcery. The secret name of rice may be used to destroy the rice crop of others. A shaman uses the secret names of shamanistic paraphernalia to make the articles useful to him in his performance. The name of wine serves to prevent drunkenness. The names of pythons and crocodiles insure that one will not meet those animals on a journey.

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<sup>108</sup> The Wana term *do’a* derives from *Bahasa Indonesia*, *doa*, meaning prayer or blessing and has its origins in the Arabic word *doa’a* (Aktinson 1989: 64).

The names of the sun and of tobacco are means to beautify one's appearance by appropriating attractive properties of each" (1979: 183).

Now, in Wana society, magic is a straightforward business as it seems or as Atkinson puts it: "Magic very simply consists of words told by spirits to humans" (1989: 52). Although everyone can meet spirits potentially, not everyone does. The forest is a good place to meet spirits; certain places are said to be favorite places where spirits mingle. Wana who go *soga*, searching and collecting tree resin, often tell stories of having met a certain spirit along the way. Others who are eager to meet spirits would go by night to a grave, sit atop of it awaiting a spiritual encounter. Although meeting a spiritual being could happen to everyone, only some gain knowledge from these communions. Some are just seeing spirits in passing, some are scared and run away while others only hear or sense the spirit. Thus only a number of Wana have the potential to retain knowledge from beings that are usually part of the hidden reality. And not everyone receiving *do'a* or *sanga* from these encounters becomes a shaman. The spirits who help humans with the knowledge of *do'a* and *sanga* sometimes cling to that person. They enter a relationship with that person who can count on their assistance and can call them during healing rituals for assisting. These spirits are called *walia* – a shaman thus is called *taw walia* or *ka walia* – a person with *walia*. To become a *taw walia* several prerequisites have to be fulfilled. Although many people might have the chance to meet a spiritual being, not everyone can bind a *walia* to him or her. Thus, to become a shaman, one usually would study with an elder, experienced shaman to learn spells and names or instructions for *walia*. This, as I have already made clear, everyone can do. But meeting a spirit on one's own is a complete different matter.

One necessary feature of a becoming shaman is a certain hand line, the so called *ua m pale*. Atkinson explains: "Having the 'palm line', by the way, is a retrospective assertion; if someone is thought to have had an encounter with some spirit being, it is then surmised that he or she has the palm line" (1979: 70). Then one would go and search advice by an elder shaman. Instructed with spells and names and other instructions, one would then either go *malinja*, walking around, through the woods by daylight, hoping to meet a spirit. The other opportunity would be to *bartapa*, "to keep vigil at a place or object usually in the dark of night" (Atkinson 1979: 135). For either way it is necessary to be dressed as poorly as possible to evoke the pity of the spiritual beings. Only in this combination he or she might bind powerful spiritual being to him or her. With these new connections he is

able to gain new knowledge, *pangansani*, in forms of *do'a* and *sanga* and he can summon his spirit familiars to help during healing rituals, for example. There are a number of other practices essential to become an effective shaman, described in detail in Atkinson's work. Relevant for my analysis however is the millenarian setting in which shamanistic actions and careers are perceived and interpreted. Wana perceive of their land as the source of knowledge, power and wealth, that "Wana look to shamans to monitor both the wellbeing of individuals and the imminent return of 'knowledge, power and wealth' is consistent with this analogy" (Atkinson 1987: 349).

Shamanistic features and possibilities are regarded as remains of the past, a bridge to a hidden dimension but also to a golden past and an expected glorious future. In this sense Wana "verbal magic provides a semblance of the former power of words" (Atkinson 1989: 52). Atkinson has already mentioned part of this understanding while talking about the *taw baraka* myth:

"A future resolution is anticipated when those who left and that which was borne away will return again to seek their place of origin. In the meantime, the Wana have only a few powers left to them, including the *kuasa walia*, 'the power of shamanistic spirit familiars', which may be used to combat sickness and suffering" (1979: 64).

This is what Indo De'u confessed to me: *Pangansani* that shamans and some other Wana individuals still possess, or rather have obtained, is a relic from the past and a glimpse to the future simultaneously. It is by this means that Wana shamanism plays such a central role concerning the cosmological understanding of Wana marginalized standing.

Interestingly, another parallel can be found within the performance of shamans and the inappropriateness (taboo) of speaking about his success. If one is to call out to a shaman who is performing a flight or something other outstandingly special it would not work any longer. Atkinson mentions her informants calling this to *magagang*, to remark. Similarly I could observe that shamans are very reluctant to speak about their power and success during a healing condition. What I took first as a notion of sheer modesty I later came to understand that using words to describe a shaman's power could seriously harm his efficacy. Often shamans are hesitant to admit they are shamans at all; talking about one's own influence does not match the ideal of a performed marginality that attracts spirit familiars and grants healing powers. Instead, it destroys the potential. This is similar to the practice of Parangesong's *magagang* presented in the *taw baraka* myth above, who

caused flying boats to fall from heaven just by remarking their flying condition. Parangesong's habit of causing Wana magic to fail finally led to the departure of the *taw baraka* and the diminishing of the Golden attributes. In the same sense, Wana today are not very keen to *magagang* either.

Due to these aspects of Wana shamanship, *taw walia* are of highest importance regarding a comprehensive analysis of marginality constructions and knowledge politics, they are crucial actors in the cultural and religious production of identity and negotiation processes of identities as well as the scope of action and flexibility of these processes.

### 3.3 SELF-MARGINALIZATION OR PERFORMING MARGINALITY

<i>Aku na sikola yami</i>	I have already learned a lot
<i>Yako more panga jadi</i>	From times when everything began
<i>Atora re kasi yasi</i>	The rule of the poor and pitiful
<i>Nee wara kalingani</i>	Don't let it be forgotten

*Tendebomba* by Indo De'u

Nested in Wana cosmological narratives and their role for current and future expectations is a strict imperative for Wana social behavior. If the millennial promise shall fulfill one day, bringing them a new Golden Era, Wana need to remain *masi yasi*, pitiful, poor, dumb, in other words: marginal. Only by keeping up this orientation Wana will be able to become part of the glorious future. As a result Wana openly engage in a self-denigrating discourse, portraying Wana poverty and weakness, “we Wana are very dumb” (*samua bea, bea kojo*). In a somewhat similar case the Teenek in Mexiko, mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, rely on a cosmological explanation that situates them as subordinate towards external ethnic groups. In their worldview their pre-human ancestors fled to the underworld, leaving behind Teenek in an intermediary positioning that constitutes them as marginal by contrast to other groups (Vidas 2004: 390). The result is a “self-denigrating discourse [...] [that] justifies this situation, and at the same time – because such discourse is linked to the history of their ancestors – [...] also serves as a support for their ethnic identity” (Vidas 2004: 390). Teenek use to portray their marginalized standing in relation to other ethnic groups, just like: ““We are worth

nothing', 'we are dirty, smelly, stupid'" (Vidas 2004: 174). Part of Wana marginality is settled profoundly within the cultural cosmological understanding of the becoming of the world, the rise of human beings and specifically the fate of Wana people. This marginality is caused through events that happened in the past and is remembered through cosmological narratives popular among Wana story tellers; simultaneously, it is through the act of re-telling, constantly re-affirmed and reconstituted. It is part of a process one could call "self-marginalization". Wana also rely on a self-denigrating discourse and tend to describe themselves as subordinate and outside of Indonesian mainstream and modernity. Degrading the own identity is a strategy Wana apply due to their millennial guideline. A subordinate outsider positioning grants Wana the advantage of taking part in a future Golden Era.<sup>109</sup> Keeping Wana faith alive and following the impetus of marginalization thus offers Wana, within the millennial setting, the only way out of marginality.

The self-marginalization of Wana is severely entrenched in a specific performance of marginality. This performance finds its roots in cosmological narratives and the concurring millennial setting but touches Wana everyday life (see also Chapters 4 and 5). Joanne Gilbert distinguishes between two types of marginality. The first type she draws from the early schools of marginality thinkers like Stonequist (see Chapter 2). For her, sociological marginality is dependent on "some immutable physical reality such as sex, race/ethnicity, age, size, or disfiguration/disability" (Gilbert 2004: 6). According to her, people who are physically different are constantly living their marginality; "they cannot help but perform their marginality – they do not voice it, but rather it – nonverbally – voices them" (Gilbert 2004: 6). People who are able to circumvent these alleged physical markers, in her example closeted gays and lesbians, function as examples for only "rhetorically marginalized" (Gilbert 2004: 6), i.e. people, who "may avoid discrimination by 'passing'" (Gilbert 2004: 6). Further, she elaborates:

"Even when they are 'out', however, many gays and lesbian are still only rhetorically marginalized, as there is no apparent physical feature that marginalizes them sociologically. By choosing to 'perform' various 'gendered' behaviors, gays and lesbians may construct a nonverbal marginality, but sexual orientation does not necessarily manifest itself in an overt sociological marginalization as biological sex or race/ethnicity does" (Gilbert 2004: 6).

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<sup>109</sup> It is on the other hand as well a "language of resistance" that enables Wana to resist state and outsider claims towards them as an upland group, see Chapter 5.

Interesting in this point of view is the aspect of agency nested within Gilberts account. The choice, or rather the active decision to perform a specific behavior attributed to another physical marker, eventually leads to the construction of a new form of marginality: the nonverbal marginality that changes the issue of marginality to its rhetorical character – relevant for people who do not offer a physical resemblance of the sphere of sociological marginality. Wana are marginalized in several sociological ways, based on difference such as race and class or religion as Chapter 4 will show. Nevertheless, Wana still choose to perform their own marginality, their poverty, their pity. “We are a stupid people”, the introductory sentence for this chapter reveals how Wana construct a verbal and non-verbal marginality simultaneously. Contrary to the example given by Gilbert, Wana culture does manifest itself in sociological marginality. But even though rhetoric marginality might be possible for a hypothetical Wana who adapts to social expectations, most Wana however choose to perform their marginality. Following Judith Butler (1990) I understand performance or performativity on the one hand as an embodied practice. Butler describes the performativity of gender:

“The act that one does, the act that one performs, is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene. Hence, gender is an act which has been rehearsed, much as a script survives the particular actors who make use of it, but which requires individual actors in order to be actualized and reproduced as reality once again” (Butler 1990: 272).

In a similar way this accounts for the condition of marginality as well. Wana marginality is not something suddenly imposed upon an ethnic group or a natural given. Rather it is the result of an endless number of actions and acts that “have been around”. If a Wana individual uses the sentence “I am stupid”, in the most direct example, he performs his marginality in the sense that his way of acting in a specific way is also the use of a script that is not at all his own innovation. Instead, by drawing on these former acts of marginality performance, rehearsing them, he or she once again reproduces this peripheral condition as a concrete reality.

However, on the other hand, although the performativity of marginality explains some of the conundrum marginality presents within Wana community, there is another quality connected to the performance character of it. Marginality among Wana is very well connected to the state of being marginalized as well as being marginal. Marginalization, as a process (see Chapter 2), offers an active form that includes an acting subject,

someone or something performing the act of pushing someone towards the edge of something, e.g. the society, a community, a region. Marginality, on the contrary, displays a current state of being, although not a sort of ontological or assumed natural given. I would say that what Wana do in their daily interactions, is to perform their marginality. If we take performance as a term that “run[s] the gamut of complexity from mass rituals [...] to small, self-deprecating jokes and mundane comments on the weather” (Palmer and Jankowiak 1996: 226), it is marginality that we find in many Wana everyday performances. Palmer and Jankowiak state further:

“It is through performances, whether individual or collective, that humans project images of themselves and the world to their audiences. [...] When we observe performances [...] we experience them as mental imagery. When we self-consciously monitor our own performances, we re-experience the imagery that we think they project to audiences. Thus, performances may weave complex webs of interaction and experience, all mediated through imagery” (Palmer and Jankowiak 1996: 226).

In this point of view, performance becomes a sort of conscious choice of interacting. This is what Wana portray in their everyday actions: a performance of marginality in a sense of how Wana project ideas and understandings of their own current standing – their marginality – to an audience, e.g. their interlocutors. Performance in my example encompasses thus everyday forms of interaction that serves the mindful process of performing marginality among Wana actors.

This process serves two goals. First, it underlines the cosmological meaning and significance of marginality for Wana. The millennial expectations of a golden future are subject to certain conditions – Wana shall so far not break out of their current state of misery and are not to convert to another religion. If a person chooses not to follow these terms he or she will be deprived from any positive perspectives according to Wana cosmology. In order to stay poor marginalized, i.e. poor and helpless, a certain amount of performance supports the outer image of being marginalized. Another goal of the process of performing marginality can be found in a form of subtle resistance. Choosing to appear marginalized, i.e. poor and helpless can also be interpreted as a form of opposing government and state claims – a aspect that I will discuss in detail in Chapter 5.



### 3.4 INTERIM CONCLUSION

Creation myths or cosmological narratives are always giving a meaning to the present since they create and cause contemporary settings. Millenarian myths however are furthermore becoming futures. It is this relation that shows the meaning of cosmological narratives for Wana marginality. Both myths presented in this chapter explain the setting of the world, the distribution of wealth and power and the role Wana take within this relation. Their marginality in both cases is caused by unfortunate events, the wrong direction of the felled tree and the departure of the *taw baraka*. Noteworthy is the fact that in both scenarios no Wana had a direct impact on the happenings. In one case it was the trickster figure of Parangesong and in the other case it was Pololoisong's fault. Marginality find its roots in both pictures but in both settings the potential of Wana people constituting today a central entity is a given. Wana land is narrated as the source of power and wealth. Thus, its inhabitants, who are ordinary Wana people, are genuinely connected to attributes of a sphere of non-marginality like power and wealth. Simultaneously they are part of the source of prosperity. Through this interpretation of Wana marginality, today's advantaged people owe their wealth to events caused on Wana soil. It is in this understanding that at least one meaning of Wana marginality becomes a marker of power – it constitutes Wana land as the original center. Only later this center becomes in some way a peripheral region with marginalized people but remains, for Wana, an uttermost cosmological center. In the millenarian interpretation of the *taw baraka* myth, this cosmological center will, one day, become a real center again. Wana cosmological foundation of their marginal status is deeply embedded in their conception of a divided reality in which shamans and witnesses of the *tempo baraka* pertain bridges between these dimensions. A self-marginalization as imposed by the millennial promise of the *taw baraka* narrative leaves Wana in a temporary marginality with the ultimate promise of the reversion of temporary inequalities.

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## 4 SOCIO-RELIGIOUS DIMENSION: WANA IN INTERRELIGIOUS DYNAMICS

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The current chapter aims at elaborating deeper on the understandings of periphery and margins within the Indonesian context that affect Wana society and will be evaluated as a product of complex power relations that were deeply influenced by colonialism, the creation of the modern nation-state and in this context, the field of religion. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, the praxis of deducing Indonesian upland groups as marginalized people with a lack of religious confession is a rather common scheme among the archipelago's population. The Indonesian state underlines its religious diversity that has been legally anchored in the Pancasila, the philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state. However, as Schröter makes clear for the nation's Christian minority, religious plurality is still today not easily implemented: "[T]he relations between the various social, ethnic and religious groups have been problematic down to the present day, and national unity has remained fragile" (Schröter 2010b: 2). Due to historical constellations, nested within colonial relations, Christian people within the Muslim-dominated state are still "perceived as a threat to Indonesian unity" and obtain, as Schröter asserts, "a precarious role in the struggle for shaping the nation" (Schröter 2010b: 2). Up to this day, Schröter writes, the future of Indonesia's Christian minority is not settled but rather critical, "and pluralist society is still on trial" (Schröter 2010b: 2). It is essential to keep in mind that in the context of the Indonesian state, the factor "religion" embodies the notion of modernity and progressive ideas of Indonesian citizenship. Thus, if the situation is bad for Christian and other-religious minorities it is, as Colbran asserts, "even worse for persons who do not have a religion or belief" (Colbran 2010: 682). Religion is an important sphere of marginalizing constellations within Indonesia that affect Wana people, especially in interreligious constellations. However, Wana have created their very own notion of their marginalized standing within the Indonesian society. Implicit in discourse on upland communities like the Wana is the assumption that upland culture and belief is isolated and untouched by outside influences (see Chapter 2). Wana now and then, however, have never been isolated or stateless but have always been incorporated in wider state systems and trade networks and thus have

been engaged in interreligious contexts for ages (see Chapter 2 and 5). The goal of this chapter is to show how Wana religion is shaped along outside, other-religious influences and how Wana people in this context have managed to constitute their own belief as a religion – just as Atkinson stresses: “To characterize their religion, they draw on models of world religions familiar to them and construct an image of what religion is supposed to be” (Atkinson 1983: 690). Traces of the interreligious interchange are found in many aspects of Wana religion and ritual and still testify for the long-time interreligious links that are part of Wana constructions of their religion. Some of them I will present shortly in the following, depicting further continuities and change between Wana in the 1970s and in the 21st century. I will first portray central elements of Wana constitution of their belief. Then, against this background I will draw attention to the formulation of marginality through regular day-to-day actions that Wana experience within the interreligious environment of Taronggo and its surroundings, drawing as a tool of analysis on Frederik Barth’s elaborations of ethno-religious boundaries. Then I will focus on aspects of agency within this interreligious setting by demonstrating how and why some Wana choose to break out of their religious marginality through acts of conversion, how and why others continuously resist conversion attempts or chose to deconvert from Islam or Christianity. I will close this chapter by linking the socio-religious sphere of marginality with Wana access to knowledge.

## **4.1 THE CONSTITUTION OF WANA RELIGION**

There has been a long tradition of scholarly dispute concerning the content, theoretical scope and definition of religion in anthropology. Beginning with Edward B. Tylor’s early attempt to grasp religion as the “belief in spiritual beings” (1871) a number of anthropologists have tried to give a detailed characterization of the meaning of religion. A more recent and widespread attempt was given by Spiro who has tried to define the term: “On the assumption that religion is a cultural institution, on the further assumption that all institutions [...] are instrumental means for the satisfaction of needs, I shall define ‘religion’ as ‘an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings’” (Spiro 1966: 96). While Spiro draws back on a supernatural core just like Tylor had, he however postulated religion as a cultural

institutional system: “This means that the variables constituting a religious system have the same ontological status as those of other cultural systems: its beliefs are normative, its rituals collective, its values prescriptive” (Spiro 1966: 97). Such a rather broad approach towards religion is also given by Clifford Geertz, who defines religion in a highly famous and influential attempt as:

“(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men [and women] by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic” (Geertz 1973: 90).<sup>110</sup>

Just like Atkinson has pointed out, this definition opens the stage for perceiving religion from within a society and the way its members find “ultimate reason” in it (Atkinson 1988: 47). With this general approach towards religious systems analyzing Wana conceptualizations of their belief within the interreligious background of my research location, I will focus on the internal dynamics and perceptions Wana link to their cosmology and interreligious standing. In this regard, I do not intend to give a general definition of religion and then examine whether or not Wana belief may account for this category or not. More important are those discourses that are formed nationally, culturally and politically and that are central for an analysis of interreligious coexistence within Taronggo and its surroundings. Following Atkinson, I therefore understand religion as what my interlocutors see in it: “religion is, in methodological terms, a matter of what informants say it is” (Atkinson 1988: 47). Among Wana, this understanding is deeply influenced by the contact to other religions and belief systems. Only by national agendas, historical and political developments and interaction with other-religious definitions Wana came to rationalize and justify their own belief system as a religion. By this means, it is necessary to pay attention to religious influences that shaped Wana understandings of the concept of religion in a meaningful way.

At least since the mid 19th century, Wana have been acquainted with Islam. Their pre-colonial relations to the former ruler of Ternate, to the surrounding Rajas of Bungku and Tojo, and business relations with Islamic traders as well as with their coastal neighbors account for a vivid interaction Wana had with Muslim people. Against the background of

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<sup>110</sup> Although this definition is a relative broad attempt to grasp such a wide term, it received heavy critique, for example by Saler (2000) and Asad; the latter explicitly pointing to the ahistorical quality of Geertz’s definition that ignores hegemonic structures (1983).

these early interreligious networks some Wana chose to become Muslims. In terms of religious conversion, Atkinson recalls for example the To Ampana, a related linguistic ethnic group on the Northern shore of the Teluk Tomini who converted to Islam. Many Wana had family ties with To Ampana members and thus chose to follow their example and to become Muslim (1979: 30). With the beginning of the 20th century colonial interventions introduced Christianity to Eastern Central Sulawesi. The Dutch colonial project came along with a strong focus on Christian values and indigenous groups like the Wana were regarded as heathens in need of religious salvation. Accordingly, Christian missions and schooling heavily influenced the region, leading to further conversions of Wana people and interreligious negotiations. In the 1970s, when Jane Atkinson conducted her research in the Poso regency, Wana had lived for more than half a century in more or less close relations with Christian and Muslim neighbors. In accordance with official state discourse on religious plurality that refuses to accept indigenous “belief systems” as religions, Atkinson states that Wana at that time were aware of the fact that they were perceived as religious-free people by government as well as by their Christian-Muslim neighbors. In this context religion becomes a highly influential marker of marginalization processes within the Indonesian state. Albeit the Indonesian state does not recognize other belief systems besides the six world religions as official religious affiliations (see Chapter 2), Wana in the 1970s did not perceive of themselves as people without religion nor was Wana religious identity a category that implied the exclusion from other religions. Instead it meant holding on to an “earlier religion” (Atkinson 1989: 332). Moreover, although in national discourse, indigenous belief systems were associated with negative connotations such as backward and primitive, Wana revealed a strong attitude towards their own belief system. Despite the fact that the general reference to indigenous, non-converted people was depicted under the term *orang yang belum beragama* (people who do not yet have a religion), denying indigenous belief systems the status of a religion, Wana however ignored this outside ascription: “Yet, they claim that they possess a religion, the oldest of religions, called *agama Wana*, ‘the Wana religion’, *agama tu’a*, ‘the old religion’, *agama ruyu*, ‘the early religion’, *agama alai*, *agama kapor*, ‘the pagan religion’” (Atkinson 1979: 378). Wana who had not converted to either Christianity or Islam, found their own ways to conceptualize their belief system and to position themselves within an interreligious

context. To use Atkinson's words, one could speak of "religions in dialogue" (1979). Within this dialogue, Wana found a way to construct their very own belief system.<sup>111</sup>

## 4.2 THREE CENTRAL CONCEPTS

Central for understanding Wana religion and its reformulation are three local concepts: The Wana notion of heaven, their idea of Wana religion as the first belief and the singularity of God. These themes serve as a framework of restructuring processes of religious reconceptualization and transformation among Wana people that evolved in response to challenges from Christian and Muslim and state sides. Further, they show how Wana have dealt with external pressure concerning religion and how they have managed to find their own answers to them (Atkinson 1989). In the following I will represent these issues that Atkinson has distinguished almost 30 years ago, extending them with examples from my own research. I will do so in order to elaborate upon the rationalization of Wana religion against a changed historical and political background and within the interreligious context that I examine in this chapter.

### 4.2.1 Heaven (and Hell)

Among the categories that are relevant for Wana and their neighbors concerning religion as well as religious boundaries, the concept of heaven is probably the most central one in Wana religious constructions. Wana generally declare that they do believe in heaven, *saruga* or sometimes also called *suruga*, borrowed from the Indonesian term *surga*.<sup>112</sup> Most Wana maintain that their "earthly misery" will be reshaped in a "paradise-like" after-world, "they, who live a poor and filthy life on earth, will enjoy a beautiful afterlife

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<sup>111</sup> In her article "Religions in dialogue: the construction of an Indonesian minority religion" (1989) Atkinson elaborates in detail on this aspect. A great deal of my ideas in this chapter I owe this article and I will always come back to Atkinson's original ideas and research findings.

<sup>112</sup> *Surga* itself is a term borrowed from the Sanskrit term *syurga*. The religion of Patuntung among the Makassar of Gowa also encompasses the idea of *suruga* (heaven) as well as *naraka* (hell). Rössler suggests that these concepts have found their way into Patuntung cosmology through the influence of Islam and have no indigenous origins in the local religion (Rössler 1987: 81).

of leisure and comfort in heaven as a reward for earthly suffering” (Atkinson 1989: 691). In an interview Apa nTina explained to me:

“According to our history, the earth we are living in right now is quite difficult and tough to us; but when we die we move to heaven, people there are happy. They are free, can move back and forth, wherever they want to go. It is not the same like here.”

By virtue of promising felicity, the concept of heaven serves Wana people as a reversion of their earthly poverty, despair – and marginality. It is in this sense deeply connected to the cosmological dimension of marginality in which Wana expect an end to their misery through the comeback of the Golden Age. In the 1970s Wana had thus constructed an idea of heaven that was “a symbol of Wana visions of social justice and a new world order” (1989: 691). Following the direction I have given in Chapter 3, I will begin with a Wana narrative – although not a cosmological one – that conceptualizes the interreligious dialogue and dynamics. Wana narratives like the following continue to play an important part in constructing religious relations until today, as I have already made clear in Chapter 3. Atkinson mentions this continuity as well: “Being Islam or traditional in one’s religion came to be a significant choice, one that Wana pondered and mulled over in a manner that generated a fascinating body of stories explaining and comparing the origins, practices and logic of their own religion and that of Islam” (1979: 30). The following story portrays this vision of an afterworld:

It is the story of Pojanggu Wawu, which is literally translated as pig’s beard or “one who wears a beard full of pig grease” (Atkinson 1989: 691). Pojanggu Wawu is a magnificent and exemplary Wana who is such a successful hunter that his beard has pig’s grease applied all over it. In addition, Pojanggu Wawu is a rather altruistic character who shares all his goods and prey with his friends, relatives and everyone else who passes his house. The other character of the story is a Muslim man named Pohaji, who lives in a wealthy house at the coast and has already been to Mecca. One day he dies and his soul enters heaven respectively the after world; meanwhile on earth his body is getting prepared for the funeral. His soul wanders around in heaven and detects a gorgeous house, which, as he learns, belongs to the Wana Pojanggu Wawu. Pohaji’s own house in heaven, however,

is a mere dirty hut. In the face of this unequal condition, Pohaji quickly hurries back to earth where he, alive again, goes to live with Pojanggu Wawu. There he shares the same lifestyle like the Wana hunter and even prefers pork over chicken meat. As he finally dies, he ends up in Pojanggu Wawus heavenly home (Atkinson 1988: 57-58).

In this account heaven is a place where Wana are rewarded with a paradise-like condition while Muslim people experience the reverse. In the versions of heaven told in the 1970s, other ethnic and religious people who did not share the same normative orders and morals like Wana, would end up in a situation similar to the one Wana have to suffer on earth, exemplified by Pohaji's fate in the story above. Atkinson explains that

“[Wana] claim that Muslims live their heaven here on earth, as demonstrated by their comparative wealth and preoccupation with purity. In the Muslim section of heaven [...] people live in filth (pointedly portrayed as pig excrement) and they are so hungry that their souls take the form of wild boar that root through Wana gardens in search of food. As for Christian souls, they have only scraps of clouds to eat (an apparent reference to Bible school pictures of Jesus and angels floating about on cumulus banquettes)” (Atkinson 1989: 691).

Following Atkinson, the idea of heaven is an outsider notion that deeply influenced Wana religious concepts: “Whatever indigenous notions of an afterlife were once present in Wana culture, they have been radically transformed by the concept of *saruga*” (Atkinson 1988: 54).<sup>113</sup>

Christian people in Taronggo share this idea. In an interview with Apa Ele, a Christian Wana convert, he talks about his non-converted relatives and friends and unravels his opinion about Wana belief in heaven: “There exists one belief concerning heaven; they only believe in heaven like we do because they already heard a lot about it through us”. Apa Ele explicitly denies his non-converted Wana relatives an original concept of heaven as part of Wana cosmology – for him it is clear that heaven is a genuine Christian concept. Atkinson however perceives the Wana concept of heaven as an answer to Christian and Muslim pressure to conversion and points to the fact that Wana have rephrased a genuine outside concept for their own good: “No doubt representatives of both Islam and Christianity have used images of heaven as enticements to convert [...] but Wana have reworked the proffered promise of paradise to conform the value of their

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<sup>113</sup> Searching for answers among the earliest source on Wana culture, there is no mentioning of an afterlife in A.C. Kruyt's writings; nevertheless he speaks about heaven in Wana cosmos (see below).



own traditional ways” (1988: 54-55) – by establishing an idea of heaven that benefits Wana in an exclusive way, dismissing Muslims and Christians.

In 2011 Wana followed a slightly different version. The story of Pojanggu Wawu was not popular during my own research; only some Wana recalled this story but its significance was low. Instead the concept of heaven among Wana in Morowali Regency today does not distinguish between salvation for Wana and other people. All people are believed to end up in the same state of heaven, regardless of their religious orientation.

However, the notion of heaven is nowadays far stronger associated with the concept of sin that deeply affects ones access to heaven. Conversely to Christian and Muslim concepts of sin, Wana rely upon their own notion of religious restriction. Wana expect after death a final judgement, which refers to the catholic concept of purgatory. This judgement decides if they either can access heaven directly or they have to suffer in a hell-like space first. Apa Mike, a young Wana from Kayupoli told me the following account:

“In the past there was a man who died; he had no religion just like me. He died but after one day he had not yet been buried. Then, he came back. He said, I was not allowed to enter [heaven]. The people were scared, they feared it was a demon coming to them. He said, don’t be afraid, I am a normal human being. I cannot yet live in heaven because I have lived in great sin. I was a very avaricious man (*orang sekikir*). When someone passed my house I would never give any water or food. I was very stingy. The people in heaven told me: You have to go back to your house first, go, reenter your body, we will not accept you in heaven. Go, make a big garden and every time someone comes, you offer to take something from it. Offer everyone food and water and be nice to everyone. This is our message to you. The man followed the heavenly orders and became very old, more than 100 years. When he died, there was no sin left. He went straight to heaven.”

This account is not typical for stories concerned with an after-life. Most Wana accounts from Taronggo and Salisarao were centered around the following explanation: Once dead,

they go first to Indo Kuliling,<sup>114</sup> the female guardian of a blacksmith place. Indo Kuliling evaluates the sins they have committed during lifetime. If Indo Kuliling presumes them innocent, the way to heaven is open and they may directly enter *saruga*. If however they lived a life of transgression and Indo Kuliling presumes them guilty of sin, consequences are inevitable. Indo Kuliling and her assistants, mPande and Kumalangi,<sup>115</sup> will let the sinners burn in the forge fire and, depending on the level of sins, will hammer his or her body, like metal used to forge a knife. This notion of afterlife, contrary to the story of Pojanggu Wawu, was widely spread and well known in my research area while Atkinson does not mention it at all. People regularly warn each other, often in a joking way, to avoid sinful behavior in case they would like to pass Indo Kuliling.

Similar to the universal application of the concept of heaven, most of my interlocutors state that Indo Kuliling will judge people of all ethnic and religious backgrounds. My informants applied their concept to all other affiliations since, according to them, all people will be treated the same. Interestingly, they also observe their Christian and Muslim neighbors on earth and usually they perceive of them as extremely sinful – compared to Wana people themselves. Therefore, some of my informants assert, the period those “sinners” will need to spend with Indo Kuliling after death will take a much longer time. Contrary to Christian concepts, Wana do not believe in an endless state of agony after death. They do not believe in Christian stories and warnings about entering hell forever – versions they are frequently told by their Protestant and Pentecostal neighbors. Although Wana notions of heaven and hell are probably shaped against the background of Christian and Muslim ideas, they are, from Wana perspective, their own original concepts. Instead, Wana tend to turn the picture around. From Wana perspective, the fact that Christian and Muslim people today share some common concepts with them, like heaven, is due to the fact that all people have their origin in Wana land as I described in Chapter 3.

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<sup>114</sup> The term *kuliling* might be borrowed from the Indonesian term *keliling*, sometime also referred to as *kuliling*, meaning extent.

<sup>115</sup> Atkinson notes Guma Langi, the “Sheath of the Sky” (1990).

### 4.2.2 The Singularity of God

Another extremely significant concept that Atkinson points out and that my informants were concerned about was the matter of distinguishing Wana belief from other religions by the singularity of God. The belief in one single deity is a highly important aspect for the Indonesian state and society. As I have shown in Chapter 2, this condition is set in the first and probably most central pillar of the Pancasila which declares the principle of *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, the Belief in One God. The Pancasila thus implies a monotheistic imperative, regardless of the religious confession. Widiyanto points out, that in so far as the monotheistic principle, i.e. “Belief in a Single Deity is regarded as the Indonesian response to religious diversity [,] [...] [i]t opens up the possibility to the identification of different religions and has judiciously prevented the establishment of a purely secular state” (Widiyanto 2013: 166). However, the results are tremendous; indigenous groups who do not fall under this category are often disenfranchised: “The adherents of ‘local indigenous religions’ [...] and other unrecognised religions do not enjoy the same rights as those of recognised religion [for example access to public space]” (Widiyanto 2013: 166). Therefore, it is only likely that the issue of belief in a single god has become a major concern for non-converted Wana against the Indonesian state and, moreover, within the interreligious context of Taronggo. As a matter of fact, Christian and Muslim converts and neighbors regularly relegate Wana belief to the fringe, simply on the base of a supposed Wana polytheism. Wana however, usually encounter such “allegations” energetically and state that they believe in no more than one single god alone: *Pue* or “the Owner” following Atkinson’s translation (1979). In stories of the past however, it seems that Wana have relied on a different concept and that this religious principle has evolved in accordance with outside pressure.

#### *Pue in Creation Narratives*

A.C. Kruyt collected a religious account during his time among the Wana, in which he refers to two Gods Wana believed in. In this creation narrative, heaven and earth were once connected by a liane, the *wiaa siwangoe*, as I have already explained in Chapter 3

(1930: 414-15). Those days there were no more than two Gods, named *Poe ri arantana* (*Pue ri ara n tana*) and *Poe lamoa* (*Pue Lamoa*). Both were also known by the names Lai and Ndara.<sup>116</sup> These two were siblings who could move between heaven and earth without any difficulty. When one day the heavenly part began to move away from the earth, the *wiaa siwangoe* split in two halves. The first God, *Pue Lamoa*, could save himself to the heavenly part while his brother, *Pue ara n tana* had to stay on earth. In another version of the account given by A.C. Kruyt, Lai and Ndara are people who fought iKoni, a demon that is known as the notorious man-eater. Lai and Ndara followed iKoni to the coast where they managed to kill him in the end. When they returned to the Wana homeland, a little mouse had gnawed on the liana so that heaven was moving away. It was Lai who could save himself to heaven, while Ndara vanished in the earth, “*verdween in de aarde*” (A.C. Kruyt 1930: 415). Atkinson also listened to stories similar to those Kruyt has written down. In Atkinson’s version however, iKoni is displayed as the first *measa*, a human’s liver eating demon. In contrast to A.C. Kruyt’s first account, it is not *Pue Lamoa* who climbed to heaven, but Lai who became the God of heaven, *Pue wawo yanggi*, the Owner above the sky. Ndara descended from the ground to a place beneath the earth and became *Pue ara n tana*, the Owner beneath the earth. Further, in this creation account a central hero is proclaimed, Pololoisong, who went up to the sky to talk to God (see above). Here, A.C. Kruyt recounts Pololoisong talking to *Pue Lamoa* as the solitary God. However, in Atkinson’s version, it is *Pue* without any additional suffixes who Pololoisong addresses. During my research this creation myth was still familiar. Similar to Atkinson’s result, in my own recordings it was also only *Pue* who Pololoisong talked to. *Pue Lamoa*, I came to know, is not perceived at all as part of this creation myth and my questions were answered with astonished laughter.

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<sup>116</sup> Lai and Ndara are also mentioned among other ethnic groups of Central Sulawesi, see for example Stöhr (1976).

### *Pue in Rituals*

Atkinson analyses Lamoia (here: *Pue Lamoia*) in relation to the vow-making ritual, the *pantoo mako 'o*.<sup>117</sup> She recites a passage of a shaman making a hard vow, while calling upon the Owner above the sky and the Owner below the earth, “accepting the conditions of a divided world” (1989: 205). Thus, in the ritual of the hard vow, the *pantoo mako 'o*, today called *nia*, two Gods are referred to (Fig. 8).

The *momago*, another ritual, involves a passage of a shaman with his spirit allies towards a single *Pue*. The *momago* is the most central Wana healing ceremony. Although it is described in great detail by Atkinson let me briefly explain the ritual since it continues to be of great importance for Wana in my research area.<sup>118</sup> The *momago* is usually staged by a family of a patient and often follows a *nia*. As I have just described, if a person gets sick the family may choose to make a *nia*, a ritual vow to prepare a *momago* in case the patient will get cured. Therefore, the *nia* and *momago* are closely related rituals. Since for a *momago* everyone can come, the staging house, usually the house of the patient's family, needs to be big enough to offer a great crowd of people enough space (Fig. 9). Most important guests are the shamans who do not receive special invitations but usually a leading shaman will be asked to perform to assure the *momago* can be staged. Food for the numerous guests has to be prepared as well as enough rice wine. Central for a *momago* are a drum and two gongs. The drum, usually covered with monkey skin, is made from tree trunks, whereas the gongs, made of brass, are rare inherited goods, some of them dating back to pre-colonial times (Atkinson 1979: 238).<sup>119</sup> A *momago* will not

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<sup>117</sup> Kruyt who calls it *mantoo* observes the same ritual. The word *pantoo* was used during my research mainly as the word “to say”. With Atkinson the syllable *to 'o* also appears in non-ritualized talk; used for paying a vow, people say *pantoo mako 'o* or *nia mako 'o*. The term *nia* stems from the Indonesian language and means vow, the Wana term *mako 'o* means hard.

<sup>118</sup> During my research I had the chance to take part in a number of *momago* rituals, a ritual that was central for my research since it offered on the one hand the opportunity to study Wana shamanism and related religious aspects while on the other hand it was a great chance to chat with guest from other regions as well as it was also the place for political discussions. Atkinson has well described the first impression of the ritual, which takes a longer time to understand its internal chronology: „At first impression, the *mabolong* appears to defy neat and orderly description [...] the occasion seems chaotic – shamans sing, drum and gongs sound, youths flirt, people chate, occasionally someone standst o dance, perforemers variously orate, gesticulate, and topple over unconscious, mature men ecpouind, some become drunk, indivudals curl up an sleep. The scene appears disjointed and confused” (1979:235). For a detailed discussion of the ritual see Atkinson (1979) or her ethnography of 1989, which is centered on the *momago*.

<sup>119</sup> In Kayupoli, some gongs that had been broken were replaced by Martine Journet and Gérard Nougariol with gongs they brought from Bali. When one of the gongs in the Salisarao area was in a bad condition

start before it is dark and before every guest has eaten. The hosting family will prepare the *duku*, a woven offering tray that is placed in the middle of the room where the shamans as well as other people sit around. Offerings are put in the *duku* including the obligatory betel nuts, piper leafs and lime – the betel fixings –, tobacco and corn papers, rice wine and some cloth, for example a pair of trousers, a sarong or a shirt, served as a gift for the shamans (Fig. 10).

After an introductory phase of playing the gongs and drums for mutual amusement during which for example some young adults may imitate shamans' style of dancing and women may perform in the female style of dancing, called *salonde* (beautiful) (Fig. 11), the leading shaman will start with the opening chant of the *momago*, the *patoe*. In this *patoe* the leading shaman will summon his spirit allies, his *walia* (Fig. 12). The *walia* are invited to take part in the *momago*, to help the shaman to cure the patients. Herefore it is necessary to invoke the *walia* with patience and with so called *baku m walia*, food for the *walia*. Each *walia* may have different taste, most are content with tobacco, rice wine or a specific plant, but others have developed a unique taste. Once I witnessed a shaman eating burning wood for his *walia* while on another event a shaman called for toothpaste that his *walia* wished for. After the initial *patoe* he will start to dance, *motaro*, a specific form of rhythmically moving the body up and down (Fig. 13) and may eventually fall in trance in the course of the night (Fig. 14). Other shamans will start to call their own *walia* while *motaro* (Fig. 14). Once a shaman has started singing, he may begin to cure assembled patients who are in need of treatment. There are different forms of treatment a shaman may use; he may take out objects hidden in the body of a patient (*ransong*) or he may try to get hold of lost parts of the patient's soul, for instance the *koro uli* or the *tanuana*. In some very severe cases the shaman will need to go to *Pue*, *yao ri Pue*. For this purpose he will together with his *walia* climb upwards, *mandake*, and see if there is anything that can be done to help the patient. In this scenario, *yao ri Pue*, the shaman and his *walia* will only meet one God, who is located upwards. A *momago* will always last until sunrise since it is considered to evoke dangerous spirits if the sound of the gongs and drum stop before daylight (cf. Aktinson 1979; 1989).

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Wana were worried to stage another *momago*. The sound of a scattered drum may cause wrong and dangerous consequences, therefore I followed Journets and Nougatols example and took care to provide a new gong from Bali for the Salisarao community.

Another ritual reveals a different picture. While the *momago* is the most frequent and biggest healing ritual, the ritual *molawo* is usually perceived as the most powerful ritual. The *molawo* serves as an analytical tool to consider the question of a multiple deity-principle among Wana people. Therefore, only those *molawo*-rituals will be of concern that include a journey to a God. For example, the *molawo taw sampu'u* cures diseases caused by attacks from headhunting spirits like the *sangia* or *tambar*. As a result, a journey to the Owner is not necessary. Other diseases however are caused directly by *Pue Lamo* and can be cured with a special type of *molawo* called *wala* – a *molawo* version that requires a journey to a God. To begin the *molawo*-style ritual, the patient and the *molawo*-conductor, who does not necessarily have to be a shaman, come together in a house that is usually erected for the *molawo* by the patient's family. The ritual head takes a chicken provided by the family. The chicken is turned around and guided three times by the hand of the ritual leader from the patient's head to his toes. After that, the chicken is turned around and waved into the other direction, from the patient's toes to his head, again, three times. In this performance the head signifies the direction to heaven, the place where *Pue wawo yanggi* resides, the Owner above the sky, whereas the toes, the body's end, stand for the place of *Pue ara n tana*, the Owner beneath the earth. Later in the ritual the *walia*, spirit allies, summoned by the ritual leader, will start their journey to the Owner above the earth.<sup>120</sup> There is no *molawo*-style ritual where *walia* would travel beneath the earth. Apa Jendi explains to me:

“This *molawo* [*wala*] is attributed to *Pue ara ntana* and *Pue wawo yanggi*. [...] Actually, both Gods are the same [*siwaju*], both are called *Pue*. But later in the ritual the *walia* go to *Pue wawo yanggi*, who himself will talk to *Pue ara n tana*. *Walia* cannot go directly to *Pue ara ntana*, there is no way (*taa ree jaya walia*) leading to this place. Only up is the direction where the *walia* take their boat.”

Later in this ritual, the spirit allies head to *Pue Lamo*, the Owner of Thunder, who is regarded as the most naughty Lord known to Wana people. In another form of the *molawo* ritual, the *molawo rapi*, also referred to as the high *molawo*, a fourth God is mentioned: *Pue Bulanga*. This god was fairly known among my interlocutors. However,

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<sup>120</sup> See Chapter 3.2.2 for details on Wana shamanism.

the documentary filmmakers Nougazol and Journet note his appearance during *molawo* ritual as shown in one of their movies titled “Indo Pino”. Here, Apa Rahu, the *kepala suku* of the Morowali area, performs a *molawo rapi* that lasts three nights. During his ritual performance he mentions *Pue Bulanga* at some point in his ritual talk. According to Journet and Nougazol, *Pue Bulanga* is the God between the Owner of the sky and the Owner beneath the earth, “divinité située entre la terre et a plus haute sphère céleste” (Journet and Nougazol n.d.). One of my informants states *Pue Bulanga* as one of five Gods – alas not being clear who a fifth God would be – but being the weakest and residing below *Pue Lamo*.

To sum up, the ritual speech of making a hard vow, *nia*, includes the concept of two Owners. The *molawo* ritual, in its diverse styles, presents a variety of deities. In contrast, during the *momago* ritual, another type of healing ritual, the shaman and his *walia* take a journey to a singular Owner, referred to as *Pue*. Given the plurality of the concept of God, either in historical accounts as well as in current rituals, the emerging singularity of one Wana God, *Pue*, has to be regarded as closely connected to a monotheistic imperative of the Indonesian state context. Although accounts of a creational past and ritual speech trace a variety of Gods relevant for Wana people, in everyday discussions however the concept of a singular *Pue* is promoted. There is but one God, most Wana claim. For a couple of weeks I stumbled over this rigorous negation of other Gods existence, since of course I was familiar with Atkinson’s results. Atkinson already mentioned a decline in importance of a variety of Gods during her research. Instead, she notes, another form of God became more and more present, a *deus otiosus*, a good willing creator God. Taking note of Eliade’s postulation of a celestial Supreme Being for shamanism in North and Central Asia that lost influence to less smaller deities, the former receiving a new status as *deus otiosus*, Atkinson remarks for her research context that “*Pue* was the benign *deus otiosus*, the creator and giver of breath, the ultimate justice in the universe (1989: 199). However, although *Pue* as the idle God has withdrawn from the world, it is still possible to visit him during a shamanic journey. The Owner, *Pue*, who more resembles the state’s ideology, addressed in *momago* ritual, cannot be met directly but only by *langi m Pue* – a sort of mediator between *walia* and *Pue*.<sup>121</sup> Atkinson states, that “*Pue* has emerged only in the last few decades as a focus of both Wana shamanic practice and general cultural

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<sup>121</sup> Atkinson notes here *leangi m pue*, “the Owner’s intermediary who speaks with a shaman’s spirit entourage” (1989: 347).



concern” (1989: 159). *Pue Lamo*, by contrast, can be met directly in the *molawo* ritual and can even be tricked by ingenious *walia*.

As I mentioned above, the influence of Islam and to some extent of Christianity on Wana religious constructions and concerns cannot be ignored. According to Atkinson’s research in the 1970s, Wana reformulated their belief in a way they could match competing religious claims. The monotheistic imperative of the state’s Pancasila lets other elements of a god-like identity, central for certain rituals, get pushed away in favor of one omnipotent God or *Pue*. It remains difficult, however, to evaluate if this process is caused solely by other religious agents’ critical voices. It is likewise possible to read the occurrence of an Owner, who can be visited in the *momago* ritual and is more distant than *Pue Lamo*, as shaped rather independently from other religious influences. From today’s perspective, it is almost impossible to argue in one way or another since relevant data dating back to a time where Islam and Christianity had indeed only minor influence does not exist. Nevertheless, the fact that a plural concept of God has shifted towards a rather monotheistic approach, at least in an outward direction, is probably connected to national agenda and state-based religious discourse.

Today most Wana emphasize the equivalence of *Pue* with a Christian and Muslim God – particularly in discussions with their Christian and Muslim neighbors or visitors. For the analysis of marginality constructions within Taronggo and its surroundings, this intersubjective formation becomes highly significant. The often claimed negation of a monotheistic belief system allows other-confessional community members to exclude Wana from the category of religious practitioners. Frequently, Wana hear statements by their neighbors and relatives, denying a Wana monotheistic belief system; the following example illustrates this condition. I recorded this account during a Protestant festivity, given by a Christian man in an effort to explain Wana belief towards me: “Oh, Wana people pray to everything; they have many, many Gods; for them there is a God in everything, in this stone, that butterfly or the mountain over there; there might be even one in my shoe.”

Wana nonetheless refuse to accept this ascription of polytheism or animism. As a result, Wana are highly hesitant to speak about additional Gods. Other forms of the single *Pue*, Owner, like the aforementioned Owner beneath the earth or the one above the sky or *Pue Lamo* are never discussed in presence of other-confessional friends or guests.



Figure 8 A *niat* ritual in Salisarao.



Figure 9 Guests arriving for a *momago* in Salisarao.





Figure 10 The *duku* for a momago, filled with baku m walia, food for the spirit allies.



Figure 11 Indo Pino performing *salonde* during a momago, hosted in Taronggo





Figure 12 Apa Meti calling his *walia* during a *momago*.



Figure 13 A shaman falling in trance during a *momago*.



Figure 14 Several shamans during a *momago*, hosted in Salisarao.

### 4.2.3 Precedence of Wana Religion

The third concept relevant for the reformulation of Wana belief is not as much related to inherent features of the belief system but rather portrays an overall assumption of religious seniority. Wana perceive of their religion as the first belief, *agama ruyu*. To exemplify the superiority attached to this portrayal, I turn to another narrative recited by A.C. Kruyt that illustrates the dialogic dynamics of interreligious exchange nested in this approach of religious precedence:

Hero of this story is Pololoisong, who I have already introduced in Chapter 3 and who appears in various narratives of early times. In this narrative Pololoisong lives in a house made of bacon walls and is dressed in a loincloth. He has a Muslim brother named Adi Banggai. One day Adi Banggai comes to visit his brother but refuses to enter his house because it is made of bacon. Instead he tries to convince Pololoisong to convert to Islam. The latter refuses and mentions the fact of him being the older brother and therefore being

always right, “en het daarom bij het rechte eind had” (A.C. Kruyt 1930: 418). But Adi Banggai does not want to listen, turns this argument down and keeps on trying to persuade his brother. On the third attempt, Pololoisong suggests to bring their fight before God, named here *ala tala*, another version of Allah but accounting here for a common God.<sup>122</sup> Adi Banggai complains before God that Pololoisong refuses to become Muslim although his younger brother’s life is great and his heaven is wonderful. Pololoisong however, Adi Banggai insists, obviously lives in poverty and his heaven is made of bacon. God meanwhile listens and replies that Adi Banggai is wrong because Pololoisong’s life and heaven indeed are beautiful and because he is the older brother. After this godly advice the two brothers start their march back home. On their way, something unexpected happens: the ground just before and behind Adi Banggai suddenly opens, detaches him from the rest of the land with the result that he has to stay alone on the newly-created island where he is forced to live a life in scarcity (A.C. Kruyt 1930: 418).<sup>123</sup>

A.C. Kruyt’s version of this story continues to be extremely important for Wana self-positioning in regard to religious affairs today. During my own research, I recorded A.C. Kruyt’s account in a variety of slightly differing versions. The story is significant for Wana constitution of their “right to believe” and is a popular narrative told frequently during social events and evening conversations. Pololoisong, functioning in this narrative as a prototypical Wana who adheres to his own faith, does to no point doubt his right to follow his own belief. The differences between both faiths are symbolized in Pololoisong’s bacon house, a religious taboo for his Muslim brother, forcing Adi Banggai to stay outside. A second symbolic differentiation can be found in Pololoisong’s poverty, exemplified through his clothing and house. Although in A.C. Kruyt’s version not explicitly mentioned, Adi Banggai is usually portrayed in Wana narratives as a rich Muslim man, who has lots of money and fine clothing. Again, as we have already seen in Chapter 3, poverty is an important marker of Wana culture and also religion. In this narrative, Wana religion receives a label of poverty while Islam is associated with wealth – an important distinction that is deeply linked to Wana cosmological assertions on their

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<sup>122</sup> Although I never found Wana referring to *ala tala* when talking about God, Atkinson states that *ala tala* is part of shamanistic verses, who were taken from Muslim prayers and reformulated and incorporated in the own ritual practice: Wana consider the phrase to be a reference to God and to carry special potency” (1979: 378).

<sup>123</sup> Translation by Grumblies.

own marginality. Although Pololoisong seems to be of economic disadvantage, he reacts in a peaceful and deliberate way: Instead of fighting with his brother he chooses to bring the problem – which in fact is a problem for his brother alone – to God. One could assume that Pololoisong's decision to pass the responsibility to judge over right and wrong to God portrays the numerous occasions when Wana individuals are engaged in discussions with other religious people, forced to explain and justify their belief. Some of my interlocutors for example stated that they were weary of discussing religious matters with Christians and Muslims because they would often receive nothing else than lack of understanding. Pololoisong in this narrative thus chooses the only possible way to avoid endless discussions: He already knows that God will judge in accordance to Pololoisong's status as the older brother, simply because "seniority confers authority in Wana thought" (Atkinson 1983: 690). The calmness of the hero and the moral judgment by the highest law symbolize a strong and affirmative attitude Wana display towards their own religious status. This narrative is an example how Wana elaborate on other religious influences and how they manage to find a strong position within the complex interreligious relations they face. The fact that it has been around since at least the 1930s underlines the continuing necessity of explaining, defending and constituting a belief system that is until now not accepted by state and society as a religion.

In the 1970s, Atkinson writes, it was common ground that Wana religion was the first belief:

"While not accepting Wana religion as a true religion, Muslims and Christians will assert that Wana animism is prior to their own revealed faiths. To Muslims and Christians, Wana customs are akin to animistic beliefs of their own forbearers before the advent of world religions. They believe their own religions, in contrast to such primitive beliefs, represent an important advance from former ignorance to current enlightenment" (1988: 56).

However, the picture, which presented itself to me in Taronggo, was of a slightly different character. Most of my Christian and some of my Muslim interlocutors did not accept the idea of Wana belief being older than their own. Rather they explained the fact that some of their forbearers had followed animist practices by their nescience of other religions. To them, it is Wana ignorance that made them adhere to "animism" – and not a timely priority of Wana religion. Some Muslim informants, especially those with close ties to non-converted Wana or themselves converted Muslim Wana, stressed also a common origin of Wana and Muslim belief. Some even pointed to the seniority of Wana



belief over Muslim belief – but not all of them. On the Christian side however, there is no place for the idea of Wana belief being older than Christianity. According to non-converted Wana however, first there was Wana religion and it was only later that Islam followed, portrayed as a younger sibling. Christianity is a newer introduction and not (yet) as deeply connected to Wana religion in a cosmological way like accounts for Islam. Although in the 1970s Christianity had been added to the story of siblings, interestingly, no Wana in my research area more than thirty years later would grant Christianity the status of a sibling of Wana belief. Islam is perceived as the ancient brother, but Christianity is referred to as a foreign concept, that has no historical or other superiority or at least shared position with Wana religion. For Wana the story of Adi Banggai and Pololoisong as well as other narratives mentioned above assert to the fact that Wana religion was the first religion of all, “but for them priority does not connote primitiveness but rather special claims to validity” (Atkinson 1983: 692). Instead, presenting the own belief as the first religion eventually leads to the assumption that Wana belief underlies authority: “Wana, in millennial fashion, foresee a time when their now-despised religion will be accorded proper honors. If history is to be a succession of eras, as the dominant culture asserts, then it is only right that [...] history should end where it began – the first, who are now last, shall be first again” (Atkinson 1982: 692). This conceptualization therefore deeply touches upon the sphere of cosmological marginality and draws a setting in which Wana will one day break out of their current standing

### **4.3 THE RATIONALIZATION OF WANA RELIGION**

The religious concepts presented above as reformulations of Wana belief have been formed and shaped within the field of interreligious dialogue in which Wana manage to find and express their own positioning. I have chosen these examples based on their relevance in Atkinson’s research and A.C. Kruyt’s early elaborations on Wana religion. I have drawn from the descriptions these earlier accounts are presenting and have slightly expanded them with insights from my own research thereby already pointing out how some aspects have changed between Atkinson’s and my own research results. Given the self-conscious statement concerning Wana conceptualization of their religion in Atkinson’s account, I was therefore deeply surprised to find a very different depiction



among my interlocutors. During my own first months of fieldwork in Taronggo and its surroundings I came to meet Wana who stated to be *orang (yang) belum beragama*, “people without religion”. It appeared to be almost impossible to find a person who would self-confidently present or discuss a concept of *agama Wana* (Wana religion). If at all, they granted it the status of *kepercayaan* (belief) – a term that implicates a certain negative valuation. Rössler for example has described how the Makassar of Gowa, South Sulawesi, generally differentiated between *kepercayaan*, describing their pre-Islamic belief, and *agama*, in their case Islam. *Kepercayaan* for them always implied a negative connotation of “backwardness”. This association contrasted with the portrayal of religion along the Indonesian idea of *kemajuan*, development. The adherers of the pre-Islamic belief would not call their own belief by its name, *patuntung*, a word that nowadays is almost tabooed, but rather draws back on terms like *budaya* (culture) or *tradisi* (tradition) to describe their pre-Islamic religion (Rössler 1987: 110-111).

My immediate observations during my first months of fieldwork led to the idea Wana today do not (or no longer) recognize their belief as religion. How then, I asked myself, did it come to this modified perception? It was only later that I came to understand that it was my own role in the field that influenced the statements I gathered.

#### **4.3.1 Fieldwork Politics in an Interreligious Setting**

As I mentioned in the beginning, conducting research in a multi-religious setting like Taronggo bears some special challenges – to all people involved in the research process. My interlocutors and I took a couple of weeks to position myself and my role as an anthropologist within the field and its complex spheres of interreligious relations and hierarchies. Inevitably my own confession became an important topic. Asked what religion I had, I admitted that I had been baptized as a child but that I would no longer follow any religion as I rarely attend church in my own country. This was a position both sides of my informants struggled to understand. My Christian (and Muslim) interlocutors had difficulties to see me as a person without faith. For example, the anthropologist Tamir Erez conducted research among Messianic Jews in Tel Aviv; after 7 months of fieldwork he was asked to stop his research by a local pastor, portraying vividly the difficulties of religious expectations that can occur during ethnographic fieldwork. During his time in

the field he was expected by his interlocutors to convert to their religious confession. Instead he was conducting his research with “a pathetic but non-believing position [that] was more difficult for them to deal with than the regular stance of a critical non-believer” (Erez 2013: 49; see also 2015: 45). Having no faith set me, according to Christian interlocutors, in the same category as non-converted Wana people. My baptism made it even harder for them to grasp my lost interest in church. Nevertheless, I was continuously invited to Christian events. Because I intended to do interviews with members of all religious parties in Taronggo, I followed some of these invitations during my first months of fieldwork to pay respect and to document the events. This however, I realized later, complicated my research. Non-converted Wana in Taronggo were confused and highly suspicious of my religious affiliation as I had told them I would not be “a religious person”. Why would I still go to church from time to time, they wondered. As a result of these actions, I hardly gathered any information concerning interreligious relations during this first phase of fieldwork. Non-converted Wana kept on telling me that they had no religion and that their relation with Christians or Muslims was conflict-free. My Christian interlocutors on the other hand were doubtful about my true faith – a faith I always pressed I would not have – and my intentions. Seeing me in the morning walking around the village, talking to members of the Christian community about their relation to non-converted Wana and then on the same day in the evening, watching me hiking up the mountains to talk to Wana shamans about relations to other religions or indeed taking part in Wana rituals left them puzzled and cautious. Just like Wiegele has pointed out: “One needs to know how one’s informants interpret specific acts of participation. Does this particular action constitute a statement of belief within a context of shared meaning, or is this action less significant?” (2012: 85). But I myself had problems to position myself properly. It took me a while to realize that I would not be able to keep on doing interviews with all religious “camps” since I was focusing on marginality within the community and this would inevitably lead me to focus on non-converted Wana. More and more I started to emphasize my Non-Christianity. Never before in my life had I dealt with my own positioning concerning my belief. Like many people of my generation, I was baptized, I was confirmed and I also was a member and leader of Christian youth and Scout groups. After high school however, I never dealt with my religious affiliation any more, except for the occasional church visit for Christmas where my mother, a member of the parish council and church choir, just expected me to go. But I never saw a problem

with that for myself. Now, during fieldwork, I suddenly felt the need to reconfigure my religion and I came to the conclusion that I still believed in something that, however, I could not grasp. Regarding the exclusive and excluding character of Christian faith in Taronggo I began to make a kind of belief-statement for my informants. I would believe in something, I claimed, but I would not know in what, but for me no belief or religion would be higher, better or more appropriate than the other and that I therefore would, of course, sympathize with Wana believe to the same amount I would with Muslim or Christian belief. This turned out to be a clear statement that over time was accepted and approved at least on Wana side. But while focusing more and more on Wana religion, my Christian interlocutors began to draw back from me. My questions on meanings and experiences with Wana belief began to lead to insufficient answers. On the other hand, members of the Wana community opened up and gave me insight on their perceptions and interpretations of their own belief. Their hesitation had been nested deeply in between historical narratives and current experiences that tell of proselytization, ongoing missionary attempts and political-religiously motivated marginalization processes, that affected Wana culture to the point that a serious scheme of distrust towards other-religious affiliates had evolved. This strategy of portraying the own faith as no religion in this context serves as a self-conscious and self-cautious act of agency.

### **4.3.2 Reformulation of Own Belief System**

Albeit the struggles of fieldwork reality, it soon became clear, that Wana still have a strong concept of their belief as equal to other religions. Today, Wana people, lowland as well as upland, live in interreligious networks of Muslim and Christian neighbors. Within these pre-colonial, colonial and current experiences, amid other religions and a framework of surrounding cosmological schemes, Wana hold on to their own belief system and they are still conceptualizing in a distinguished way, elaborating a well-equipped position of Wana religion in a multi-religious environment as shown above. The reformulation of the own belief is just one possible way to deal with increasing pressure from outside. Another possibility could be a fundamentalization of the own religion – a development that can be observed among other groups like the Kwaio of the Salomon islands described by Akin (2003). For Kwaio people, the efforts of Christian missionaries

led to an increased concentration on personal moral and religious values. They, a small ethnic group comparable to Wana people, are said to be extremely “stubborn” against external “advise”. Using creative tactics of isolation, they have managed to resist Christian missionary efforts. Their religion has developed in accordance with this external pressure. In an article from 2003 Akin describes the ongoing intensification of Kwaio religion, “which adamantly rejects modernity, and defined modernity itself as a flagrant rejection of community” (Akin 2005: 187). Among Wana, however, this fundamentalization is not directly observable. The reformulation of their own belief system as presented above can instead be regarded as a necessary objective regarding the influence of missionary practices and official standards within an interreligious setting. Schrauwers notes a rather similar process among the To Pamona in Central Sulawesi, not far away from the Wana region. Like Wana, To Pamona originally had no specific term for their own belief. It was only in the 1920s that the processes of conversion entailed a new examination of local categories and how they would distinguish between own and Christian belief. The word *molamoa*,<sup>124</sup> which Schrauwers translates as “to worship the spirits” (2000: 78), gained much attention and served as a disparate signification of Pamona belief against missionary and convert claims. As Schrauwers notes: “the word is indicative of the rationalization of a traditional religion, its transformation from ‘fussy ritual acts’ into an abstract, more logically coherent set of beliefs” (2000: 78). This distinction served the interreligious community’s needs. With a reformulation of the own belief system, the To Pamona precisely defined those attributes belonging to *agama* (religion), the religious sphere, and those that were ascribed a status of *adat* attributes, serving convert- and non-convert interests to find a common arena. *Adat* in that context was regarded as de-religionized, remaining a mere technical achievement according to Schrauwers (2000: 78). This conceptualization of religion and custom can be read as a reaction to state (and missionary as well as convert) discourse. While the term *adat* was initially introduced to differentiate Islamic religious law (*hukum or sharia*, BI) from local customary law (*adatrecht*) under Dutch colonial control, *adat* and *agama* nowadays have opposite meanings: “today ‘religion [*agama*] tends to be countered to ‘tradition’ [*adat*] – particularly in those societies which have been Islamized or Christianized” (Picard 2011: 6). A similar context is described by George who shows how the indigenous Bambang

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<sup>124</sup> The Pamona and Wana languages are closely related. A fact that explains the similarities between *Lamoa* and *molamoa*.

residents in Sulawesi have suffered under missionary pressure. Since the 1970s, similar to the developments in the Wana region, the local belief in Bambang, called *ada' mappurondo*, is not perceived as a religion by local officials on the basis of state legislature: "Owing to a narrow interpretation of *Pancasila*, the creed of the Indonesian state, mappurondo practices go unsanctioned and fall under the rubric of *adat* (i.e. custom, *not* religion) or animism (i.e. a mistaken pagan enchantment with nature, also not religion)" (George 1996: 40). Thus, adherers of *ada' mappurondo*, just like Wana people, are consequently regarded not as "acceptable citizens" but instead belong to a "former age of primitive tribalism". George further describes how the Bambang community became subject to communist allegations or "anti-developmental attitudes" (George 1996: 40). As in Taronggo, *mappurondo* people were encouraged to convert to Christianity or Islam, "in order to advance scholastically, and [...] to exclude mappurondo adults from holding office in desa [...] administration" (George 1996: 40). Again, we can see parallels to Wana experiences: The developments described by George led to an immense increase in religious conversion among *mappurondo* people, with the result that in 1990 three-fourths of the residents of George's research location had converted to Christian faith. A conversion itself does not cause as many problems as one might think. The change in attitude, however, that resulted from the numerous conversions clearly left their mark on the community. Like Christian converts in Taronggo behave towards their Wana relatives, the new Christians in Bambang "look condescendingly upon their mappurondo neighbors and kin" (1996: 40). This change in mindset is backed up and even enforced by state context: "censorious attitudes have gained ideological and institutional support from the Indonesian government, whose state policies continue to champion monotheistic religion as the keystone of solid, progress-oriented citizenship" (George 1996: 40). Coming back to the differentiation of *adat* and *agama* mentioned by Schrauwers, George states: "*adat* and *agama* can serve as two of the principal terms through which Indonesian citizens can articulate and objectify their beliefs and culture" (George 1996: 238). To George, *adat* is a much more fluid term than *agama*, but both terms are part of an "exquisitely contemporary" discourse that both sustains and creates local custom. Citizens have to sort out for themselves, though by no means freely, what is to count as *agama* and what is to count as *adat*" (1996: 239).

In an interview with a Christian woman from Taronggo, I learned about a similar understanding. Ibu Lita described Wana rituals as well as shamans as designated aspects

of *budaya*, culture; a religious conversion towards Christianity or Islam would not result in the end of rituals since she clearly separated Wana aspects of socio-religious life into a religious and a cultural sphere. One example of George's research in Central Sulawesi illustrates this binary conception towards *adat* and *agama*. For a Christian wedding, some locals organized a cultural event for George including elements of a *mappurondo* ritual. A local non-converted interlocutor of George was concerned about the devaluation of the ritual's sacral content; George recites the sources' pledge towards the Christian organizer:

"I have coffee beans. I will give them to you and you can roast them up and make coffee. I have sheaves of rice. Go ahead and take them, and cook up some rice. But this is my religion. I will give you my religion. But don't, don't turn my religion into culture" (George 1996: 8).

In the context of national ideologies concerned with *adat* and *agama*, George's interlocutor was "resisting a civil discourse that denied him a religion and treated his sacred tradition as 'culture' and 'art'" (1996: 9). Wana have managed to make sense of the outside pressure that is directed towards some central concepts of their own belief. To quote Atkinson, "Wana religion cannot be pigeonholed as primitive animism. It is not an ossified survival of a Paleolithic past, but instead a dynamic system that has developed and adapted to cope with changing circumstances" (Atkinson 1988: 48). For most Wana, their belief offers the same qualities that are ascribed to the officially recognized "world religions". However, the situation within the interreligious setting of Taronggo and its surroundings has placed severe stress on non-converted Wana. Thus, contrary to the situation in which Atkinson conducted research in the 1970s in a single-religious settlement of non-converted Wana, Morowali Wana are, due to ongoing pressure from their other religious neighbors, relatives and state officials, rather hesitant to express their thoughts towards people of different faith – regardless of the above mentioned conceptualizations of *agama Wana*.<sup>125</sup>

Against the background of the national discourse on religious minorities, living and in some cases working together with Christian and Muslim neighbors leads inevitably to marginalization processes that are expressed in collective hierarchies and shaped along

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<sup>125</sup> Once they understood that I indeed had not at all a Christian intention they started to share their interpretation of their belief and their setting within this complex interreligious context. Some would say, for example, of course they have a religion since their religion is the first religion of all, following the argumentation Atkinson had recorded in the 1970s (see above). But during such a discussion, if a Christian or Muslim neighbor would enter the room they immediately stopped on this subject and changed the topic.

socio-religious categories. Thus, on the local level of Wana life, state ideals and ideology are traceable through every day forms of marginalization that situate Wana at the lowest rank of the social ladder in relation to their other-ethnic and other-religious neighbors. Within the interreligious context of Taronggo and its surroundings, religious conversion to either Christianity or Islam can offer a way out of marginalization and the religious periphery. However, most upland Wana have successfully managed to resist conversion attempts with which they were and are confronted from colonial side, lowland neighbor side or contemporary missionaries. Yet there are also Wana who have chosen to convert to other religions – a strategy many indigenous groups in Indonesia chose (and continue to choose) to avoid problems as I have already mentioned in the example of the To Pamona or the indigenous people of Bambang. Therefore, I will in the following sub-chapter provide an insight into everyday marginalization processes as they happen and are experienced in Taronggo and its surroundings.

#### **4.4 LIVING TOGETHER: ASPECTS OF EVERYDAY MARGINALIZATION PROCESSES IN AN INTERRELIGIOUS COMMUNITY**

It becomes clear that although the reformulation of their own belief system that I have described above serves Wana people as a tool of dealing with (and often countering) the tremendous pressure habitually directed towards groups that adhere to local beliefs, religious marginalization continues to be a serious topic. As George's example has already shown, the problem goes further. Interreligious living contexts become a matter of concern in the face of the Indonesian perception towards non-recognized religions or beliefs within the state context. Thus, for non-converted Wana regular day-to-day interactions within the interreligious environment of Taronggo and its surroundings are often accompanied with condescending attitudes and tinged with missionary impulses by their Christian and Muslim neighbors. It is important to note that the situation between the three confessional divisions in Taronggo is not at all characterized by violence or aggression. Although tensions between different faiths and even ethnic groups exist, they are of insignificant nature. Thus, I will not present in the following a timeline of conflict, but rather a setting of marginalization practices that impinge on those non-converted Wana either living in Taronggo or frequently visiting the village.

Horstmann asserts quite rightly, that although a huge amount of literature has been written on conflicts that arose around ethnic quarrels, there is nevertheless "relatively little [we know] about how ethnically different people live in sustained peace" (2011: 493). I believe strongly that the same applies as well to multi-religious communities, often closely connected to multi-ethnic aspects as well (cf. Aragon 2001). I follow the idea of Robinne and Sadan, that "ethnicity becomes just a cultural marker in addition to, and just like, others" (Robinne and Sadan 2007: 306). In Taronggo, the category of ethnic difference is not, to use Horstmann's words, "an *a priori* determinant of identity and social coherence" (Horstmann 2011: 493). Instead, in the context in which Wana culture is determined predominantly through its alleged "lack of religion"– imputed in state discourse as well as legislature – religion eventually emerged as a basic key marker of social identity. In this context, as Wana are associated with a lack of religion and the underlying negative assumptions I have so far outlined, ethno-religious identity in



Taronggo is entangled with forms of social exclusion active and passive (cf. Sen 2000), social inequality as well as discrimination via marginalization. Symbolic acts of segregation are an everyday routine that Wana experience already at an early age. These acts are part of social practice – practice that in itself produces social subjects and is most vividly analyzed in practice theory. According to Ortner, one of its most recent anthropological agents, this theory aims to explain “the relationship(s) that obtain between human action, on the one hand, and some global entity which we call ‘the system’ on the other” (Ortner 1984: 184). As Weininger makes clear, “[a]ccording to Bourdieu, the hierarchical ‘status’ of a lifestyle is a function of its proximity to or distance from the ‘legitimate culture’” (Weininger 2005: 137). Legitimate culture can be explained as “the culture endowed with the dominant legitimacy” (Bourdieu and Passeron 2000: 23) or as Weininger puts it, as “those elements of culture universally recognized as ‘worthy,’ ‘canonical,’ or in some other way ‘distinguished’” (Weininger 2005: 137). However, although the concept of habitus is a useful tool for elaborating upon social inequality, Ortner exhorts that we must be wary when it comes to the interpretation of habitus as equal to culture:

“The idea of habitus is potentially risky [...] [when t]reated as just another word for ‘culture’ [...]. But understood as the internalized (and constantly renewed) set of representations of class-defined social location, and as the constant processes that naturalize them, it is a very powerful idea” (Ortner 2006: 78–79).

Pushing forward Bourdieu’s ideas on habitus, Ortner fills a gap in his elaborations concerning a picture of habitus that is rather static, unconcerned with power relations and ignorant of historicity. Instead, Ortner points to the aspects of habitus that turn the fixed concept into a dynamic one that highlights “the processes that constantly denaturalize them as well, the little cracks and openings that constantly appear as a result of the complex and constantly changing dynamics of practice” (Ortner 2006: 79). Nested within such a hierarchical system, power plays an important and special role. Most interestingly for the example from Taronggo are those spheres of symbolic power that constitute the social positions within the village and its surroundings. For Bourdieu,

symbolic power “can be exercised only if it is recognized [...]. This means that symbolic power does not reside in ‘symbolic systems’ in the form of an ‘illocutionary force’ but that it is defined in and through a given relation between those who exercise power and those who submit to it, i.e. in the very structure of the field in which belief is produced and reproduced” (Bourdieu 1991: 170).

Thus, it is symbolic power that adds to the legitimization of social inequality and the reproduction of social distinctions as we find them in Taronggo. Bourdieu defines symbolic power as a “worldmaking power” that imposes the “legitimate vision of the social world and of its divisions” (Bourdieu 1987: 13). Bourdieu connects the notion of symbolic power to the aspect of symbolic violence, defined as different from overt violence, and instead as “‘gentle’, invisible violence, ‘unrecognized as such, chosen as much as undergone, that of trust, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, debts, piety, in a word, of all the virtues honoured by the ethic of honour’” (Bourdieu 1990a: 24). Nevertheless, I shy away from the notion of symbolic violence and do not see it as an adequate point of reference for my analysis simply because it undermines those fields of power that non-converted Wana have to their disposal in Taronggo. The notion of violence clearly ascribes a “practitioner” and a “receiver” of violence, almost exclusively attributing the directing power towards those of a higher social position. As will become clear in the following, Wana nevertheless clearly have their own ways of responding to and enacting forms of symbolic power. Thus, it is not sufficient to speak merely about symbolic power and violence but also to look for the individual’s power within this system, the power to act that someone can draw back on. Thus I rather tend to the notions of symbolic power and agency, two aspects that are closely related to each other (Ortner 2006: 137). The latter I understand in Ortner’s terms as “a form of empowerment, a source and effect of power” (1999: 147).<sup>126</sup>

In the context of Taronggo, the habitus of socio-religious groups receives specific meaning through embodied dispositions in everyday life. Religious affiliation provides a sense of group identity including the community’s ethic and normative rules of behavior. Thus, religious affiliation might be seen as a marker of cultural practice in the context of Taronggo and provides the ideas of class stratification within the Taronggo community. The reflection of hierarchical relationships between the different groups of the village by religious affiliation allows a significant differentiation between the own group and “the

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<sup>126</sup> I further draw back on the meaning of hegemony, a concept closely connected to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus. For Comaroff and Comaroff hegemony is “that order of signs and practices, relations and distinctions, imaged and epistemologies – drawn from a historically situated field – that comes to be taken-for-granted as the natural and received shape of the world and everything that inhabits it. It consists”, and here they are referring to Bourdieu, “of things that go without saying because being axiomatic, they come without saying; things that, being presumptively shared, are not normally the subject of explication or argument [...]. This is why its power has so often been seen to lie in what it silences, what it prevents people from thinking and saying, what it outs beyond the limits of rational and credible” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991: 23).

others”. With this theoretical framework I will now turn to the community of Taronggo and its surroundings and the position non-converted Wana obtain here.

#### **4.4.1 “Praying According to One’s Own Faith” – Interreligious Tolerance?**

Let me begin this elaboration of social inequality and symbolic power among members of the interreligious community, consisting of Wana, Protestant as well as Pentecostal and Muslim community members, with a short vignette from my fieldwork (Fig. 15-17). In Taronggo, it is a common habit to start community events with a shared prayer, which is an important part of community life. Smith Kipp analyses in her book *Dissociated Identities: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in an Indonesian society* (1993) the relations between adherers of differing faiths among the Karo Batak in Sumatra. According to her, an inequality between religious affiliations is most visible in the private sector of interreligious communities.<sup>127</sup> She draws this insight, for example, from community gatherings and social events in her research community, where Karo Batak arrange with religious pluralism and, even more, anticipate it. Similar to people in Taronggo, Karo Batak start those events with a collective prayer. In a minor sub clause, Smith Kipp mentions those prayers to be held according to one’s own faith. It was this sentence that struck my interest. The following example displays one of these events in Taronggo:

Anton, the brother of the *sekretaris desa* (village secretary), whose grandmother is entitled (from Christian side with pride) as the first converted Wana, was organizing his wedding with an external woman from another ethnic group and village. The wedding was supposed to be held in the bride’s village. Nevertheless, Anton’s family was obliged to help the couple perform their wedding with monetary gifts, as is a common form of support for members of the religious community of Taronggo. The act of collecting money from relatives involves an official invitation of every household that holds family ties with the groom. Although a number of relatives do live in the mountains of Salisarao no invitation was spoken out to them. On the day of the event, the relatives gathered in the groom’s sister’s house. Primarily male family heads came together but also a number

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<sup>127</sup> As opposed to being situated within a public sphere.

of women appeared. Due to a shortage of space the guests divided up in two rooms that were connected with each other by an open door. In the back room, the living room, a number of chairs were arranged so that guests in that room had without exception an opportunity to sit. In the front room, people were seated on the floor, backed up tightly to the cooling walls. It was in the back room where most Christians were to be found as well as the bride's family who came for the first time to Taronggo. In the front room on the floor, almost exclusively, Wana could be found sitting in hesitant silence listening to the loud and energetic laughter that sounded from the front room to the back room. I was sitting with them on the floor and after a while Ibu Sek Des, the groom's older sister, owner of the house and friend as well as informant of mine came to us and joined the group, trying to loosen up the atmosphere. Were it not for me, she probably would not have changed rooms and it was with disappointment that she noticed me sitting on the floor instead of socializing with the bride's family since my presence as a white and privileged person was always regarded as something to be proud of and a good opportunity to show off a little.

After a longer waiting time, the groom's father, Apa Ari, the former *kepala desa* and village eldest, inaugurated the event. After short greeting words, pointing out the importance of the wedding and the close ties of the family, Apa Ari summoned all guests for the communal prayer. He pressed that everyone could pray according to his or her own belief; then he folded his hands for the prayer and closed his eyes. All Christian and Muslims closed their eyes as well and thus entered prayer, the only difference between them was the way they would held their hands. Some of my Wana interlocutors followed their example but many left their eyes open. I could not follow all words of the prayer since Apa Ari's age left him with a hoarsely low voice and I sat on the opposite of the room, so I was not able to understand everything. He talked a lot about Jesus and his meaning for believers. Then, it was the turn of the bride to lead the prayer, who herself, as a matter of fact, is the Christian priest of Taronggo. Her voice was much clearer and stronger, and she raised her voice as she prayed for all those who so far had not found belief in God and would be subject to an existence in hell; she hoped all those lost souls would find their way to Jesus just in time to find salvation. After this prayer people started to discuss the details of collecting money.

This exemplary situation mirrors the daily situation of living together in a community consisting of three different faiths. A shared prayer, used to inaugurate a number of events and gatherings, is perceived by Christian and Muslim members as normal. Religious diversity is nothing extraordinary in Indonesia and multi-religious villages are no exception. Thus, in a similar setting among the Karo Batak of Sumatra, Smith Kipp argues for the Muslim and Christian community, “people expect religious pluralism and accommodate to it” (1993: 253). But can this rather calm attitude of the Karo Batak dealing with religious diversity easily be applied to non-converted Wana in Taronggo? Most of my informants expect communal prayers as they are custom on almost all shared community events in the village. However, many of them are not “accommodated” by it. The common prayer itself is not the bone of contention. What struck my interlocutors the most is the explicit mentioning of the specific belief, Christian or Muslim. “How is the prayer according to our belief, if they keep on talking about *tuhan yesus*?”, Apa nTina one of my informants asked. He pressed further the conversion imperative found in most of those common prayers:

“I know they talk about us when in prayer; they pray for us and hope we will find the way to God. But we already found it, *sudah selalu* (BI), it has always existed.”

Here, Apa nTina refuses the accusation of supposedly not believing in God; his claim to believe in God and that all Wana have always believed in God illustrates yet again the way Wana conceptualize their believe (see above). He feels in some way excluded from the allegedly communal act of “praying together” since Wana do not follow this habit in the way Muslims or Christians do. Further he is irritated by the mention of specific confessional figures like Jesus during those prayers and expresses his perplexity. The praxis of communal prayer in the context of the multi-religious situation in Taronggo thus deserves some observation in the field of symbolic power. Because Wana do not rely on a tradition of active praying, they are de facto excluded from this social praxis simply by means of the nature of the communal act. A neutral or rather communal “prayer according to one’s own belief” therefore only applies to adherers of world religions while non-converted Wana are excluded. Against this multi-religious background, where the habit of praying becomes a presupposition of belief itself, the term “prayer according to one’s own belief” receives oxymoronic character.

The exclusion however, is not the only aspect of symbolic power enacted upon Wana in the course of the prayer. References to an after-life in agony are a common theme in these prayers, as we have seen in the example cited above, where the Christian local *pendeta* (priest, BI) prayed for “those who so far had not found belief in God and would be subject to an existence in hell; she hoped all those lost souls would find their way to Jesus just in time to find salvation”. Such statements are usually directed towards non-converted Wana – and not towards other-confessional parties, i.e. here: Muslims. Wana “non-believers” generally feel that they are the ones addressed with such statements.

Not all informants from Taronggo see the communal prayer as problematic. Many people in Taronggo witness these parts of social events on a regular basis and are used to it for years. Wana from the surrounding mountains who do not participate in village ceremonies with the same frequency take more offense in these acts of exclusion, related for example to the prayers, than their village relatives do. For example Apa Yare who would regularly complain about people praying during communal festivities, expressing his anger about people calling it prayer when they, according to him, hide behind it a missionary imperative for Wana,: “I often feel that it is just for us (when they pray), so that we follow (their) religion; they laugh about us when we do not pray”. Felt differences here are subject to an upland–lowland divide that is caused by differing levels of habituation or customization. According to Smith Kipp, problems resulting from religious pluralism are not subject to a public sphere but become only recognizable within private circles. For Wana however, communal prayers during village gatherings are part of a public sphere that reproduce marginalization and discrimination processes. A general consensus towards religious pluralism as described for the Karo Batak, where “everyone accepts similar standards of interaction” (Smith Kipp 1993: 253), is for non-converted Wana no more than a hypocritical coercion of an alleged tolerant majority, resulting in a repetitive indignity for them.





**Figure 15** Protestant church building in Taronggo.



**Figure 16** Pentecostal church building in Tarrongo.





**Figure 17 Mosque in Taronggo.**

#### **4.4.2 Embodying Social Orders**

Social distinction is made by social subjects who according to Bourdieu, “classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed” (Bourdieu 1984: 6). It is in this context that symbolic violence is formed and expressed – a form of symbolic usage different to the aforementioned “symbolic power”. The privileged group uses its culture to sustain its higher status, excluding others and thereby coming to an understanding of social order by decoding symbolic markers of difference (Lamont and Molnár 2002: 168). This binding process causes classificatory consequences that are, according to Lamont and Molnár, “inescapable and unconscious [...] [and] shape social positions by defining [social] class boundaries” (2002: 268). Within this framework, the communal prayer in Taronggo serves as an analytical marker that shows how Wana feel in some way excluded from



communal life based on their religious affiliation and closely related to it symbolic power enacted upon them. The prayer is just one example of everyday social practice in Taronggo and its surroundings where social differences are embodied in distinctive actions and habits. During the communal prayer in Anton's house other even more obvious forms of symbolic power and signs of formulating or reinstating a lower social status for Wana by the host were, for example, sitting on the floor while the predominantly Christian guests were offered chairs. Further, hospitality during this event included the serving of cigarettes. During that day, Wana were sitting on the floor and were offered cigarettes of a cheap brand that the host himself would not smoke. Meanwhile the Christians who had gathered on their chairs in the backroom were offered expensive *Gudang Garam* – a brand that is wrapped in shiny golden paper and known to be smoked by government officials.<sup>128</sup> These acts of treating people differently, although they were all guests and all had close family relations to the host, portray quite clearly how Wana in Taronggo are perceived of as *orang gunung*, mountain people, or worse, as *orang terbelakang* (backward people, BI). Only seldom are upland Wana officially invited to village ceremonies by Christian or Muslim villagers since the latter rarely if ever would take the strenuous walk up the hills to invite people living, for example, in Salisarao. If upland Wana happen to be in Taronggo while an event takes place they follow their *kampung* friends out of curiosity or leisure.<sup>129</sup> During those events that are of greater dimensions than the one described in the field vignette cited above, the distinctions become even clearer. The following vignette illustrates those dynamics:

One day during my time of research stay a great Christian wedding was celebrated. The preparations lasted for weeks and most Wana in upland Salisarao and even some from far away Posangke and Kayupoli had heard the news and were coming to Taronggo for the event. The wedding hosts had invited a number of important people, it was stated, and even the local *camat*, the head of the Bungku Utara district, was expected to come. When the day arrived, the differences between the guests were quite obvious. Those guests accustomed to events of that type, took place among the seating rows of the ceremony, were nicely dressed and participated most naturally in the conversations. Upland and

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<sup>128</sup> *Gudang Garam* is one of the biggest tobacco companies in Indonesia. For a detailed study on smoking behavior in Indonesia see for example Mitchell (2013), Nichter et al. (2009: 103) and Reid (1985).

<sup>129</sup> Here, the common prayers are regarded as an insult – disrespecting Wana belief and lying about the catch phrase “praying according to one's belief”.

lowland Wana however stayed at the edge of the location, more onlookers than guests, some of them dressed in their best cloths while others wore their everyday worn-out T-Shirts and many had come without shoes. During the communal prayer Wana stood silently aside. The food for the wedding was arranged nicely on a long row of tables between the two seating rows. Then Apa Ele, the father of the bride, held a short speech. He himself was born in Taronggo Tua, a former location of the current village, as the son of two non-converted Wana; his father had come from Posangke while his mother was born in the old Taronggo. After his first wife had died, he married a Christian woman from Mohoni (located in Central Sulawesi) and converted to Christian faith by 1982. He later became *kepala desa* of Taronggo lasting two terms of office until 2007. On the day of his daughter's wedding his speech was probably the longest and also most central of the whole event. The main objective of his speech was further to open the buffet for the guests. In his speech he addressed first the guests who had come from other villages and towns, the family of the groom and then the people of Taronggo. Last he welcomed his *saudara-saudara dari atas* (BI), brothers and sisters from above, meaning those Wana who had travelled from Posangke, Salisarao or Kayupoli to attend the festivity. He declared himself as nothing more than they are: an *orang gunung*, a mountain person. He pressed his family bonds and his own background and even seemed a little proud against the other guests. After this integrating speech, pressing the similarity of all guests, no matter from where they had come, he opened the buffet. He invited those guests who stand or sat close to the dining tables to the big buffet. Then he turned to his *keluarga dari gunung* (BI), his family from the mountain, and explained to everyone that there was not enough space for every guest to eat from the dining tables and not enough chairs. And because his mountain relatives were not comfortable with sitting in chairs or eating from plates, he invited them to take their meal in the nearby town hall around the corner, where they could sit on the floor and eat with their hands as they prefer to; instead of plates the food would be served in banana leaves. But the food, he insisted, would be the same, here and there; they would make no difference between people. Then he wished everyone a great celebration.

The content of the speech in itself was no novelty to me. I had observed a number of festivities in Taronggo, upland and lowland, and everywhere the picture seemed to be the same. Usually, upland Wana are seated on the floor, a little away from the main activity of the ceremony. They are served the same food, but without plates, spoons or chairs.

Sometimes the distinction goes further, and different food is served for Wana who generally are believed to dislike beef (a fact that is simply not true; my interlocutors stated they indeed like beef, but they rarely get the chance to taste it). “They are happy with chicken, why should we serve them cow?”, one of my Christian interlocutors replied when I asked about this circumstance. Wana usually were not always aware of such acts or processes of (symbolic) violence as directed towards them. Some distinctions were internalized relations people were not actively recognizing as actions of differentiating just like Bourdieu has amounted to his habitus concept as a “system of acquired dispositions [...] as categories of perception and assessment” (Bourdieu 1990b: 13).

Wana in upland regions usually do not possess any chairs; some of their houses simply do not accommodate the idea of a chair because the floor is made of elastic bamboo where no chair could stand. Plates and spoons however I found in almost every household. If upland Wana choose to hold a festivity, often lowland people from Taronggo hike up the hills to partake in the ceremonies – mostly village men who look for alcohol and a good party as well as a few lowland women who sell their goods like cigarettes, sweets or clothing. The guests from the lowland then usually – but not always – are treated special and get their food served on one of the few plates available, contrary to the picture we get presented by the opposite case presented above. Wana usually feel uneasy when hosting an important Wana ritual like the *momago* in Taronggo; most rituals are held upland because these rituals are perceived of as annoying for a majority of the village community. I heard Christian interlocutors complain that *momago* simply serve as a reason to get drunk; some were complaining that Wana do not directly search for medical help but instead rely on shamanic cures while other tend to critique these forms of rituals as connected to *setan* (Satan, BI). The sound of the gongs necessary for a *momago* is further a source of consternation for some Christian neighbors who complain about the noise that lasts until sunrise.<sup>130</sup> Some Christians attend these rituals but often behave in

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<sup>130</sup> Interestingly I noticed one night a similar attitude by an upland Wana towards a Christian ritual. Here is an excerpt from my field notes from Spring 2012:

Last night it was the Easter night and the children in the kampong started to walk around the village with guitar playing, singing and blowing through bamboo, making a lot of noise. It started around 3am, 4am. Apa Ke’u from Salisarao spent the night at Apa Nevis house and was startled waking up by their noise. A very long time they [the children] were standing in front of the house before they left for other houses. I also had the feeling they had stayed suspiciously long in front of our house [where non-converted Wana live]. Apa Ke’u mentions that maybe they choose the houses of people *tawa manggaya* [not (yet) converted]. He was very angry, as he repeated a couple of time, to get woken up during the night. This reminded me of Christian people complaining about *momago* noise. Both sides seem to feel disturbed by

inappropriate ways as mentioned above. Other markers of social distinction between upland and lowland, converted and non-converted Wana as well as other religious and other ethnic neighbors include language, space, the body and clothing as well as other forms of consumption that I do not intend to portray in detail. Wana who were not fluent in Bahasa Indonesia often were objects of amusement for others, especially by outsider visitors to Taronggo.<sup>131</sup> Further, while Muslim and also Christian women in Taronggo would dress “properly” according to their social space, Wana have no clothing restrictions and openly present naked shoulders and legs — often a stumbling block for others. Wana men seldom wear long trousers, too. Regardless of sex, Wana often wear neither shoes nor are their clothes free of holes or spots – all factors that lead to outsiders feeling offended.

The habit of smoking and consuming alcoholic beverages serves as another example, especially within a gendered field of observation. While neither Christian nor Muslim women smoke in the research area, Wana women do.<sup>132</sup> Observing who smoked in which situations and what kind of tobacco people preferred made many distinctive boundaries become clearer to me – boundaries that of course were not always stable.<sup>133</sup> For most of

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the others *acara*. But, I also noted last year, that Wana people then were very ok with the noise; they made fun of it, but no one mentioned being angry. I believe, Apa Ke’u strong words are part of the whole development. The development here refers to a process of change that had immediate effects on the locals’ attitude (Wana and non-Wana alike), happened in 2012 and is described in detail in Chapter 5.

<sup>131</sup> Problematic became the situation in case of disease since the local nurse did not speak the local language at all. In Baturube or Kolonodale Wana were often unable to express their disease at all.

<sup>132</sup> Only once I shared a cigarette with a female Christian interlocutor.

<sup>133</sup> Another important point was the question *what* to smoke. For my first two weeks I was accompanied by a guide from the nearest city, Kolonodale, who often lead tourists in the nature reserve bordering the village of Taronggo. Before we left for the first time to Taronggo we went to the market in Kolonodale buying goods hard to get in Taronggo. He told me that cigarettes are an important gift you are expected to offer at every visit to Wana people. So we bought lots of them, but while I immediately turned to a brand I had seen most Indonesian men smoking, *Gudang Garam*, shiny packed in golden paper, my guide stopped me immediately. They were too expensive, he told me, and for Wana people it would be enough to buy a cheap brand, since they were happy if there were cigarettes at all. They would not like the expensive brand he insisted. He proved to be wrong. Although I later met Wana who indeed dislike filter cigarettes and prefer their own tobacco, most Wana men would always choose the expensive brand – the one most Indonesian men of a higher status (and with a higher income) would smoke. This guide was considered a good man, however it became clear that he sees Wana in a different light. They did not like his cigarettes and the sarungs he brought as gifts were considered inappropriate in a way. Would he bring a cheap sarong and the cheapest cigarettes when invited to Christian or Muslim houses in Taronggo, they asked me. I myself for my own consumption always turned to a cheap brand of slim white filter cigarettes that generally most women did prefer. However, Apa Jendi, one of my main informants and leading shaman, preferred those over the expensive brand when we sat together although I always brought packages of both brands for him. After a while he could not smoke something else. One of his spirit friends appeared to him during a dream and told him he would get sick if he would continue to smoke Wana tobacco or other brands than the one I smoked.

my Christian and Muslim sources Wana women's habit of smoking, drinking and clothing was a sign of their "backwardness"; they were "hill people" living in the village but "still primitive in their thinking and behavior". However, the fact that I am a female smoker never astonished them. Ibu Lita a Christian woman from Taronggo explained, that it was not the same when I was smoking because "people from the West were different". Women in Indonesia are said to traditionally avoid smoking at all and Mitchell claims: "these pressures stem from sociocultural expectations of women linked to the home, notions of reproduction and motherhood, religious ideology, and the demands of an associated ritual economy" (2013: 169). It is important to note, that the Indonesian tobacco industry is taking aim at boosting female consumption; for example, in 2002 the advertisement for tobacco concentrated heavily on young and educated women in urban centers like Jakarta, in which smoking is portrayed as connected to a lure of modernity (Nichter et al. 2009: 103). However, in rural areas the gendered social distinction of smoking habits continues; Ng et al. state that interviewees in rural Java perceived of smoking as a pure male business; "Smoking [among women] is only common among hookers and bad girls" (2007: 799; see also Mitchell 2013: 177). In the research area, smoking among Wana women was considered to be a sign of primitivism. On contrary, being white and coming "from the West" was always associated with modernity and progress. My smoking, therefore, served my Christian and Muslim interlocutors as a marker of "positive" cultural distinction from them and, of course, from Wana in the meaning of modernity. For my Wana interlocutors however, my habit of smoking served as connection between them and me, knowing that I had a higher status among their Christian and Muslim neighbors (see introduction). The cultural or socio-religious gap that divided them, the "primitives" from others, was in some way bridged when we shared cigarettes and rice wine.<sup>134</sup> Smoking, just like consuming alcohol as well as clothing and language use therefore served as analytical markers during my fieldwork, offering ways to grasp issues of ethno-religious boundary making and -crossing. The examples cited above serve as a demonstration of social power and a demarcation of social hierarchy in which non-converted Wana often simply obtain the status of the "primitive". Expressed in moments of hierarchy, some of these habits of course are connected to religious aspects like taboos in consumption or appropriate clothing norms.

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<sup>134</sup> The longer I stayed in the field, Wana women more and more started to smoke during public events, when I was offered cigarettes by Christian, Wana and Muslim men.

For example, the complex relations with interreligious communities and food restrictions I could myself observe a couple of times. Here is a short episode taken from my fieldnotes:

“Yesterday a young student from Makassar, who is currently coming to Wana area for research for her BA, came to “our” house, followed by her uncle who works at the Kantor KUA (KUA (*Kantor Urusan Agama*; Office for Religious Affairs) in Baturube. I offered them coffee, tea and food, but they only wanted to drink water. They were promised a meeting with Apa Ensi and Indo Felu, who I called via a neighbour to come down from their gardens. I felt in charge since they came to our house and Indo Dheri was not around so I technically was the host. Later when Indo Felu, Indo De’u and Apa Ensi arrived, the latter asked me almost shocked if they had not eaten yet. I told him, they did not want to, but he went to ask his daughter, living next door, to prepare food for them. We told them they should wait before leaving to get something to eat. But they left although the food was already prepared, without even touching the water I gave them. I was confused and we discussed whether it was our house that could have raised their displeasure. Other than Christian or Muslim houses in Taronggo our house is made of wood and stands on poles, the dog and cats are running freely around, there are only few chairs and guests usually sit on the floor. There is no running water or bathroom facilities besides the river, a 20 minute walk away. But when they left, the others assumed that they were highly religious Muslims. Still, Indo Ensi complained to me that their behaviour was not very polite. Our neighbor, also a Muslim, but rather easy minded, also complained about their behaviour.”

Muslims from outside, so people in Taronggo tell me, take it “too serious” with their restrictions. People within the *kampung* are not strict and people respect their refusal to eat pork.<sup>135</sup> That people from outside do not touch plates or glasses when they come from

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<sup>135</sup> Apa Dheri tells me about Lando, who lives in the *kampung* but also had spent a longer time in Uewaju in the mountains among Wana. There he did not care about diet restrictions, he dried his food next to pork; people were asking him about it, but he laughed and said that as long as he would not eat it, there is no problem for him. Apa Dheri and others pay Muslims like Lando respect for customizing with Wana ways of living. However they do see Muslims from outside who do not even touch the glasses they are offered as impolite.

a non-Muslim house, leads to confusion. However, most habits that I have described so far are not connected to religious restrictions and I perceive of them mainly within the context of social hierarchies and not primarily within religious rankings. For example, another account was told to me about a Christian from outside who came to Taronggo for a *pesta*, probably a wedding. He refused to touch anything from the food, did not want to drink from a glass and finally took his shirt, wetted it with water to drink from it instead of using a glass. Apa Ensi heard about it and was so angry about it that he immediately went to search him for a fight, but he already had left. Apa Ensi was well aware that in this case the problem was not connected to religious restrictions, but a sheer matter of inpoliteness. Apa Ensi described his reaction: “I was so angry when I heard this; they think we are too dirty, they do refuse to eat from our plates, drink from our glasses. So why do (they) even come here?”

As I have mentioned earlier, on the local level state ideals and ideology are traceable through every day forms of marginalization; thus social aspects are always infused by state-related influences.

#### **4.4.3 Interreligious Marriages**

So far I have shown that living in the interreligious community of Taronggo for Wana means, on a symbolic level, dealing with social order, social power and meaning. Social hierarchies in the described community can further be perceived as demarcations of social boundaries. For an analysis of marginalization processes in interreligious community settings, it is thus not sufficient to look at aspects of social inequality alone but also on the way these borders are contested, (re)formulated and symbolized. What are specific strategies utilized to defend them, who overcomes or breaks them and what are the results of definite articulations like these? For answering these questions I will turn now to the articulation of socio-religious inequality in an even more concrete relation. I have already introduced Smith Kipp study on an interreligious community among the Karo Batak, where Christian, Muslim and non-converted people live together. For Smith Kipp, problems are evident primarily within the area of kinship relations and interreligious marriages: “Marriages between persons of different faith, and conflicts among close kin, are the primary point of religious tension in the pluralistic society” (1993: 254), she

writes. In her example, Karo Batak usually manage to separate religious problems and family obligations. Only those she calls “traditionalists”, the non-converted, see both factors rather closely intertwined. In one of her examples, a converted Christian dies. His wife and two of his children, all non-converts, had buried him according to Christian custom but later hold a séance for the soul of the deceased. The third son, himself a converted Christian, boycotted the ritual, an act which was interpreted as highly conflicted: “A Christian son who fails to sit before the medium to converse with the deceased father creates a conspicuous absence” (Smith Kipp 1993: 254).<sup>136</sup> Kinship relations as well as marriages are heavily affected by religious pluralism and can thus serve as a point of analysis for marginalization processes. Since non-converted Wana regularly do engage in marriages with other-religious individuals, interfaith marriages are a highly important and heavily discussed topic. In the following, I will therefore use the field of interreligious marriages to discuss the problems of an interreligious living situation in Taronggo and its surroundings. For this purpose I will draw upon the scheme of boundary making after Fredrik Barth as a means of analysis in order to show the manifold contradictions and connections between the public and private sector that both affect the local marriage institution.

### ***Meanings and Consequences of Breaking Ethno-Religious Boundaries***

Research on boundaries and borders has a long tradition within the humanities and social sciences, it is “part of the classical conceptual tool-kit of social sciences” (Lamont and Molnár 2002: 167) and focuses on “understanding the role of symbolic resources (e.g., conceptual distinctions, interpretive strategies, cultural traditions) in creating, maintaining, contesting, or even dissolving institutionalized social differences (e.g., class, gender, race, territorial inequality)” (Lamont and Molnár 2002: 168). These social differences can be distinguished between social and symbolic boundaries according to

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<sup>136</sup>In this context Smith Kipp declares the séance a public event and declares religious pluralism as belonging only seldom to the private sphere. This statement contradicts with her earlier argument where she ascribed a problematic condition solely to the private sector and not the public sector. Regarding this contradicting argument, I therefore believe that it is necessary to clarify where in Taronggo the public ends and the private begins. A strict separation in Taronggo between both spheres regarding religious tensions is not easily assessable. The conversion factor is almost never discussed in big gatherings but their specific consequences are always a hot topic in the private sector.



Lamont and Molnár. For these authors, the latter are constituted by variations in access to resources and possibilities for the social actor:

“Social boundaries are objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and non-material) and social opportunities. They are also revealed in stable behavioral patterns of association, as manifested in connubiality and commensality” (Lamont and Molnár 2002: 168).

These social boundaries can result from symbolic boundaries in case the latter are commonly accepted. Symbolic boundaries are defined by Lamont and Molnár as

“conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality. [...] [They] separate people into groups and generate feelings of similarity and group membership. [...] They are an essential medium through which people acquire status and monopolize resources” (2002: 168).

Lamont and Molnár refer to Bourdieu's work on distinction where he asserts how symbolic categorizations do reproduce class privileges (see above). This means, for example, a classificatory framework for distinguishing between “us” and “them” and legitimizing one group as superior over another by symbolic markers like taste or style as I have described above. Crucial for the research on social and symbolic boundaries is the work of Fredrik Barth. His ground-breaking concept of “boundary making” led to a shift in general anthropological research; instead of focusing on the mere cultural content of ethnic groups, it was the constitution of their boundaries that suddenly became the center of attention. For Barth, ethnic groups are “categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves and thus have the characteristic of organizing interaction between people” (Barth 1969: 10). This definition encompassed correlations between race, language etc. and ethnic membership, pointed to the internal dynamics of ethnic belonging and let room for change (Emberling 1997: 299). Therefore, for Barth “the critical focus of investigation from this point of view becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses” (1969: 15). Here, boundaries are the tools for distinguishing one group from another and therefore lead to exclusion processes. While ethnicity was regarded as a mere static concept, the new analytic lens proposed by Barth made room for a novel perspective on ethnicity as something rather situational. The problem in this account can be found in the ignorance of cultural

differentiation (Wimmer 2008: 982). Almost 30 years later Barth himself pointed to this specific weakness of his approach and suggested a new, improved model to analyze the politics of boundary making. In the year 1994, he states:

“ethnic relations and boundary constructions in most plural societies are not about strangers, but about adjacent and familiar ‘others’. They involve co-residents in encompassing social systems, and lead more often to questions of how ‘we’ are distinct from ‘them’, rather than to a hegemonic and unilateral view of ‘the other’” (Barth 1994: 13).

He developed a three-level model seeking a better understanding of how ethnic boundaries are constructed. On the first level, the micro-level, social relations of personal character are analyzed against their specific environment, “the complex context of relationships, demands, values and ideas” (Barth 1994: 21). On the next level, the median level, we look at collective identities and how they are formed, constituted, changed and saturated. This level is observed “through entrepreneurship, leadership and rhetoric” (Barth 1994: 21). The interconnectedness between the varying levels becomes visible, according to Barth, at the median level where “processes intervene to constrain and compel people’s expression and action on the micro level” (Barth 1994: 20-21). Situated on the macro-level Barth sees global discourses, state concerns and international organizations. Connolly (2009) uses this methodological framework for her analysis of interreligious marriages among Christian and Muslim Dayak in Sumatra. She critiques the overtly dominant focus on macro and median level, “meaning that analyses addressing processes of boundary formation tend to ignore the emotional and experiential level of the individual and the family” (Connolly 2009: 494). In the following I will utilize her analysis for a deeper understanding of the meaning of interfaith marriage for marginalization processes in Taronggo and how they are formed and become meaningful for socio-religious boundaries.

### ***The Macro Level***

On the macro level, it is necessary to take a closer look at state regulations and policies regarding interfaith marriages within the archipelago. All processes at a local and meso level are deeply affected by state interventions and historical national and political

processes. The current legal situation has its roots in a long history of law development. The Indonesian Marriage Law declares interreligious marriages subject to conversion by Law 1/1974.<sup>137</sup> This Decree was the last attempt to force a common law on marriage since earlier tries had failed to serve the interests of a Muslim majority and the rest of the state's citizens. The new Marriage Law was a new effort "to accommodate the cultural demands of Islam while seeking to contain it politically (Connolly 2009: 495). The first draft of the new Marriage Law failed to serve the desires of the Islam majority; many of the bill's articles were regarded as opposing Muslim religious values.<sup>138</sup> For example, marriage was made subject of official registration by Article 2(1) whereas formerly a marriage contract between the bride's father and the fiancé was sufficient. Muslims feared that it was a threat to Islamic law, and changing it would be a sacrilegious affair. Many Muslims opposed to making marriage a matter of state affair instead of religious concern (Katz and Katz 1975: 661). Another point of anger and heated debate was Article 11(2), making marriages between different religious confessions possible. Already in 1898 in the Mixed Marriage Regulation No. 158, Art. 7(2) propagated by the Dutch (*Regeling op de gemengde Huwelijken*), marriage was declared independent from religious differences.<sup>139</sup> A heavy reaction arose from Muslim sides in 1952 when the article was tested in a famous case where a Christian male and Muslim woman were trying to get married. They formally requested at the Jakarta District Court for a legal authorization of their marriage. Although the woman unsuccessfully plead for a religious legalization through her *penghulu* (Islamic "priest", BI), the court decided they could get married, since state law superseded Islamic jurisprudence. The couple finally married but the reactions from Muslim side were heavy; still, the court did not change the decision (Lindsey 2008: 276). The reconfirmation of the opportunity to marry interreligiously with the new draft of the 1974 Marriage Act caused, no wonder, similar reaction:

"The same Moslem fears were expressed all over again – that the tearing down of religious walls through inter-marriage is a rejection of the Islamic belief that religion is a way of life and that interreligious marriages will benefit only

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<sup>137</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 1/1974 Tentang Perkawinan* (Law 1/1974 on Marriage).

<sup>138</sup> The first draft was edited by General Ali Murtopo who functioned as Chief of OPSUS (*Operasi Khusus*, Special Operations).

<sup>139</sup> Article 1 of the Regulation manifested a mixed marriage as between people who were subjected to different laws. Later, in 1901, it was extended by the Dutch in an significant way as it was basically against Islamic law that generally forbid interreligious marriages. It was now stating that "difference in religion, race and origin is not a challenge to perform mixed marriage" (Aini 2008: 697–98).

missionaries because such marriages will increase the ranks of Christians” (Katz and Katz 1975: 662).

Other articles were also subject for indignation on Muslim sides and demonstrations were held on an almost regular basis during that time. Soon it became clear that the draft had to be changed for the sake of the state’s political peace. President Sukarno ceded to make those articles opposing Islamic values subject for deletion, thereby reaching a consensus on the law which was finally passed by the House and signed by himself on 2nd January 1974. Some articles had been changed and adapted to the new guidelines but the article concerning interreligious marriage law had been removed completely (Katz and Katz 1975: 664).

Therefore, today’s situation concerning interreligious matrimony is to some extent unclear. No paragraph states this form of marriage neither legal nor illegal. It is only in Article 2 (1),<sup>140</sup> that “a marriage is legitimate, if it has been performed according to the laws of the respective religions and beliefs of the parties concerned” (quoted in Buchanan 2010). The same article nevertheless declares that every marriage has to be “registered according to the regulations of the legislation in force” (quoted in Buchanan 2010). This means in detail that Muslim marriages need to be registered at the local office of Religious Affairs (*Kantor Urusan Agama*) while non-Muslim marriages need to be listed at the Civil Registry Office (*Kantor Catatan Sipil*) after the wedding religious procedure (Buchanan 2010; Fig. 18-19). Although these regulations of the 1974 Marriage Law do not state that religious confessions have to be the same, it is generally accepted and interpreted as banning interfaith marriages since a) the ceremony has to be conducted according to a state acknowledged religion and b) these religions often prohibit marriages between different faiths.

Nevertheless interreligious marriages are not as rare as one might expect regarding the official norms. The number of popular examples from the media reporting on the weddings of celebrities like the Muslim Yuni Shara and the Protestant Henry Siahaan, who circumvented the law by marrying in Australia, or the Catholic Deddy Corbuzier who married the Muslim Kalina according to his bride’s faith without himself converting; the ceremony was preceded by a socio-religious NGO. Marrying abroad or turning to an NGO are just two options bypassing national law to successfully accomplish

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<sup>140</sup> Art. 2(1), *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 1/1974 Tentang Perkawinan* (Law 1/1974 on Marriage).

interreligious marriage in Indonesia. Further possible is a “conversion of convenience”, as Aini calls it (2008: 702). He further refers to census data from Yogyakarta Province, stating for the year 2000 a number of twelve per thousand marriages of interreligious character.<sup>141</sup>

Still, interreligious marriage remains problematic for all adherers of the state’s six recognized religions. The situation is even more difficult for people who follow their own, unrecognized belief system. Since Wana belief is excluded from the national category of religion, it suffers specific disadvantages on the macro-level, i.e. the state level, which “result[s] in the denial of other civil and political rights” (Colbran 2010: 682). One of these rights is the right to marry. According to Article 2 (1), see above, a marriage is only legal if it is arranged according to the religion of the couple and later on registered with the state. This becomes a problem, if the religions of bride and groom are different. It is even more complicated if one or both do not adhere to an officially recognized religion.

Couples who adhere to a faith that is not recognized by the state cannot officially register their marriage. Wana usually only get married according to Wana adat (Fig. 20). Their wedding thus cannot be listed as legal. If a wedding is considered illegal the situation becomes especially difficult in terms of childbirth: In such a case, the birth certificate for a born child will only recognize the mother which means the child is born out of wedlock. Colbran states, although those children are socially not accepted in Indonesia, parents generally “have no choice but to register their child in this manner because otherwise the child will experience difficulties enrolling in school, breaching both the child’s right to have his or her birth registered and the right to education” (Colbran 2010: 682).

State rules on interreligious marriage tighten ethno-religious boundaries on the macro-level. In case of marriages between followers of officially recognized religions, the state often serves the interest of the religious community trying to protect and defend its borders against change coming from outside. Common aims between those two do not necessarily need to be shared on the micro level. This is the case for marriages between Christian and Muslim community members in East Kalimantan described by Connolly. She points to the fact that decisions made on the macro-level often have devastating effects for families and subjects of the community where she did research. At a first

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<sup>141</sup> The quote on Muslim communities is much lower than for Non-Muslim ones (Aini 2008: 703).

glance, we might assume decisions made on the macro level might have even more distressing effects on Wana people standing outside of religious categories. According to state law, their marriage cannot count as legal which makes their children illegitimate. However, as I will show in detail while analyzing the following levels after Barth, it is rather the opposite we find in Taronggo.

State impact is felt – and I am pronouncing the word *felt* – of less importance to Wana people regarding marriage law. State rules often diverge on the local level. The problem of the identity card (KTP, *Kartu Tanda Penduduk*) is such an example. An article in the Jakarta Post from May 2012 focused on the new option for religious minorities in Indonesia. Until recently, the obligatory identity card had to be filled out according to one of the six officially recognized religions. Generally, people had to choose between one of these religions and put it on their KTP to be officially registered. This caused the phenomenon of often-called “Kristen KTP” or “Muslim KTP” – people who are adherers of world religion only on their identity card, while in fact they follow their own nondenominational belief. Syarbini therefore asks: “On what basis is animism going to be considered a religion? If it’s just for the purposes of national identity cards then don’t do it, religious life could become messed up”<sup>142</sup> (Fardon 2012). Nowadays, faith has become an optional category on the new electronic identity cards, “a move lauded by pluralism campaigners as a significant step toward ending discrimination against minority groups” (Pramudatama 2012). But if we take a closer look at the local realities of Taronggo and its surroundings, Wana people usually leave the religious category on their KTP blank.<sup>143</sup> In most but not all official village data, like census, they are listed without religion. It becomes quite clear, that decisions made on the macro-level often do not translate on the local dimension. Is it therefore plausible to allege that decisions made on the macro level seem to be in concordance with median and micro-level conditions? To answer this question in concurrence with the proposed analytic lens let me now turn to the median level.

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<sup>142</sup>Translation by Grumblies.

<sup>143</sup> An article from the Jakarta Globe, entitled “Life Still Tough for Believers in Minority Faiths in Indonesia” states that in a census from 2010, a number of 270.000 Indonesians listed their religion as “other”. These adherers of other belief systems “struggle to get marriages recognized by the state or have their children considered legitimate”. The article cites an example of a couple that is wishing to get married but for 11 years has tried without success. Thus, these couples, like Wana couples, are living in a status of cohabiting which is, according to Article 458, issue to penalty: “anyone who lives together as husbands and wives out of a legal wedlock are punishable” (Rayda 2013).

### *The Median Level*

For her analysis of the median level among Christian and Muslim interfaith marriage Connolly focuses on aspects of collective ethnic and religious identity of Dayak people. Historically, Dayak have experienced a fate similar to Wana. They had close trading networks with Muslim coastal inhabitants, resulting in systems of patronage and intermarriage for the advantage of both sides, “Malays [...]gaining] the allegiance of Dayaks, whereas for Dayaks it offered access to Malay power” (Connolly 2009: 497). Still, whereas intermarriage was an important option and led to a change in ethnicity conceptions among the converted Dayak, religious conversion outside of marriage intentions was not an option since the advantage of gaining more power could not compensate for the harm it did to personal ethnic and family relations. According to Connolly, the appearance of Christian missionaries who focused on salvation and the idea of Christian kinship presented a better solution for Dayak people with the result of Christian conversion. Love as one of the key factors of Christian education and the idea of equality “has been important in overcoming sub-ethnic differences and building both a pan-Dayak ethnic identity and a sense of Christian community” (2009: 498). This process fortified socio-religious boundaries between Muslim and Christians with the latter expecting to be saved as the former are perceived to be excluded from salvation. Entering a Christian identity optimized the social positioning for many Dayak who now were part of the privileged majority of “adherers of a world religion”. Dayak used Christian discourse and spirituality “as a way of creating an oppositional discourse, defending themselves against the state and other ethnic groups who declare that they are dirty, backward animists who impede national progress” (Connolly 2009: 497).

Oppositional strategies of ethnic-religious boundary-making do present themselves in a different way to Wana people. As I discussed earlier, most Wana in the 1970s reformulated their belief as a strong religious system that can, at its core, claim a similar status like Christianity or Islam (see Chapter 4.2). Contrary to Dayak “tactics”, Wana tried, on the median level, to find their own ways of dealing with structures shaping the macro- as well as other levels. One could ask why the situation among Dayak and Wana people took such a diverging process – although one might assume apparently that the prerequisites for interaction with external religious influences were of similar character. Still, Wana identity is not as sharply shaped along religious categories as it is the case for

Dayak today. Some Wana have converted to Christianity or Islam but still follow local rituals that are closely interconnected with Wana belief system (see 4.4). For those, their ethnic identity has not changed. They still consider themselves Wana, ethnically, and many state they still consider *Pue*, the Owner, as identical with God or Allah. Even second or third generation Christians and Muslims present themselves as *suku Wana* (BI), ethnically Wana. A variety of ascribed attributes define ethno-religious boundaries between Wana and the rest. Their neighbors often describe Wana as different because they do not follow an official recognized religion. Instead they are supposed to “pray to trees and believe in demons”, which is considered to be “ridiculous”. Further, Wana fall in the category of “wild” and “uncivilized people” who lack any interest in broader political themes (see Chapter 1 and 2). Common allegations tht I recorded during my interviews and daily chats are, for example: They do not want to be governed; they have no education (and do not want it); they live far away in the mountains; they are too lazy to follow any economically meaningful strategy and so on. These assumptions, often discussed openly in front of Wana themselves, display a boundary that I find hard to describe as ethnic. My Christian and Muslim interlocutors formulated the difference between “us” and “them” along the “progress” they made and Wana have not. They happily embraced world religions, which lead them to a life more meaningful and economically fruitful. Sometimes with arrogance, sometimes with regret and sometimes with sorrow they talk about their families in the mountains or those in Taronggo, whereas the latter made, according to them, “the right move in a brighter future but still refuse to enter the world of true believers”, as one of my Christian interlocutors told me. Those boundaries are rather shaped along progress – the nation’s sense of it – and religion, which are closely interconnected. Therefore I prefer the term of socio-religious boundaries instead of ethnic boundaries. In Taronggo, where a number of members from different ethnic groups live, they do play a role as well. But for Wana the socio-religious boundaries are those they feel most intensely subjugated to and are most aware of. It is possible to see the importance of socio-religious boundaries resulting from the rather complicated question of ethnic belonging that I described above: “When ethnic identity is confusing or ambiguous, religious resources sometimes offer a more solid framework for identity” (Mitchell 2006: 1140). Therefore, in short, Wana distinguish themselves according to their religious belief. Still, the boundaries are neither fixed nor static. Converted Wana who still follow rituals and turn to shamans in case of illness for



example, only seldom see their conversion resulting in a strong exclusive new religious identity (see Chapter 4.4.). Here it is rather the Christian or Muslim family background that makes religious and ethnic differentiation a dilemma – a problem that needs to be analyzed on what Barth calls the micro-level.

### ***The Micro Level***

Interreligious marriages in Taronggo are seldom openly discussed as problematic. Carefully promoting a picture of ethnic and religious harmony within the village, the median and macro levels are hardly sufficient analyzing the role these marriages play for Wana positionings with the interreligious community. The micro level thus focuses on the sphere of the individual, identity formation and personal interactions at the local level.

Connolly sees among Christian Dayak a fear of a Muslim intrusion through Muslim men marrying Christian Dayak women. Female Dayak are perceived of in their role as mothers and child bearers, thereby being part of the body politic and primarily serving as its boundary markers,

“women [...] become the susceptible gateways through which Muslim men encroach on the Christian community, and the relationship between Muslim and Christians becomes a gendered hierarchy in which Muslim men are the masculine predators and Dayaks are their docile, feminine prey” (Connolly 2009: 499).

Among Wana gender inequality plays a minor role and is mainly recognizable in questions of political power. As I mentioned earlier, religious conversion in case of an interfaith marriage almost exclusively happens from Wana to other religions (Fig. 18-19). Since Wana women as well as Wana men marry people from other religious confessions, conversion does not rest on a gender based inequality. Rather, it is an inequality where Wana men and women are, more or less, equally marginalized in national and local discourse due to a “lack” of “civilization”, education and consequently world religion.

Interreligious marriages happen generally more often in Taronggo than in the mountainous area (see also 4.4). One Taronggo example is the family of Apa Ensi, a vehement supporter and advocator of Wana belief. Five of his six children married Muslims or Christians and followed their new partners’ religion. Three of his sons

converted to Christianity while the youngest daughter married a Muslim. The third son had just married a Christian Pentekosta from Lemo during my research stay and was planning to convert in the near future. The last son who has not converted is Ensi, who married a young Wana girl from the Posangke area far away in the mountains. In the next sub-chapter I will talk in detail about the politics of conversion. Here, however, let me pay special attention to interreligious marriage along the example of Ensi, Apa Ensi's oldest son to demonstrate the meanings and processes behind an interreligious marriage.

Ensi met his wife, Indo Reza, through a scenario we might call a "blind date". Around ten years ago, a time where neither mobile phones nor land lines were easily accessible by Taronggo people, Ensi used the chance of a radio communication station, connecting Taronggo with people in Bungku. Not knowing her background or her face, Ensi started a "radio relationship" with a girl from Bungku and he fell in love with her voice. Before ever seeing her, both made marriage promises to each other and their parents made arrangements for them to get married. Thus, a wedding soon became inevitable. When Ensi finally met her for the first time, his surprise was big: While he had expected to meet a young maiden, the woman welcoming him instead turned out to be a mature lady who already had given birth to a daughter. Married and divorced as she was, Ensi served her interest very well, since he owned land in the Taronggo region and was therefore a promising groom. Since the wedding plan had already reached an advanced level, Apa Ensi insisted that his son would marry the woman due to moral obligations – even though Ensi felt tricked. He had no choice but to comply with his earlier wedding promises. Because Ensi to this day followed no other religion than Wana, the bride's family pressed Ensi to convert to Christianity before the wedding. A requirement that indeed was problematic for the young man since his own family was against a conversion. Ensi states:

"Indeed, they didn't want it, they did not want to accept that I would follow her religion. But if you do get married, you simply have no choice, you must! I myself did not want to convert (*masuk agama*, BI), but I had to get married. Of course they, the Christians, would never consider following my belief because I do not yet have a religion; that's why we always have to follow their religion. Well, if the *kepala desa* marries his wife (village chief: Christian, wife: Muslim),

there is no problem, because they both have a religion, even though it is different. But me, I am Wana and I have to follow my bride.”

Even though Ensi and his family were not excited about his religious conversion they did not seriously try to prevent it since they were aware of their disadvantage regarding religious contexts in national discourse and state rules.

Another example is Indo Mika, also a child of Apa Ensi, who married Apa Mika, a Pentecostal Christian and son of a priest. Indo Mika converted around a year after the wedding but, as she said, it was no option for her not to convert. During my main fieldwork stay both lived a harmonious marriage, with Apa Mika being highly tolerant of his wife’s ongoing affinity with shamanic curing and Wana belief in general. She could freely attend healing and other rituals although her husband refused to follow her on those occasions. When I returned to the field site in March 2012, Indo Mika had volunteered to teach in the newly erected *sikola lipu*, a school in the upland especially for Wana, built solely under Wana auspices but stimulated by NGO activities from Palu. I will later describe the school in detail (see Chapter 5); for now, it is important to mention that the school was “religious-free” (*tanpa agama*, BI). Religious people from Taronggo opposed this new initiative as was foreseen from Wana people and NGO and so did Apa Mika. Still, every third day Indo Mika together with other volunteers hiked up the mountains to teach her non-converted upland relatives how to read and write. Her husband became furious. People gossiped about it and suspected he experienced pressure from the Pentecostal community since he was regarded as a firm believer who could not accept such a behavior of his wife. The ultimate goal of bringing Wana in the mountains the word of God was seriously disturbed by Indo Mika’s activity. Since Indo Mika did not listen to his complaints, one day he simply left the village without leaving a note. No one knew where he went and villagers were worried about their marriage. After a few days of confusion and uncertainties, he came back and Indo Mika resigned from the voluntary teaching. Nevertheless, she did so with great anger and the marriage was predicted to end soon. It becomes clear that although religious conversion can offer a way to overcome religious difference, it is seldom the case for Wana. A strong orientation towards Wana belief is often noticeable among converts, causing confusion among couples like Apa and Indo Mika. The pressure from the Christian or Muslim party towards the Wana party to convert is strong and almost inevitable (see Chapter 4.4).

In the beginning of this subchapter I have referred to Smith Kipp, who states that in her example only those she calls “traditionalists”, the non-converted, see religion and marriages as closely intertwined. The analysis of socio-religious boundaries along interfaith marriages in Taronggo and its surroundings shows that mainly Wana people do perceive of interfaith marriages as problematic. One of the reasons for this is the fact that Wana are usually the disadvantaged parties in such a wedding. Connolly concludes her analysis referring to the three levels with the following words:

“It is not just the case that the order of the state and the order of the family are not scandalized by the same things or that the state’s codes of honor are more inflexible than those of the family [...]. It may also be the case that the state does not even have a grand strategy aimed at achieving religious homogeneity and clearly defined religious groups. Thus, what appears to be a formal state strategy turns out to be a pact between religious leaders and parties campaigning for homogeneity and political actors and parties seeking to retain power” (Connolly 2009: 503).

I could easily agree with Connolly in the situation between interreligious parties as she described for her Muslim and Christian community, where social power is dictated by religious choice. Nevertheless, the situation for indigenous religious groups in Indonesia is quite different as my analysis reveals. People who simply do not have an officially recognized religion are underprivileged on all levels described above. Even though developments on the macro and median level do point in the direction of a more reasonable development process that is currently happening within the Indonesian state, the everyday realities non-converted Wana experience is still heavily marked by marginalization aspects, forcing Wana people towards a religious conversion.



Figure 18 Reni, a Wana woman, receiving a ritual washing by the Imam as part of her wedding with a Muslim.



Figure 19 Reni after her wedding at the *Kantor Urusan Agama*. Apa Main, her uncle and a shaman from Salisarao, accompanying her.





Figure 20 Wana wedding ceremony in Salisarao.



Figure 21 Christian wedding in the church of Taronggo.

## 4.5 THE POLITICS OF RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

In this Chapter I have presented so far a picture of what it means to live in the interreligious community of Taronggo from the perspective of Wana people. I spoke about what it means to follow Wana religion and how socio-religious borders are constructed, manifested, defended and, furthermore, frequently broken. Religious conversion hereby functions as the most visible (and most extreme) marker of religious transformation and concurring marginalization processes. As I have pointed out in the introduction of this thesis, the area of Salisarao remains until today an area of non-converted Wana families. Christian and Muslim households are only found within the lowland village of Taronggo. Thus, due to the geographical distance from and lack of other religious families, upland Wana can more easily resist conversion attempts; here, individuals receive strong support by their families, *agama Wana* remains the most important form of belief. To visualize the relations of conversion between upland and lowland I will present in the following three charts of kinship relations. The first, Family A, displays the family relations of a family from Salisarao; the second and third, Family B and C, both show a family from Taronggo.

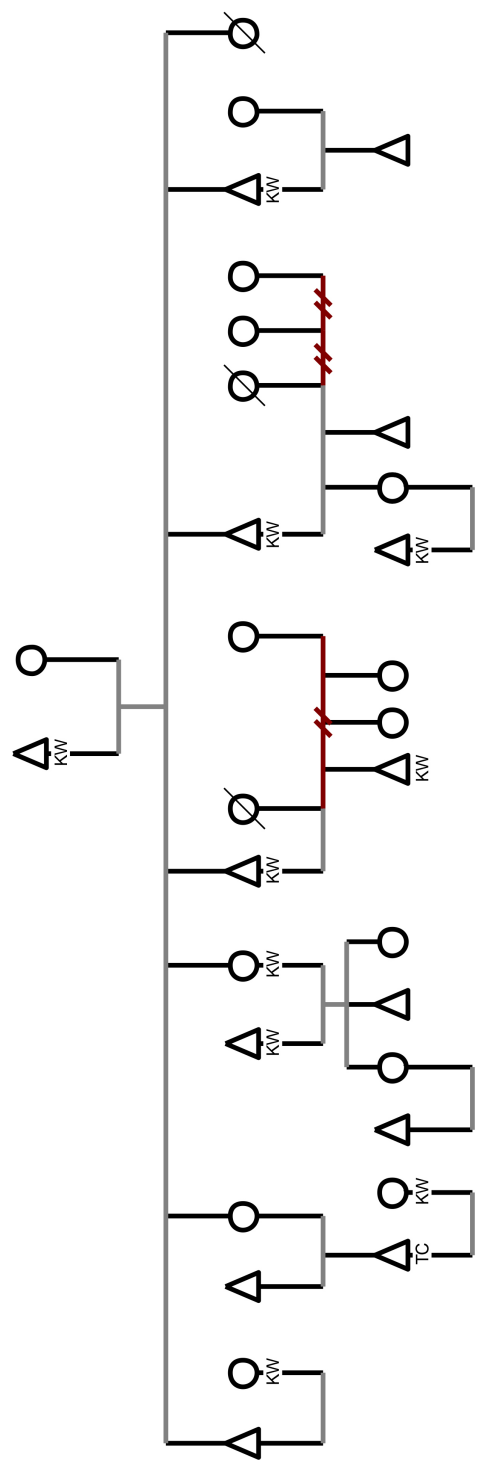


Figure 22 Family A: Kinship Relation in Salisrao.

- Legend
- KW = *Ka Walia* (Shaman)
  - TC = Temporary Christian; now returned to Wana belief
  - All individuals without special notes = Non-converted Wana



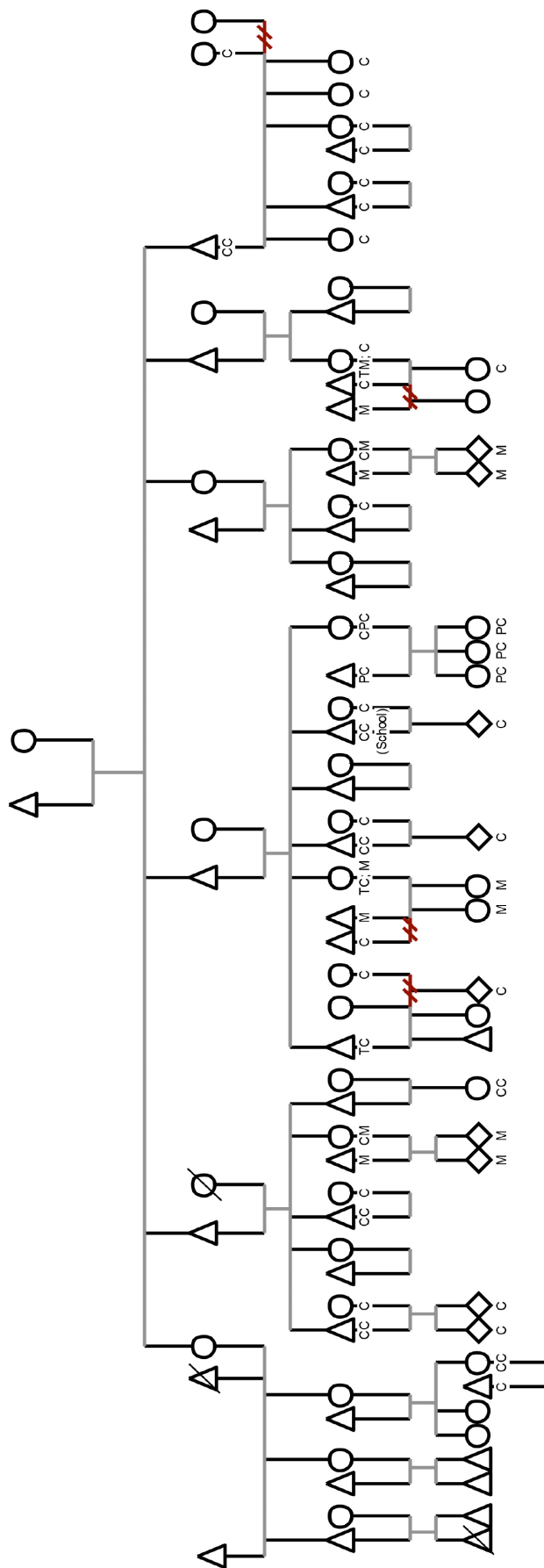


Figure 23 Family B: Kinship Relation in Taronggo

- Legend:
- C = Christian (Protestant)
  - CC = Converted Christian
  - TC = Temporary converted Christian; now returned to Wana belief.
  - PC = Christian (Pentecostal)
  - CPC =Converted Christian (Pentecostal)
  - M = Muslim
  - CM = Converted Muslim
  - TM; C = Temporary converted Muslim; now Christian
  - School = Converted due to schooling
  - All individuals without special notes = Non-converted Wana

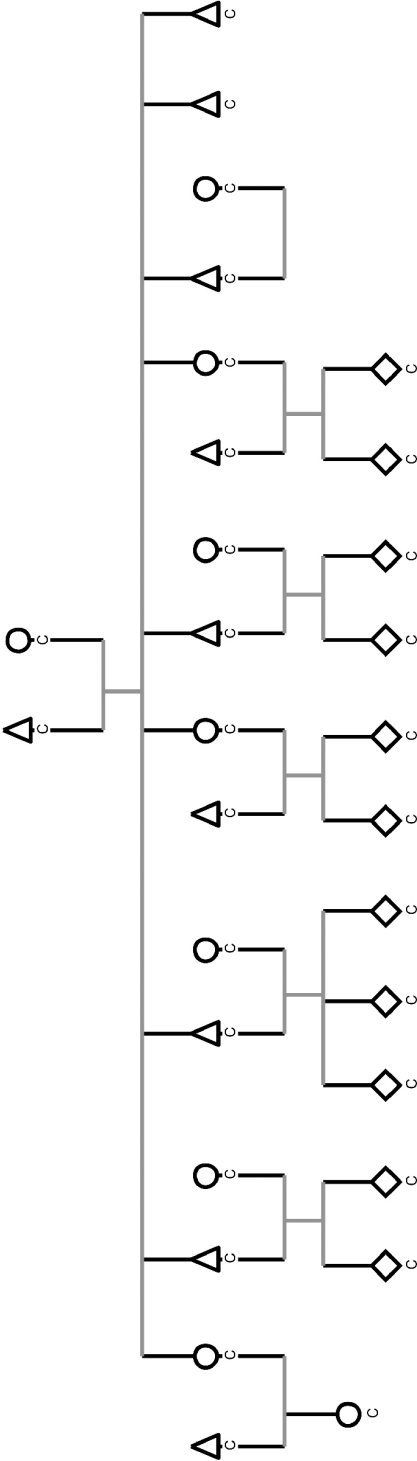


Figure 24 Family C: Kinship Relation in Taronggo

Legend: C= Christian (Protestant)

These families are examples of the interreligious context in which Wana either choose to convert or resist religious conversion. In the upland area of Salisarao, Family A completely resists conversion attempts; many of those living the upland area have to one point in their life lived in Taronggo or other lowland settlements (Fig. 22). So did Apa Ester, the male Wana who is listed as temporarily having converted to Christianity in Figure 22. He was baptized while he lived with a Christian lowland family in Taronggo, who supported him to go to school for further education. Nevertheless, he returned to Salisarao and renounced his Christian belief. Many individuals belonging to Family A have shamanistic features; to one or another degree some of them are *ka walia*, shamans. When we look at Family B, an interreligious family living in the lowland of Taronggo, no Wana there is a shaman. Although in upland regions shamans are of frequent occurrence, in Taronggo almost no Wana chose the *walia* way. Becoming a shaman includes a number of prerequisites that are not as easily fulfilled in lowland as it is in upland regions (see Chapter 3). Another reason can be found in the low prestige a shaman earns in Taronggo; while shamans are usually well respected individuals and healers in Wana society (cf. Atkinson 1989), they are met with suspicion by their lowland neighbors. Family B clearly reveals the importance of interreligious marriages for Wana society (Fig. 23). Although the family's grandparents all are non-converted Wana, born in upland Tingkoba'a, one of their children and ten of their grand-children converted to Islam or Christianity (Pentecostal or Protestant). Nevertheless, there remains an important part of Wana who have not converted, but the ongoing pressure through schooling and the changes I have described above lead to an increasing trend in lowland conversions. While most of these individuals do obtain low status jobs or are simply subsistence farmers, the only Christian son of Family B became *kepala desa* for a number of years. Economic difference is also an important distinguishing marker for Family C (Fig. 24). This partly ethnic Wana, but religiously Christian family obtains most of the important positions within the village, for example the first daughter who is *sekretaris desa* while the father is a former *kepala desa*. All family members are big in the palm oil business and thus belong to the richer section of Taronggo villagers. No marriage between a member of this family and a non-converted Wana has yet occurred.

In the light of the analysis of religious change and socio-religious power relations within the research area, it becomes understandable that conversion becomes an important matter especially in the interreligious community of Taronggo. Religious conversion needs to be analyzed against the framework of current political and social structures. In the year 1979 Atkinson mentions the pressure caused by state rules and national discourse concerning religion:

“The concept of religion is a central one in Indonesian nationalism. Religious freedom is guaranteed to all Indonesian citizens who subscribe to an officially sanctioned faith. Indigenous systems of ritual and cosmology are, with several notable exceptions, denied the status of a religion. Religion is associated in nationalist culture with education, cosmopolitan orientation, sophistication, and progress. The Wana are largely nonliterate, unable to speak the national language, physically remote from government authority, and live at a subsistence level using swidden agriculture. In short, they represent the antithesis of nationalist goals and aspirations. Wana failings to match the ideal of a progressive citizenry are summed up for nationalist Indonesians in the fact that the Wana lack a religion. In cultural terms, conversion then offers a solution to social ‘backwardness’” (1983: 689).

More than thirty years later the situation has changed. Many Wana today have followed national desires. Most of them are able to speak the national language, acquired reading and writing skills or live in centralized villages like Taronggo. However, government officials and neighbors do continue to perceive of them as *orang gunung*, mountain people, who have not yet acquired the status of full citizenship – mainly because they do not adhere to an official recognized religion as I have shown above. Conversion in the 1970s, Atkinson states, thus displayed one option to escape this marginal status. In view of the manifold marginalization processes still present today the question arises why, then, do Wana still resist the pressure to convert? One reason for the ongoing opposition against religious conversion can be found in the decrease of official and social pressure towards non-converted Wana. In the 1970s intimidation from Christian and Muslim sides displayed a serious dilemma: “People tell of being told their necks will be cut like chickens, their genitals split open and rubbed with salt, for their human worth is less than that of dogs refusing religion” (Atkinson 1979: 32). For Atkinson, fear was the main reason for conversion among Wana people in the 1970s; realizing that their non-converted friends did not end up as described in the warnings mentioned above, many Wana quit their new confessions and returned to their own belief. Today, actual fear seems to no longer be a motivator for religious conversion. However, the ongoing social

pressure from other-religious people and communities has become a new conversion impetus within the interreligious community of Taronggo.

I already introduced some of my Wana interlocutors, Indo Mika and Ensi, who themselves changed their religious confession in order to get married. For people like Indo Mika and Ensi, Wana use their own terminology to describe the socio-religious differences (and boundaries). The term *mangaya* refers to people who have converted, *taw ro mangaya*. According to my knowledge it means a conversion to Christianity or Islam as well. The term *mangaya* cannot be used for people who have “had religion” for a longer time. Instead it is used in combination with a missionary effort. One of my interlocutors, Apa nTina, explains with these words: “follow religion, whatever they teach you”. The term is not used for a distinctive ethnic ascription, but always describes a religious effort. According to Apa nTina the term was introduced by missionary people in the Ue Bone area; therefore the meaning of the term is often immediately associated with Christianity and further with Pentecostalism.<sup>144</sup> In the following I will give a short introduction to the anthropological interest in the field of religious conversion. With the theoretical framework in mind I then will talk in detail about the politics of conversion and de-conversion in Taronggo and its surroundings.

#### 4.5.1 On the Anthropology of Conversion

Conversion in its simplest means entails the process of crossing over to a new “religion”. Studies in the past perceived of conversion and conversion movements as a rather sudden religious change, in itself a completed and defined act. More recent accounts tend to treat religious conversion as a process of rather slow character. Rambo for example speaks in this context of a definition problem; the term conversion refers to Evangelic Christianity

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<sup>144</sup> Another term people use in Taronggo for people coming from outside, from another area moving to Taronggo is the general term *pendatang*, like it is used in general in Indonesia. The Wana term, *taw ojo jela*, means almost the same, meaning “people just coming by”. To describe people who result as a daughter or son from a marriage between a *pendatang* and a Wana person, people use the term *pernakang* (BI). As another distinctive expression, but here for people from above, upland Wana, comes the term *taw wana to melimbalimba*, referring to the Wana agricultural habit of moving houses according to their agricultural circle. In the same way people talk about to *Wana ntongku*, meaning Wana from the mountainous area. These terms however are rarely used, people tend to speak from people from atas or from the village, *taw kampung*.

where it means radical change (Rambo 2003: 213), confining the Pauline paradigm which includes the reversion of former belief, passivity of converts to foreign forces and “an unexpected flash of revelation” (Rambo 2003: 213). While conversion for Rambo is a Christian idea, for the Comaroffs it is a central European concept: Jean and John Comaroff pointed to the critical position that stands behind the problematic terming of conversion as a supposed global and trans-historical concept. To beat these underlying hegemonic agendas it is essential to keep the concept’s European roots in mind (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). Asad, quoting Morrison, makes clear that on a global scale the term always had dissimilar connotations and thus should not be treated as a tool of analysis; instead conversion should become the subject of analysis itself (Asad 1996: 266). Asad attempted to overcome this situation by concentrating instead on narratives of conversion that would include the deeper meaning and apprehension of changing one’s personal religious affiliation: “in studying conversion, one [...] [is] dealing with the narratives by which people apprehended and described a radical change in the significance of their lives. Sometimes these narratives employ the notion of divine intervention; at other times the notion of a secular teleology” (Asad 1996: 266). In studies concerned with conversion aspects, the supposed transformation of converts is seldom of major character, “often the change is less than a complete 180-degree transformation” (Rambo 2003: 214). Therefore, the idea of a thorough and complete convert as the product of a successful conversion is arbitrary. Instead, “a complete conversion is a goal to work toward, not a ‘finished’ product” (Rambo 2003: 214). Thus, conversion as a process can also be read like a passage – a position held by Austin-Broos:

“Conversion as passage is also quest, a quest to be at home in a world experienced as turbulent or constraining or, in some particular way, as wanting in value. The passage of conversion is a passage to some place rather than no place. It is not a quest for utopia but rather for habitus. It involves a process of continual embedding in forms of social practice and belief, in ritual dispositions and somatic experience [...]. Conversion involves an encultured being arriving at a particular place” (Austin-Broos 2003: 2).

This position however, seems to conflict with Rambo’s picture of conversion as a never fulfilled goal, thereby denying the possibility of a true arrival wherever the passage may lead the converting person. Nevertheless, both positions underline the meaning of social action and positioning(s) along a given social structure for the conversion process. In order to grasp the process-like character of conversion, Farhadian and Rambo propose the

active term "converting" as the "most appropriate term to signify that religious change is an ongoing complex process" (Rambo and Farhadian 1999: 23). For the authors, religious change can be grasped by a detailed cartography of the converting process, which they present in a seven-stages-model. A first step in this model includes the thorough consideration of the context in which converting takes place. Similar to Barth's above-mentioned concept of ethnic boundaries, it is necessary to distinguish the converting context along macro, median and micro level. Further, Farhadian and Rambo talk about the converting individual's crisis that functions as a catalyst for change. A possible response to the crisis stage is the "quest" stage, where people try to find personal orientation. These motivational structures can for example show the wish to obtain social rank (1999: 27). Further stages include the situation of encounter and then, on a more intensified stage, interaction – a stage in which rituals, relationships, rhetoric and roles can deepen the relation with the new religious community. A sixth stage concentrates on the level of commitment while converting and in the last stage the authors assess the consequences of converting. In this context, the connection between the process of converting and obtaining a new rank through it is deeply connected to the relation between converting and modernity. It is nothing new in anthropological literature that a conversion to a(nother) religion can be associated with a means of gaining access to modernity (cf. Horton 1975a, 1975b). Van der Veer provocatively has pushed this relation further with his suggestion that "conversion to forms of Christianity in the contemporary period is not only a conversion to modern forms of these religion but also to religious forms of modernity".<sup>145</sup> Thus, the wish to obtain a higher social position through conversion as Farhadian and Rambo have suggested, becomes even more appealing in the context of embracing religious forms of modernity through it. Conversion then, as mentioned above, "is not a quest for utopia but rather for habitus. It involves a process of continual embedding in forms of social practice and belief, in ritual dispositions and somatic experience" (Austin-Broos 2003: 2). Religious converting then, in general, cannot be detached from the social and cultural context within which a person decides to change his or her religious affiliation. Rappoport summarizes the conversion strategy for the South Sulawesi Toraja as follows:

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<sup>145</sup>Quotation taken from the book cover of van der Veer (1996).

“Conversions to Christianity increased around the 1960s because of the fear of Muslim encroachment and also because the Indonesian government, installed in 1949, officially imposed monotheism. After ten years of forced conversion in 1969, traditional religion was at last recognized, but then only as a local variant of Hinduism - that is, an Indonesian Hinduism, which was officially construed as being monotheistic. By that time, most Toraja had already converted to some form of Christianity” (Rappoport 2004: 386)

I therefore follow Buckser and Glazier in their more general description of conversion:

“Conversion is usually an individual process, involving a change of worldview and affiliation by a single person, but it occurs within a context of institutional procedures and social relationships. Religious groups structure the ways in which adherents move in and move out, and in many cases they place converts in a unique social position. These processes articulate with other dynamics within groups – their internal divisions, their authority structures, their political rivalries, and more. In many cases, religious groups are also held accountable to the restrictions and requirements of state authorities” (Buckser and Glazier 2003: xi).

The authors’ approach, I believe, serves the peculiarity and specific characteristics that we find in Taronggo. It becomes clear that conversion functions as a marker of social structure and agency. This relation becomes especially meaningful for the context of non-converted Wana who are excluded from the “domain of modernity” simply through the fact that they do not bear a religion and are (thus) perceived as “primitives”. Religious conversion thus symbolizes for Wana a chance to overcome this status and to become a “modern citizen”. Further, as I have shown above, social boundaries within the multi-faith community of Taronggo receive meaning mainly through confessional differences and the symbolic power that comes with it. David Gellner points to the importance of boundaries for the discussion of religious conversion – certainly translatable also to the Wana context and the importance of socio-religious borders for them: “religious change is only labeled ‘conversion’ if it occurs across a boundary. Thus, as boundaries have become sharper between ‘religions,’ so the issue of conversion has grown in political significance” (Gellner 2005: 755; see also Pelkmans 2009: 11). Religious conversion then, is also about the character of religious communities and significantly about the constitution and the negotiation of their boundaries (Buckser 2003: 69).



### 4.5.2 Further Reasons for Converting among Upland and Lowland Wana

“Conversion highlights the interaction, and in many cases the tension between individual consciousness and the structural requirements of community life.”  
(Buckserand Glazier 2003: xii)

At first I believed that the main reason in Taronggo to convert would be marriage just as Ensi and Indo Mika who both converted to Christianity for marriage reasons. The often mentioned “reordering of one’s world picture, in which novel representations [or beliefs or propositions] are imported into the mind” (Swift 2012: 272–73) was not visible in my interviews and day-to-day talks. Instead, my interlocutors described converting as a rather socio-political process instead of a definite change in belief. Reasons for converting were rich – on an imaginative level. Apa Ensi, who never converted, utterly understood the social value of becoming part of the government’s acknowledged religious community. Why then, he asked me, can he not believe in other religious regimes? Apa Ensi tried to be open towards other belief systems. He knows, he stated, that converting would make life a lot easier for him and his family – just in the sense Farhadian and Rambo have suggested (see above). Through the process of converting he could get a better job, would be socially more accepted in the lowland region and he could further participate in the social world outside of Taronggo. But he saw no intellectual or epistemic reason to change his faith – although he tried hard to understand the concept of Christianity in order to elaborate whether a conversion would make sense to him. In the following I will present a short episode that happened between Apa Ensi and myself that illustrates his doubts towards converting.

Apa Ensi and I are having one of our intense, open interviews. We sit on the floor of his house, drinking our third cup of sweet coffee. His family sleeps around us; we can hear their regular breathing through the numerous mosquito nets hanging in the large room. “Indo Yohan”,<sup>146</sup> he re-enters our talk after a long break of

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<sup>146</sup> People in the research location usually would call me by my local nickname, Indo Yohan, meaning mother of Yohan. Yohan was a rooster that I received as a present from Apa Ingus, a shaman from Kayupoli and people made a joke out of it calling me “mother of Yohan”, Indo Yohan, since I had no children of my own and further kept Yohan as a pet instead of eating him. This appellation however made

pondering silence, “may I ask you a question?” “Of course”, I answer enthusiastically, always glad to be able to give back at least something to my interlocutors. “What is it, *Apa?*”, I ask, using the polite and kinship-oriented form of address *Apa*, meaning father. He lights a new cigarette with his old one and nervously he lowers his voice, turns closer to me. His old eyes wander around the house, checking the other household-members’ state of sleep. Then, finally, he seems to be at ease; “Indo Yohan”, he opens again, this time in a conspiratorial manner, “have you ever seen God?” I am startled by this question. I try to think of the right answer, keeping in mind that to this point he had not settled out for sure that my Christianity is not a threat to his faith (the interview happened during my third month in the field). “No”, I answer, “I have never seen God”. He takes his time to think about my answer: “This means the situation is actually similar to ours, there is only the name. But He cannot be seen. But”, he insists, “Why can those people take a picture of Him?” I am startled again and it takes me a while to understand what he means; he helps me and points to a picture of Jesus he was shown by some Christians in Taronggo. I feel challenged and try my best to explain the situation of making drawings of Jesus as something different to having seen God. Then, he replies. “Hmm, indeed. I knew somehow it is like that. Those people have stories like this one, that they have met God, so that people like me who do not have a religion yet follow them”. Later he adds: “For us Wana, we cannot see God, we only talk about him. There are shadows and there is wind; it is the same with the wind; he shakes the leaves on the trees and you can see that. But you cannot see the wind.”

This episode illustrates that in Taronggo converting to other religious confessions seldom happens due to faith in the first place. Agreeing with the theoretical positions I have presented above, I do not wish to elaborate on the “degree of belief” of individual converts. But interestingly, in Taronggo, most converts never talked about their faith in the new religion. Instead, more present was the feeling that new and old belief all rested on the same root, in other words the same God. Through this ontological equation Wana converts and non-converts were legitimizing the old as well as the new belief. As I have

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it easier for my interlocutors to refer to me with the more polite version as “mother of” than by my actual name.

shown in 4.2.2 most Wana emphasize the equivalence of their God, *Pue*, with Christian and Muslim God – mainly during discussions with Christian and Muslim neighbors or visitors. Thus, only very few of my informants stated a complete change in faith in an absolute and exclusive manner.

The main reason for converting instead was, in the first place, interreligious marriage and concurrently social pressure by the relatives and church community of the partner. Although improved social value or status was often (but not always) a direct consequence of conversion, it never served as a sole motivational factor for it. Another reason for converting can be found in economic or material motives. In a Southeast Asian colonial context Winzeler talks about so called “rice (bowl) Christians”, people who converted simply to gain access to food and associated economic goods, “to take advantages of resources or services provided by missionaries in order to escape poverty or to achieve upward mobility through education” (Winzeler 2009: 49).<sup>147</sup> I agree with Winzeler that the term itself should not be limited to Christianity alone; “rice Muslims” are an imaginable category as well or simply rice converts. Although the term itself remains questionable, indeed economic factors sometimes encourage people to convert. Winzeler also points to education or protection as a conversion motivator in another regional context: “becoming a Muslim in Malaysia or Borneo or Brunei is interpreted as a strategy for obtaining development assistance for a village or for improving an individual’s prospects for getting a desirable government job” (Winzeler 2011: 208). Among the Akha in Burma and Thailand, Kammerer points to the fact that Akha converted less for food but rather for opium; because Christianity entails an opium-free environment many Akha converted to break out of their own opium addiction (Kammerer 1990: 287).

A comparable economic reason for converting became visible in the village section of Taronggo called Rio Tinto. This area was erected as a resettlement side after a major landslide in July 2007. Heavy rainfall had led to disastrous flooding of the entire region and a number of Wana were killed during landslides in the area of Posangke. As a rescue initiative, 58 houses were built for Wana families coming from Ratobae and the Posangke

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<sup>147</sup> Winzeler explains further: “Literally this term refers to persons who are poor and hungry and therefore convert in order to obtain food. Both Western missionaries and critics or opponents of Christianity have used this term as a derogatory label for what is deemed to be inauthentic or non-spiritually based conversion. More broadly it has been applied to people who convert in order to gain material benefit or to improve their life chances. Rice Christians in the most literal sense are associated with India and China more than Southeast Asia, which lacks a comparable history of famine and starvation” (Winzeler 2009: 49).

mountains; these families were supposed to live there permanently, as the former village head stated. The money had come from the international mining company Rio Tinto (see Chapter 5). Soon, a Christian group called Yayasan Alesintowe with organizational roots in Surabaya settled in Rio Tinto.<sup>148</sup> They built a pre-school (*taman kanak-kanak*, BI) called TK) for Wana children from the upland and further offered them a place to live in case their families wanted them to go to school if they wished to return to the mountains. The presence of Alesintowe was at least one reason for numerous Wana families to leave the village for their home in the mountains.<sup>149</sup> The group is deeply connected to the Pentecostal church in Taronggo and has an implicit and explicit proselytizing mandate – although when I asked them directly whether they would call themselves “missionaries” most members in Rio Tinto refused this assumption. In an interview with a member of Alesintowe in 2011, I was told that the group had settled among the Wana due to a spiritual dream involving Jesus that the wife of the founder of the group had. Jesus, he claimed, had told his wife to build a school in Uempanapa for the “lost souls of the Wana tribe”. It was their goal to bring Christianity to the poor and primitive, the source stated.<sup>150</sup> Alesintowe has so far opened more than six so called orphanages, *panti asuhan* (BI), in the region, in the villages of Uempanapa, Lemowalia, Lambentana and Rio Tinto, among others. The term *panti asuhan*, orphanage, itself reveals some irony. Members of Alesintowe call those Wana children they teach “orphans” although most of them still have parents who live in the mountainous regions. My source stated that more than 50 Wana children go to school and at least 20 Wana children stay permanently in the *panti*

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<sup>148</sup> Some interlocutors stated Alesintowe simply belongs to the Pentecostal church; others claimed it had roots with the Salvation Army, while other called it Aliran Kharismatik. To receive more information about the organization remains difficult; however, they have their own Facebook-Account ([https://www.facebook.com/yayasan.a.indonesia.3?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/yayasan.a.indonesia.3?ref=br_rs)).

<sup>149</sup> Another important reason was also the lack of farmland; even though the aid project provided houses for Wana families, no additional land was offered to the former independent subsistence peasants from the mountains. As a consequence many returned to their upland homes where they had plenty of land and gardens to make a living (see also Chapter 5).

<sup>150</sup> A member of the Yayasan Alesintowe who came from Java to Rio Tinto in 2010 proudly told me that she was one of the few who were brave enough for hiking up the mountains in order to reach the scattered upland Wana villages. She told me in detail and under a lot of laughter how she and her guide arrived at a river and saw a naked Wana man running away, according to her, he was deeply shocked to see a non Wana-face; luckily, as she tells me, she still managed to take a picture of the naked bathing man with her mobile phone that she showed me with a trophy-like-gesture. For her, this event and the picture she managed to take are proof of her legitimate presence in Rio Tinto and her need to teach them the way of God and good Christianity according to their own principles. Images of the “primitive” like these serve the goals of missionary groups that settle around Wana areas.

*asuhan* in Uempanapa, a settlement north-east of Taronggo, the central and first of the Yayasan's stations, built in 1994.

In Rio Tinto, the school has "less success", around 20 Wana children live more or less permanently there. Only a handful of Wana families have decided to stay in this desolate section of Taronggo, living door to door with Alesintowe people. Members of Alesintowe have developed a number of strategies to encourage their neighbors to follow the Christian path. Wana families are invited for dinner or lunch if they go to church service. Some of them do get small jobs with Alesintowe. Although most Wana living in Rio Tinto do attend church service on a regular basis, have quit smoking in public (Alesintowe prohibits this habit) and send their children to the TK, only very few have gone so far to convert to Christianity. The reasons to convert here are mainly economic reasons. When the government provided the settlement in Rio Tinto for landslide refugees, Wana did get houses though, but no further land. Consequently, they had no opportunity to make their own living from agriculture. Economic dependency therefore is one motivational factor for conversion, but mainly for Wana living in Rio Tinto where Alesintowe's presence is at its strongest. Although Alesintowe follows a strong missionary goal, immediate, direct pressure to convert was denied by my interviewees. However, during my third field stay in 2012, Indo As an old woman with severe bronchial health problems who suffered from extensive coughing told me in private, Alesintowe members offered her medicine if she would attend church service. Once she refused, she was told by Alesintowe she would die soon because she needed the medicine immediately. The Christian group would not help without a religious commitment from Indo As. Unfortunately this account is just one example of Alesintowe business in Rio Tinto. Nevertheless, these actions almost never lead to success in converting goals. If the same can be said, however, for Alesintowe's influence on those Wana children who live with Alesintowe remains unclear to this day because those I met were too little to have already made a decision in conversion. Nevertheless, most Wana in Rio Tinto who do attend Alesintowe church and bible sessions mainly do so to receive food, medicine and other material help.

Economic reasons and social status can be a reason for converting but is usually the exception. Apa Ensi, whom I cited in the beginning of this subchapter, clearly states, that he would gain a higher social status if he would convert to Christianity or Islam. His

brother, Apa Ele, who became a Christian also became the *kepala desa* – a position he would have never obtained without adherence to a world religion. Further, as this chapter shows, social power and the structure of social hierarchy within the community posit non-converted Wana in the realm of the disadvantaged.

Another reason for converting can be found within the spiritual sphere and is connected to the aforementioned “reordering of one’s world picture” (Swift 2012: 272-3) that is, as I already mentioned, less common in Taronggo and its surroundings. I was however able to observe this different stage of converting among Wana from Kayupoli, a region within the nature reserve. People here have closer contact to Wana who have converted due to their contact to the missionaries from the New Tribes Mission, a US-based evangelical Christian mission, founded in 1944 by American missionary Paul Fleming.<sup>151</sup> The New Tribes Mission outreach area is in fact far away from Taronggo and Kayupoli as it is settled in the area of Ulu Bongka in the North. However, mobility is an important aspect for Wana people and visits to other settlements are a frequent habit. One of my informants in Salisarao had lived among the New Tribes Mission in the Bongka region but came home without having converted; his wife however had chosen the Christian path so that both decided for divorce. In Kayupoli I heard about Doni, a Wana man in his mid-thirties who also lived for a couple of years with the New Tribes Mission. Doni’s father-

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<sup>151</sup> The group’s doctrine can be found in Duncan’s PhD Thesis (1998). Because it is not published, I will recite them once again, although in a newer version accessible on the New Tribes Mission website:

“Statement of Faith  
We believe:

1. In the word-by-word inspiration, sufficiency and final authority of the Holy Scriptures. 2. In one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 3. In the Lord Jesus Christ as true God and true man; His virgin birth, sinless humanity, vicarious death, bodily resurrection, present advocacy, and His personal, imminent, bodily return for His church. 4. In the fall of man, resulting in his complete and universal separation from God and his need of salvation. 5. That the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood and died as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 6. That salvation is a free and everlasting gift of God, entirely apart from works, received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 7. That the Holy Spirit regenerates with divine life and personally indwells the believer upon his faith in Christ for salvation. 8. In the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the unsaved. 9. In the unending life of the saved with the Lord and the unending punishment of the unsaved. We hold and teach the following positions: 10. The pretribulational, premillennial return of Christ for the church. 11. The historical-grammatical interpretation of the Bible. 12. A soul once saved can never be lost. 13. We practice believer’s baptism by immersion. 14. We do not practice what are commonly known as the ‘sign gifts’.

We value:

1. The Word of God as our final authority 2. A Spirit-controlled life 3. Dependence on God 4. The role and responsibility of the local church in the Great Commission 5. Readiness to sacrifice for Christ and His church 6. Godly relationships and interdependence in ministry 7. The potential of all believers to be used by God in the Great Commission 8. Excellence and urgency in all we do to finish the task.”

Accessed 13th December 2015. <http://usa.ntm.org/what-we-believe>.

in-law has been a minister for almost ten years now. Doni converted and became what people in Taronggo call a fundamental Christian. On his occasional visits to Kayupoli, a settlement within the nature reserve, where his family lives, he aggressively tried to persuade his fellow people to come with him and follow the word of God. He left a bible translated to Wana language in the house of Indo Pino, a female shaman. With the only book in the house, Indo Pino's son, Pino, a father of three children regularly reads the bible – a point of worry for his neighbors.<sup>152</sup> Whether or not Indo Pino's family has yet converted is a point of nightlong discussions and often dispute among the people in Kayupoli but also in Taronggo and its surroundings. Today, Doni, the New Tribes Mission convert, is not very welcome in Wana homes due to his aggressive behavior and fundamentalism. However, Indo Pino's brother, Apa nTunggi, has followed Doni and converted. Apa nTunggi was a very powerful shaman who is said to have possessed the ability to fly before he became a Christian. Especially among other *taw walia* his conversion was discussed with astonishment and sometimes anger. What struck me most concerning Doni (who I personally never met) and Apa nTunggi is their change in their belief. The documentary "Gods and Satans" by Journet and Nougazol brilliantly shows the problematic of Doni's conversion and how his relatives interpret the missionaries efforts (2005). In an interview for the documentary, Doni states: "Over there they made us understand that we were living in sin. And that the people thought it was true that they were sinners. [...] Now they believe in God; no more in the Waliya-spirits. [...] The Waliya magic comes from Satan too. Everything that comes from Satan is bad. There is nothing good" (Journet and Nougazol 2005).<sup>153</sup> For Doni, Wana religion became evil in the means of the "reordering of one's world picture". On the contrary, although converts in Taronggo visit the local church or mosque – some on a regular basis, some not – their conversion almost always includes an open mind for Wana belief, a fluid world picture that consists of elements of both religions, leaving it up to the individual to make sense of it all. Converts from the New Tribes Mission and related missionary efforts have in some sense left their former belief behind. Motivation factors for converting are controlled by

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<sup>152</sup>The translation of the bible into the local language is a primary method of the New Tribes missionaries. The NTM website reveals a new form of bringing the bible in local language towards those Wana who are not able to read the book themselves – though audio bibles: "The Wana New Testament has been recorded by Faith Cometh By Hearing, and soon the machines with the recording will be in the hands of the Wana believers. 'Older people who never learned to read or whose eyesight is failing will still have access to hear the Word in their language,' wrote Steve and Linda Rosengren. Pray that the machines arrive soon and are a great blessing to the Wana people." (<https://usa.ntm.org/wana-people-group>).

<sup>153</sup> Translation taken from the documentary's subtitles.

the New Tribes Mission who seem to have a much more powerful structure than it is the case for Alesintowe efforts in Taronggo.

### 4.5.3 Resisting Religious Conversion

The motives and politics of converting are important frameworks for grasping the realm of marginality relevant for Wana. However, as was pointed out in the foregoing chapter, a much more common scheme among Wana is the practice of resisting religious conversion. Winzeler puts forward the view that in Southeast Asia: “pressures on the indigenous ethnic minorities to convert to a world religion will probably continue to increase [...]. The real question in most places will be which world religion to embrace rather than whether to do so at all” (Winzeler 2009: 59). Resistance to converting, as earlier discussed examples made clear, thus is a similar important topic as is the converting process itself. However, resistance to conversion seldom is a topic in conversion studies. Duncan is one example, describing religious change among the Forest Tobelo.<sup>154</sup> However, although the Tobelo have successfully resisted missionary strategies until recently, they finally converted to Christianity in the 1980s. Referring to Heirich (1977), Duncan points in this context to the analytical significance of studying resistance to conversion as well as the conversion process as well:

“Just as there were those who embraced this new religion, there were others who did not. These individuals were subject to the same influences and conditions as those who did convert and thus their refusals can shed as much light on conversion as the willingness of others to this new worldview” (Duncan 1998: 151).

If we go back to the theoretical ideas on the anthropology of conversion, converting was perceived as a passage or a “quest to be at home in a world experienced as turbulent or constraining or, in some particular way, as wanting in value. The passage of conversion is a passage to some place rather than no place” (Austin-Broos 2003: 2; see above). The main theoretical premise behind Duncan is, that non-converts however are subject to the same interreligious context in which individuals make their decision to take part in

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<sup>154</sup> Connolly also speaks in detail about this aspect in her unpublished PhD thesis from 2003, focusing on Dayak Christian conversion .



religious conversions. Thus, non-converts experience the same influences and often pressure like converts. Therefore, I argue that non-conversion cannot be less a passage than its counterpart conversion. As I have made clear in the course of this chapter Christian and Muslim religious influence have left their mark on Wana concepts of their own belief system. Wana have eloquently come up with a construction of their belief that rests on some similarities with so-called world religions and thus made its position within the Indonesian nation state strong and firm – at least from Wana perspective. The rationalization of Wana belief thus is nothing less than a process as well, and therefore needs to be perceived as a passage in the sense that Wana have actively reformulated their belief. By this means, resistance to conversion usually is a rather passive process then. Sometimes, however, the pressure to convert becomes so great that resistance requires courage and nerves.

I could record a single case in which an individual successfully resisted conversion within the context of interreligious marriage: Bodi is a young non-converted Wana man who married a Pentecostal Christian girl from Lemo. From the beginning of his courtship he assured his and her family that he had no intention to give up his faith, and that a conversion to Christianity would be no option for him. His own family was deeply worried for him since Bodi is the sole local example of resistance to conversion in case of interreligious marriage. They had no idea what would happen in such a case. Although the girl still wanted to marry him, the bride's family was furious. Because their efforts to hinder their daughter to marry the heathen Wana man were to no avail and they did not manage to cancel the wedding, they refused to give any money at all for the ceremony. Still, Bodi found his own way and got the necessary money together. He could finally arrange a huge wedding celebration, which is rather atypical for usual Wana wedding rituals. Although Bodi and his wife got married according to Wana *adat*, the festivities afterwards were carried out in the manner of Christian and Muslim weddings. The bride's family was until today highly critical about their daughter's choice and her husband's lack of religion. Bodi is a sole example but the exceptionality of his case makes the pressure to religious conversion in case of a marriage for Wana living in Taronggo very clear.

Resistance to conversion is for many of my interlocutors nested in cosmological constructions that portray millennial raisons among Wana adherers. Those who resist the

conversion imperative have found contrary strategies to deal with conversion pressure, “some [...] claim salvation lies in keeping alive the Wana religion, a system formulated out of traditional cultural practices through contrasts drawn to what Moslems and Christians do” (Atkinson 1979: 33). As I have shown in Chapter 3, Wana believe in a future Golden Era. Based on powerful cosmological narratives non-converted Wana believe that one day, their powerful allies, the *taw baraka*, will return to *pusen tana*, the Wana homeland, and introduce a new Golden Era for them. In the meantime, it is essential for Wana not to break out of their current state of misery as the following *tendebomba* by Indo De’u underlines:

<i>Manuku laki wu’alo</i>	My beautiful flecked rooster,
<i>La’u ku taka taka mo</i>	I keep him safe, so he cannot go
	far,
<i>Taa longko nakayako</i>	because the eagle is out there in
<i>Meka nya tonjou rao</i>	the sky and I am scared for him.

In this *tendebomba*, Indo De’u portrays her ongoing resistance to religious conversion. She describes her belief as a gorgeous rooster that she needs to take care of; she shall not let loose of him because the eagle might get hold of him and eventually kill him. In her interpretation the eagle symbolizes Christian religion and its adherers, who try to convince her to renounce her own belief, the rooster, for the sake of religious conversion. Resistance to conversion for Indo De’u is a necessary objective: her own belief is portrayed as a precious good, that she worries about and thus reflects the danger of losing it once and for all. For Indo De’u as well as other non-converted Wana the cosmological dimension of Wana marginality plays the most central role in resisting converting: Only those Wana who remain in the current powerless state of pity and have not converted to another religion will be rewarded by the returning *taw baraka* (see Chapter 3).

#### 4.5.4 Reconversion to Wana Religion

An important aspect of resisting religious conversion can be found in the more drastic act of reconversion – the return to Wana religion of a previously converted individual. Reconversion by this means is a term that circumscribes the process of turning away from a religion one has converted to, accompanied by a reorientation to a previous religious affiliation.

In the 1970s religious affiliation with either Christianity or Islam for Wana people were rather labels instead of an aforementioned reordering of one's world picture. Pressure from outsiders was the main reason to convert, often the fear of governmental actions acted as the conversion motor. However, converting at that time was a fluid process of minor significance. Changing one's affiliation was an easy thing to do and people converted and reconverted easily: "A common picture is to convert when afraid, then revert to traditional ways when the threat of persecution recedes a little" (Atkinson 1988: 46). However, this "fluidity of religious affiliation", to speak with Atkinson's words, was not visible to me in Taronggo. Converting in Taronggo still happens to be an often utilitarian motivated act, just as it was in the 1970s (Atkinson 1988: 45-46). But people take it per contra as a serious matter. My interlocutors stated that, inter alia, one reason not to convert was grasped by the fact that they do not entirely comprehend the other religion and its framework. As a matter of fact, a Wana convert, who had to follow a world religion due to social pressure or other reasons stated above, is socially obliged to give up his old belief and to "convert completely". Here I turn back to Ensi, the Wana husband who converted for his wife to Christianity (see above).

Ensi entered Christianity but was by no means fully enthusiastic about it. He never felt accepted in the Christian community and could not understand how Christians in the church would insist on moral rules they later would definitely break. After a couple of years he left to Kayupoli for work, the Wana settlement within the nature reserve, far away from churches and priests. There he met Fe'i, a young Wana girl he fell in love with. He and Indo Reza, his Christian wife, separated and divorced soon after.<sup>155</sup> Ensi and Fe'i married according to Wana *adat* and Ensi never went to church again. He told me

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<sup>155</sup> Indo Reza never left Taronggo, where she made a living from the land Ensi was obliged to grant her. She married again, a Christian man from the Toraja area.

although he was interested in Christian teachings, he had never liked attending church service; understanding Christian obligations and liturgy was difficult for him. Nevertheless he insisted that Wana people cannot convert merely superficially. I had told him about other Indonesian ethnic groups who declared themselves as Hindu or so-called *Kristen KTP* (BI) or Muslim – people who are adherers of world religion only on their identity card, while in fact they follow their own indigenous belief – in order to practice their own belief untroubled and in private, for example some Dayak groups in Kalimantan practicing Kaharingan, but are listed on their KTP as Hindu. Those “alibi-conversions” however remain an unfamiliar habit in Taronggo. On behalf of my accounts on this topic, people reacted often with unwilling disapproval. An incomplete conversion was regarded highly precarious for my Wana interlocutors. Ensi explained:

“Maybe this is why I got sick. Many friends tell me I got sick because I do not go to church any longer. That is the way it is for us Wana people. If you decide to follow (*masuk*) a religion and then you do not go to church you’ll get a problem, for example, you getting sick. Well, that’s not because it is a sin. Rather, for us Wana, if we enter religion, then we have to enter completely and we need to know how this religion functions. But me, I do not know how this religion works, I do not go to church any longer and that’s probably why I am not feeling healthy. If you follow a religion just a bit, just a little, that’s not possible, you have to go home [to your former belief]. They [Wana people] say, I am using this [new] religion wrongly because I do not truly follow it.”

In the beginning, Ensi tried his best to understand Christian doctrine. He was baptized without understanding anything about the process or the content of his new confession. This situation he describes as highly problematic, since he had no clue how to behave in church, did not know any songs to sing or how to read the bible. He felt very lost, he told me. He intensely tried to learn all about Christianity but more and more he started to lose interest in church. Based on a belief in One God he does not see a fundamental difference between Wana *Pue* and Christian God. The faith, he states, is the same but Christians need a church to pray and Wana do not; everywhere they can communicate with God. For Ensi it was mainly the contradiction between imparted teachings and lived praxis of the church community that disturbed him. Here is one example he gave me:

“But the way our pastor talks, I don’t like that. She speaks a lot about people who make problems, gossip she talks, like, that man over there is supposed to have taken this and that, stolen and stuff like that. I am not happy about that. I rather prefer not to talk about our community members; instead I would like our pastor to talk about the bible, what is written in it. Because that is where we get the true claim from God. In Wana teachings for example when we do *nia* (a ritual involving a vow to *Pue*) there is no one talking like, oh that friend over here and there has did this or that, there is no gossip from the past, we truly just talk with God, we ask how we can heal the patient, ask for help, there is nothing else. But there (in the church) of course is more (talk), about whatsoever. A long time I followed the Christian path but now no longer.”

Contradictions like these often serve Wana as factors of differentiation. Wana interlocutors stated how paradox they perceived of Christian rules. They know about the Ten Commandments but the point of consternation lies for some of them in the Christian necessity to insist so strongly on these rules, teaching them, praying them, using them as a difference to “primitive” Wana people while at the same time breaking them constantly. For Ensi, this was one cause of his disillusionment of Christianity – and finally lead to his reconversion. Moral criticism is only one reason for reconversion I found in Taronggo. Another is the loss of social membership. Indo Alvi, a Wana woman from Taronggo, married a Muslim teacher in her early twenties. She converted for him to Islam, but he died early in a tragic accident and she was left alone with their three children. After his death she received minimal support from her husband’s family and the small Muslim community of Taronggo. Indo Alvi had to work hard to make a living on her own and experienced great support from her non-converted Wana family and friends. She saw no reason to follow the Muslim way any longer and finally reconverted to her initial belief.

### ***The Ritual of De-Conversion: Magule Manu***

The act of reconversion from Christianity or Islam to *agama Wana* is a process that involves a specific ritual.<sup>156</sup> This ritual's goal is not the act of conversion to Wana religion but instead aims to re-affiliate from other religious confession. It is therefore a de-conversion rather than conversion ritual. One converted Christian Wana woman, Indo Besi, told me in an interview she would feel sick since she did not follow Christianity the way she was supposed to. Her only solution lay in the hope of the de-conversion ritual that would lead her back to *agama Wana* and reestablish her health. Similar to Ensi's situation mentioned above she feared for her wellbeing as a "dishonest" convert and were currently trying to prepare the ritual called *magule manu*. The de-conversion ritual, however is not easily accomplished simply because ritual experts are rare. Indo Besi explained that no Wana in the surroundings of Taronggo was able to perform the ritual. A couple of months later I finally met Apa nSa'er, a Wana senior living within the Cagar Alam. Other sources stated that Apa nSa'er was a ritual expert for de-conversion but he himself refused this status and instead referred to his wife as the actual expert. While I did not get a chance to meet his wife Apa nSa'er explained the ritual in detail to me, which is "actually not much to talk about, very easy and quick", as he claimed.

The decision to stage a de-conversion ritual does not include a big amount of preparation; Apa nSa'er claimed only two people would be necessary but usually the ritual included the closer family. The ritual does not incorporate a big party crowd, as it is the case for the *momago* for example; naturally people will not make invitations since the fear of Christian or Muslim appearance is common. As with most Wana rituals, *magule manu* includes the *duku* with the typical offerings such as betel and rice wine just as it is necessary for *momago* or other rituals (see Chapter 4). The central object of the ritual is a chicken to be offered by the person wishing to de-convert. The chicken's color, sex or size is hereby of no specific importance. After sharing some betel and tobacco first, all family members and guests sit in a circle and touch the chicken wherever one can get hold of it. The de-converting person then takes the chicken's throat and wrings its neck

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<sup>156</sup> People never discuss the ritual in public or in presence of Christians or Muslims. It was only after a couple of months of fieldwork that people in Taronggo started to share their knowledge with me. As I have already shown, the politics of conversion and religious membership are subject to conflict in Taronggo leading to severe confidentiality among Wana people. In the mountain area people living in a fair distance to government or religious centers, my informants far more easily took me in on the details of de-conversion. For sake of confidentiality I will present here only some details of the ritual.

until its death. At the same time the ritual expert speaks the necessary words, according to him not difficult:<sup>157</sup>

<i>Aku si'i da magule manu</i>	I will wring this chicken's neck
<i>Meluba muni ri wakaku</i>	and go home to my own place
<i>Rata tempo nya nipantima (ambil)</i>	Until the time has been taken
<i>Aku taa di kay pelinjaku</i>	nothing will hamper me
<i>Taa mo daku podosa</i>	I will not sin anymore
<i>Taa mo daku pomonggoyo</i>	I will not feel sick again

To these introducing words the de-converting person and the ritual leader will add specific promises and talk about their experiences with the former religion. After the chicken is dead and enough talk has been made, the chicken will be cooked by the households' women. The *dosa*, sin, made by the de-converter by his behavior towards his former confession, now has entered the chicken. Killing the chicken symbolizes killing the sin. The chicken later on is eaten and shared ritually by all people present. The name of the ritual expresses the action of wringing the neck, *magule*, of a chicken, *manu*. Atkinson already mentions this practice during her fieldwork as a ritual for de-converting from Islam – but Islam only:<sup>158</sup> “since food is such an important issue to Muslims, diet is taken to be both the way in and the way out of Islam” (1983: 690). For her, wringing the chicken's neck breaks with Muslim butchering practices and therefore symbolizes finishing one's association with Islam. *Magule manu* therefore only counted for a Muslim de-conversion during Atkinson's research, “Christianity, which lacks dietary laws, offers no such easy exit. Once one has converted to Christianity, simply resuming pagan ways is regarded as ritually dangerous and a source of illness” (Atkinson 1983: 690). During my own research none of my interlocutors claimed the ritual exclusively for a Muslim Wana de-conversion. It was always discussed instead as practicable for all religions. According

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<sup>157</sup> Presented here in a reduced version.

<sup>158</sup> The ritual was called in the 1970s *maluba* – the meaning of the word remaining unclear for Atkinson. She suggests hesitantly a connection between the Indonesian word *lupa*, to forget (In Indonesian one speaks of forgetting one's religion) (1983: 695).

to Apa nSa'er it would be of no concern which religion one would want to de-convert from. Further, food taboos exist also among Wana people as dogs and cats are excluded from Wana diet. Christians in Taronggo however regularly eat dogs and some also eat cats. The latter would be a sin towards *Pue* and especially *Pue Lamo*, the Owner of the Thunder, who disapproves of torturing animals but especially from cat maltreatment, including washing or sprinkling them with water. Dogs are less sanctified but Wana will get skin diseases if they would include them in their diet, it is said – both, cats and dogs are also perceived as valuable pets, who defend either the home against intruders or the rice field against mice. I believe, Atkinson's argument, eating and killing a chicken serves as a way out of Islam due to Islam specific slaughtering restrictions is therefore rather misleading. Instead, one might argue, it could serve as a way into Wana religion since chickens are the main meat provider for Wana people, at least nowadays. Furthermore, nowadays Muslim dietary restrictions do play a minor role in questions of conversion compared to Atkinson's result. This is due to dietary differences between Christians and Wana, as discussed by the example of dog and cat meat. Second, the prohibition of pork also does not play a role as big as it did during Atkinson's time of research; today, pigs are very rare due to deforestation, demographic change, road access and palm oil plantations in my research area.<sup>159</sup>

While *magule manu* serves in the first sense the reconversion from a former religion, it can also function as a conversion ritual to Wana religion although I have met only one case. Zuma, a young Christian, who was neither ethnically nor religiously Wana had lived for years among Wana within the nature reserve. He was planning to marry a young Wana woman; since he was accustomed to Wana culture and society, he was planning to convert via *magule manu* to Wana religion. Zuma's case shows that in absence of a traditional conversion ritual the de-conversion ritual can function as a conversion ritual as well. Zuma however was an exceptional case for questions regarding socio-religious frameworks among Wana people.

The de-conversion ritual is practiced occasionally I was told, but exact data were hard to come by. The politically explosive nature of the ritual is very clear to most Wana due to

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<sup>159</sup> Only now and then Christian households in Taronggo eat pork. Only at one festivity I attended during my research stay, a Christian wedding, pork was served to the guests, eaten by Wana and Christian guests together. For the few Muslim guests and the vegetarian anthropologist a special meal was served in another room.



news from terrifying events caused by interreligious tension in other regions in Indonesia. The Christian-Muslim escalation of the Poso conflict in the early 2000s is still very present (see Chapter 1), also for Wana living in the mountainous area and is often employed in discussion about religious pluralism in Taronggo. Regarding the wish and need for interreligious “harmony”, the ritual is rarely known by Muslim or Christian neighbors. One informant told me, this was also the reason why no Wana living in the critical area of Taronggo ever learned the arrangement and words necessary for the ritual. Ritual experts usually are invited from settlements far away. They make sure to arrange the ritual outside of administrative village units to avoid unwanted witnesses.

#### **4.6 RESISTING RELIGION, RESISTING EDUCATION?**

One of the most important aspects of socio-religious marginality deeply affecting Wana people is its connection to knowledge and access to it. As I have shown in Chapter 3, Wana usually portray themselves as *taw bea*, dumb and unknowing people. This assumption is deeply entangled with and rooted within the cosmological framework of the *taw baraka* who left Wana behind without the attributes that demarcated the former Golden Era: power, wealth and knowledge. These attributes continue to play an important role in Wana culture today and knowledge has probably emerged as one of the most important markers of Wana marginality (see Chapter 3).

In this context access to education and especially school education thus plays a special role for Wana. However, the entanglement between education and religion within the Indonesian nation-state has serious effects on people without an official recognized religion. School education always implies religious instruction that is part of the curriculum all over the country, dating back to the foundation of the Indonesian nation. With the implementation of the state’s Pancasila in 1945 and its inherent monotheistic principle, religious education became a matter of state concern. Development was to be pushed forward through the religious development of Indonesian citizens. Implemented through the National Education System Bill (SPN or *Sisdiknas*, *Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*) in 1950, still these educational guidelines were in fact reinstalled with the Bill’s

resubmission through the Education Law 20/2003 (Assyaukanie 2009: 119–20).<sup>160</sup> Until 1966, people could still choose between a religious course or other complementary non-religious lessons like moral education (Bagir and Abdullah 2011: 62). A regulation of 1960 permitted “students [to] have the right not to take a religion course, if they or their guardians (for younger children) state their objections” (quoted in Bagir and Abdullah 2011: 71).<sup>161</sup> This clause however was cancelled in the decree of 1966<sup>162</sup> – a change in policy that was caused by the political turmoil that shattered the Indonesian Nation between 1965-1966. With the September 30 movement in 1965, the Indonesian communist party was banned and under the new Suharto government a new explicit focus on religion in government policies was but one result, commenced by significant changes on religious issues (Bagir and Abdullah 2011: 71). Thus, for educational facilities and institutions all over the archipelago, obligatory religious teaching became part of the curriculum. Religious education in Indonesia is not subsumed under interreligious discursive praxis, but instead focuses on the “study of one’s own religion. It is a mono-religious education – some would say *instruction*” (Bagir and Abdullah 2011: 62). Applied in schools, the students or pupils are separated in different classrooms during religious lessons, according to their religious affiliation (Bagir and Abdullah 2011: 62). While at universities, one semester is regarded as sufficient, for elementary and secondary schools, two lessons of religious teaching every semester are mandatory (Nala 2004). A recent plan from 2013 is to increase the amount of religious lessons from two to four. Religious education is perceived as a moral education that shapes an individual’s character. The secretary of the directorate general of Islamic education at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Kamaruddin Amin, cited in a New York Times article, said that

“religious values could prevent misbehavior. [...] ‘Right now religion doesn’t contribute significantly to building character because the time allotted to religious education is very limited [...]’. ‘Indonesians are religious people, they are very much attached to their religious teachings, their religious values [...] That is why religion must be taught in school’” (Schonhardt 2013).

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<sup>160</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 20/2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*.

<sup>161</sup> *Ketetapan Majelis Perwaratan Rakyat Sementara Republik Indonesia II/1960 tentang Garis-Garis Besar Pola Pembangunan Nasional Semesta Berencana Tahapan Pertama 1961-1969, Bab II Pasal 3* (Decision of the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia II/1960 on Outline of National Development for the Period 1961-1969).

<sup>162</sup> *Ketetapan Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara Republik Indonesia XXII/1966 tentang Kepartaian, Keormasan Dan Kekaryaantap* (Decision of the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia XXII/1966 on Political parties, Mass-Organisations and Functional Groups).

As I have pointed out in Chapter 2, religious freedom in Indonesia embraces world-religions but neglects indigenous belief systems. Access to school education for Wana is thus difficult in a two-fold way.

First, for upland Wana it is quite a problematic matter due to geographic reasons. Those Wana living in the mountains are too far away from the village infrastructure to be part of the state school system. Some send their children to live with relatives in the village of Taronggo. And few give their children to *Alesintowe*, which offers Wana parents the opportunity to take care of their child and give them a bed, food and a roof over their heads in Rio Tinto.

Second, and most importantly, once Wana children attend the Taronggo village elementary school they are part of the abovementioned national policy that connects school education with religious instruction. Wana children attending the school are thus encouraged to follow religious education. The school in Taronggo is a private school (*sekolah swasta*, BI) and belongs to the Christian Church of Central Sulawesi, (GKST).<sup>163</sup> Thus the curriculum offers religious courses on Protestantism. Muslim pupils are allowed to leave the classroom during these lessons since the school cannot provide a Muslim teacher for the religious course. Although Wana children could not be legally forced to stay and learn during the Christian lessons, but due to social structures in Taronggo, Wana children usually follow the Christian curriculum. Against the background of socio-religious power constellations and experiences of marginalization in Taronggo portrayed above, leaving the school building during these lessons thus is simply not an option for Wana children. Further, all children enrolled in a school need to be registered according to an officially recognized religion. In Taronggo, Wana children are thus all registered as Christians.<sup>164</sup> In an group interview I took with Apa Nevi, a non-converted Wana, and Ibu Lita, a Christian woman, both living in Taronggo, I asked Apa Nevi who went to the village's elementary school when he was little, whether he felt he became a Christian during his school education:

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<sup>163</sup> The national school system offers pupils a three-staged model, starting with a six-year lasting primary school, beginning for children at the age of 7. Afterwards, education continues in the junior secondary school lasting three years, with the opportunity of an additional three years of higher secondary education; the latter "paves the way for higher education, which is imparted through a variety of academies, polytechnics and universities" (Bedi and Garg 2000).

<sup>164</sup> No person I talked to had ever heard of someone earning a school degree without adhering to a world religion. I asked numerous schoolteachers and government officials about the legal situation for such a case but no one could give me a clear answer. It was just an unthinkable option.

He answered: “No, no. I went to a Christian school, the teaching and learning was Christian. But I did not become a Christian.”

Ibu Ibu Lita interrupts him: “He got Christian religion (*dapat agama Kristen*, BI). All Wana people get Christian religion once they go to school, because the school is a Christian school.”

Although Apa Nevi nevertheless resisted religious converting and did not become a Christian, Ibu Lita describes what many Wana fear for their children or what the kids themselves do not aspire. Another Christian interlocutor explains:

“Once we want to go to school we need to have religion. Here, not everyone has religion, but if we want school we need to follow religion. But it is not allowed to urge someone; we only talk about God. When they start to believe and follow us, that is not a problem, we only cannot force them.”

Once the children have passed the local elementary school, Christian or Muslim children usually leave Taronggo for further school education in towns like Kolonodale or Bethelme, the Christian stronghold of Morowali. Some Wana children do so as well. In most cases the local teacher, as he told me, organizes home stays for Wana children among his own relatives or friends who are in need of a housekeeper. Wana kids by the age of around 13 then make a living among these new, usually Christian, families by babysitting, cleaning, washing, cooking and so on; others are working in the family business. They attend school but time for homework is often rare and I have heard one story of abuse and distress. Usually the hosting family expects the child to attend religious service as well; keeping an *orang (yang) belum beragama* under one's roof is often regarded as a threat. All those school children I have met or heard of, soon converted to the guest family's religion. Apa Ele, a Christian from Taronggo shares his thoughts on the topic. I asked him, why these children often convert once they have left Taronggo;

Apa Ele: “They do so because they feel intimidated (*malu*, BI). Because there, the people every Sunday go to church service, or to the mosque every Friday. They start asking, hey, maybe you want to follow to the mosque? Or maybe to church? Ha, staying alone then by yourself you feel ashamed, right?”

Me: “Hmmm”

Apa Ele: “This is true, that is why we [they] must have a religion. They follow anyway. And when they come home, they no longer do so (*begitu pulang ke mari tidakmi*, BI).”

Sia, a 15 year old Wana school girl who goes to school in Bethelme, told me on one occasional visit to Taronggo that, “of course people expect you to convert”. Life in the new environment is hard, she says, and going to school without a religion is even harder. Converting was the only way of becoming socially accepted and she is very happy to follow now the Christian way, she said.

It becomes clear that the correlation between conversion and education is clearly nested within the framework of state ideals and societal pressure. Therefore, some Wana families in Taronggo refuse to send their children to school and consequently cause offence and even anger among Christian and Muslim villagers who interpret this behavior as a lack of responsibility and inadequate parenthood.<sup>165</sup> A similar approach accounts for Alesintowe in Rio Tinto; as I have pointed out above, the great majority of Wana oppose their offer to host Wana children from upland because of the proselytizing objectives of Alesintowe. Only a few Wana parents want their children to be raised in a missionary environment. The equation of resisting religion and resisting education however is too simple. The wish for school education is a huge topic in Wana discussions as the next chapter will reveal in detail. Education is perceived as a moment of power and agency, an opportunity to oppose marginalization at the local and national level. The intertwining of religious conversion and education however puts Wana in a paradox dilemma that is difficult to escape. Apa Ensi for example, wished that his children would advance their education by attending a secondary school:

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<sup>165</sup> I will come back to this issue in Chapter 5 in regard to a religious-free school in Salisarao.

“I tell my children, go to school, get smart, so that you can counter the government (people) when they are lying to you. [...] Two of my children went to the sixth grade of SMP (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*, Middle School). But then they were to become Christian; they experienced a lot of pressure to convert. Ha, but they did not want to; they ran home. I told them it doesn’t matter, go, become Christians, get baptized, so that you will get smart first. If you come back here then, we have medicine here (*obat*, BI; he means the ritual of de-conversion) to finish with that. But important is that you get smart and don’t stay stupid (*bodoh*, BI) like us old people. Ah, but they don’t want to hear; they don’t want to become Christians. So they come back, are still stupid and get lied to by the government. But I can understand them. If only there wasn’t the problem of religion...”

The problem of religion thus hinders Wana to gain access to knowledge that could potentially help them to better their marginalized standing. In 2012, Wana gained a new solution for this problem when they opened a school especially aimed at Wana desire and free of religious content that I will describe in detail in the upcoming chapter. However, religious conversion that is, in local practice, entailed to school education thus portrays a central obstacle for Wana people. It becomes clear, that the connection between school and religion I have outlined here, forces Wana to pay the highest price for education – a price most Wana do not wish to pay.

## 4.7 INTERIM CONCLUSION

In its social construction, Wana marginality is deeply entangled with questions of religion and interreligious relations as this chapter has shown. Against the background of the Indonesian state, national discourse has added significant influence towards the local level to marginalize people with a minority religion as the Wana do – also in historical perspective. Wana, perceived of as the “anti-thesis of national goals” (Atkinson 1983) and “primitives awaiting conversion” (Aragon 2000: 33) have found their own answer to social and national pressure. The rationalization of their belief has provided non-converted Wana with a tool to counter missionary demands and communal expectations of religious conversion. Nevertheless, the difference between Wana living upland and

lowland becomes meaningful in questions of an interreligious living situation. Those Wana living in Taronggo next door to Christian and Muslim neighbors face a stigmatization that is based on their lack of officially recognized religion. Social power in Taronggo lies mainly with those who go to church or mosque. Socio-religious boundaries and power relations thus become palpable for example along marriages that remain practically illegal between non-converted Wana or, in an interfaith marriage, imply a religious conversion by the Wana party. In this case refusal is an act almost impossible although I could present one counter-example. The conversion of a Christian or a Muslim towards Wana belief is simply, albeit the sole example cited above, unthinkable.

Another aspect relevant to religious marginality is access to education. In Taronggo Wana children can attend the elementary school, but many parents are highly reluctant since school attendance means first that Wana children have to attend Christian education lessons and thus, second, school education often eventually encourages Wana children to religious conversion. I have not heard of one Wana who attended school beyond the fourth grade and has not converted.

Thus, Wana are constituted as a marginal group without religious affiliation, expected to become part of a religious center – or adherers of a center acknowledged belief. Instead they constantly resist state power and discursive powers they experience within the interreligious environment. Religious conversion here would be an “easy solution” to “social backwardness”, a way out of their marginalization in relation to the political center. But for Wana their cosmological center serves as the point of hope and promise; they need to remain in their constant state of religious marginality in order to reverse the current center–periphery relation that, in the meantime, is disadvantageous for them. Resistance to religious conversion thus is hope for salvation, which is further also the hope for a process one could call demarginalization.

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## 5 POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POSITIONINGS AND DYNAMICS OF RESISTANCE

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The previous chapters revealed how Wana conceptualize their marginality in terms of a cultural-cosmological worldview that is intertwined with millennial aspirations and expectations. Further, in its social meaning, for non-converted Wana marginality becomes meaningful along socio-religious boundaries that exclude Wana from national discourses of modernity and citizenship while neglecting indigenous people's rights and often pressing people to convert to "modernity" and "citizenship" who are usually the very last in the social order of local communities. Marginality then, receives yet another meaning in terms of Wana political-economic standing. In the following, I will show how the political-economic dimension of Wana marginalized status is mainly constituted by the on-going risk of land loss, a well-known point of contention for Wana people. In this context, specific marginalization processes are, for example, resettlement programs by the government that were aimed at moving Wana permanently from the uplands into centralized lowland villages. Wana however have developed strategies of resistance, "weapons of the weak" as Scott has called them (1985: 1). The focus of this chapter thus lies on strategies of resistance and dynamics of opposing; it is not the goal to give a mere historic overview of the region or detailed description of Wana economic-political standing but rather to show how Wana find their own ways to resist within fields of changing power constellations. In his book *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (1985), Scott describes the daily forms of resistance of the poorer members of the small village of Sedaka in Malaysia and their struggle against the negative outcomes of power relations, inequalities and forms of domination within the community. Although the setting of Sedaka resistance is a more everyday form of counteracting class-based oppression, rather similar to Wana ways of daily resistance living in an interreligious setting as I have described in Chapter 4, Scott's analysis makes clear "that between the poles of complete passivity [that is, no resistance at all] and active resistance, a variety of motivations, goals and actions may be present" (Oliver-Smith 2010: 35). Everyday forms of resistance are a result of the cultural understanding of power and the transformation of its historical context. It is in this way that Wana



resistance, as a meaning of a “diagnostic of power” (Abu-Lughod 1990: 42) is the only way they can hope to change their situation for the best.

I will start with a brief outline of Wana political positioning in pre-colonial interactions with outside authorities to show how Wana have engaged their agency with various regimes and governments. I will then continue with colonial influence in Central Sulawesi uplands and the way Wana people resisted colonial pressure. I will focus in detail on resettlement actions aimed at Wana people that started with colonial intervention in Indonesia and continue to play an important part for upland groups not only in Indonesia until today. The history of Taronggo itself as a resettlement site and the concurring erection of the first Christian school thus portray important markers of Wana opposition to outside influence. Resettlement strategies continued to play an important part for Wana people although the underlying reasons and motives were not always alike. In 2007, several Wana were resettled after a natural catastrophe, and in 2011 a new resettlement plan was formulated aimed at moving Salisarao Wana to a newly built lowland village. The motives behind these actions as well as the entanglement between government, companies and local inhabitants reveal important factors for ongoing marginalization processes that continue to severely affect Wana livelihood until today. The concurring Wana strategies of resistance and rebellion I will present afterwards highlighting the role of “powerful friends” and the politics of “being Wana, becoming indigenous”, to follow Hodgson’s study on the indigenous movement in Africa (2011). Since “every historical moment constructs its own forms of agency” (Ortner 1995: 186), we have to regard resistance and its agency and temporal orders in a process of transition, especially in times of changing regimes and outside economic pressures.<sup>166</sup>

## **5.1 EARLY POWER CONSTELLATIONS: WANA IN TIMES OF *KERAJAAN*, 16TH – 20TH CENTURY**

Wana have been affiliated with a wide range of sultanates in the past – an era called *kerajaan* (BI). In those days, Wana were incorporated in early state systems, dating back to the far-reaching sultanate of Ternate during its heyday in the 16th century, covering

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<sup>166</sup> A reduced version of this chapter has already been published elsewhere (Grumblied 2013).

most of the Eastern islands of Indonesia's archipelago. Although data on Wana for these early days are absent, Atkinson mentions her informants recalling the Ternate ruler as one of their first dependencies (1979: 23). My research showed that Wana in the region of Morowali Regency do not align their history in accordance with a Ternate ruler – a fact that can be caused by micro-regional differences between Wana in Atkinson's study area and my own. However, Central Sulawesi sultanates and their rulers later replaced the Ternate Raja's influence. Wana still were part of a far-reaching network of political obligations and were connected to a state system long before Dutch colonial rule stretched its arm to the Central Sulawesi uplands. Under Central Sulawesi sultanate rule, Wana were obliged to pay tribute in form of honey to their ruler in the North, the Raja of Tojo, and in form of white chickens and bamboo tubes filled with rice for the Raja of Bungku in the South, as Atkinson research shows.<sup>167</sup> The raja of Bungku is remembered for giving Wana people their *ada*-system<sup>168</sup> – the local law system. Before the invention of this new system “people would kill people” (Atkinson 1989: 267) but with the new *ada* rules, a system was established that regulates most notably matters of marriage but also important acts that threaten communal peace like violence and theft.<sup>169</sup> The Central Sulawesi rajas did not exert direct control over Wana people but exercised indirect power through local Wana leaders called *makole* or *basal*, functioning as representatives of the raja (Atkinson 1989: 188,345). These *makole* were part of the Wana ranking system, including *makole* kin, common people and debt slaves (Atkinson 1989: 267). Regarding Atkinson's account of Wana *makole*, Morowali Wana remember only one Wana leader who lived in the area of Posangke. The descendants today are still believed to have special powers.

During the time of *kerajaan*, Wana were involved in a range of wars with surrounding ethnic groups, mainly about territorial claims. They fought with their Eastern neighbors, the To Loinang, and with groups from Poso in the East. During their visits to the coast, sea pirates often attacked Wana people. The biggest enemy Wana had to face were the To Lage, a Pamona speaking group who tried to capture the Wana territory in the East

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<sup>167</sup> While A.C. Kruyt and my interlocutors refer to a strong dependence of Wana to the raja of Bungku, Atkinson's interlocutors stated an affiliation with the raja of Tojo. I agree with Atkinson who refers these differences to the geographical distances between the research areas.

<sup>168</sup> *Ada* is the local expression for *adat* (BI).

<sup>169</sup> Similar to Atkinson, I did not become an expert on Wana *ada* matters although I was able to observe a number of *ada* gatherings. Compensation was generally made in form of cloth and money if available.

(Atkinson 1989: 262). A.C. described these people as Bareé speaking Toraja; today they are generally referred to as To Pamona. It is also in these early wars and regional competition that Atkinson sees a cause for Wana residential mobility. She refers to A.C. Kruyt who mentions Wana people as constantly living in a state of possible flight. For instance, they used to keep their pigs with nose rings to be able to escape quickly in case of an emergency. During Atkinson's research, pigs were kept without this attribute and during my own research no Wana I met was in possession of pigs or remembered older generations keeping them – with or without nose rings. It is only in the village of Taronggo where a few Christian people breed pigs, although without any historical connection to upland Wana habits. Residential mobility nevertheless played a highly important part for Morowali Wana as well. Above all, it was an important strategy to avoid outside influence regardless of where power was temporarily located or from where it was executed. Wana merely never appeared to openly challenge the governing regimes or other oppressors; they showed no obvious motivation to straightforwardly oppose processes of marginalization. Instead, avoidance of direct confrontation seems to be a historically congruent matter among them. The To Lage told stories about Wana magical powers that helped them to disappear. In case of enemy attack, they could convert their fireplaces into red tree ants when the enemy approached or they could make themselves shrink so that they fit under tree leaves to hide from the enemy (Atkinson 1989: 262).

Since Wana usually chose to flee instead of fighting back, A.C. Kruyt and Atkinson both came to the conclusion that Wana were historically rather “shy victims” than heroes during times of war: “timidity [among the Wana] had its roots in the endemic regional warfare of the nineteenth century. In the regional game of headhunting the Wana were often the heads” (Atkinson 1989: 226). Atkinson recounts the story of Liwa, the paternal grandfather of one of her interlocutors and head of a Wana settlement, who was under such continuing pressure to flee that he would eat every morning a full meal in order to manage to escape with a full belly. Atkinson states: “Wana openly acknowledge their cowardice as a people” (1989: 262), making clear that historical experiences of being disadvantaged during fighting regimes lead to a self-victimization. Wana agency and resistance in pre-colonial times thus was rather signified by subtle forms of opposition. While they were engaged in loose forms of government by a range of sultanates and rulers, the obligations towards these rulers were marginal and also partly positively remembered with the example of the *ada* system. In wartimes, however, fleeing instead of

attacking was the strategy to deal with outside violence and pressure according to Atkinson. This self-stigmatization of Wana as victims I could only partly find during my own research. The timidity Atkinson describes for Wana society rooted in early warfare activities was either no longer part of Wana collective memory or differentiated between both research sites significantly.<sup>170</sup> The "timidity" is still an important point of self-reference and is deeply connected to a self-marginalization process that I have already described in Chapter 3, in which Wana often portray themselves as "stupid", "poor" and "helpless". However, when retelling stories of early wartimes, Morowali Wana usually do not present themselves as victims. Instead they emphasize their own creativity, their notorious fighting skills and strength and furthermore state that they were extremely feared by their enemies. Thus, Wana "timidity" in my own research context is rather rooted in cosmological narratives and experiences other than war. Both, timidity in accounts of war as Atkinson describes as well as timidity nested in cosmological accounts nevertheless can be read as a marker of marginalization processes and functions as a symbol of resistance. Albeit resistance is always a "historically specific response" (Abu-Lughod 1990: 52) to transformation processes, this subtle form of opposition described above represents an ongoing pattern for Wana people as will become further clear in the course of this chapter.

## **5.2 COLONIAL INTERACTIONS AND FORCED RESETTLEMENT, EARLY 20TH CENTURY**

Headhunting and other warlike activities found an end when the colonial government entered the region in the beginning of the 20th century. This however did not mean that violence was erased. Wana historical accounts today are dominated by ferocious stories that vividly display the pressure the colonial government exercised towards upland groups: "Although the imposition of Dutch rule in the region at the beginning of this century put an end to raiding, it inaugurated a new form of local terrorism" (Atkinson 1989: 226). In the early 20th century, the colonial government was eager to resettle upland groups to the lowland, closer to the administrative apparatus in order to make

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<sup>170</sup> If it ever has been – the difference between Atkinson's and my own research, again, might be explained by micro-regional differences.

them “controllable” and thereby “civilizing” them by means of what Scott has called “the great utopian social engineering schemes of the twentieth century” (1998: 4). Thereby, they introduced a new era of violent interaction. Colonial efforts were regarded as “traumatic [...] big men in boots with guns” (Atkinson 1979: 24) displayed a so-far unknown enemy who Wana tried to oppose. Atkinson recalls stories of Wana who killed Dutch officials in Pindulu, at least in some way changing the picture of “being the heads in headhunting”. Informants in my research are in Morowali Regency and also recall bloody interactions with Dutch officials.<sup>171</sup> However, the overall strategy of resisting colonial power can nonetheless be traced back to patterns of hiding and escaping government officials and their endeavors.

### 5.2.1 Extending Power to Central Sulawesi Uplands

Central Sulawesi was not of special interest for the Dutch colonial government in early years (see Chapter 1). Although the island’s Western region experienced some occasional visits by colonial administrative personnel it was not until the late 19th century that the remoteness of Central Sulawesi gained attention by the colonial undertakers. This era signifies a time of change in Dutch colonial history for the archipelago. The Dutch East Indian Company (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC*) had largely ignored most islands outside of Java but with the VOC’s end in 1799, the colonial government put a lot of effort in the task of extending their power over the archipelago (Cribb 2000: 113–14). The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the extension of the spice trade over the islands, the Agrarian Law of 1870 and an increased need of colonial goods in Europe during the times of industrialization led to a massive transformation of colonial practice. By 1850, the colonial project of forced cultivation on the main island of Java (*cultuurstelsel*) came to an end and a fresh “liberal spirit” (Weber, Kreisel, and Faust 2003: 405) enabled a new economic drive throughout the colonial sphere. The long run colonial policy of abstention

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<sup>171</sup> Interestingly, for Atkinson’s informants, the Dutch regency was far more shocking and hurtful than former wars, whereas my studies revealed an opposite picture. The Dutch times are remembered as a time of bloody oppression but also as a positive development, for instance in form of road construction. Early warfare with their ethnic neighbors is remembered as far worse and violent. Apa nTee, (*kepala suku*, administrative head of Taronggo Wana), summons up: “The Dutch only wanted to govern us, that was all; the others were far worse”. This difference in Wana accounts could be traced back to differing Dutch interactions in Northern and Southern Wana lands.

underwent a complete modification when direct rule was extended to remote islands like Sulawesi, Borneo and Sumatra. Expanding colonial power to the remote areas of the archipelago where colonial actors had so far no access to became a new goal. This of course required a whole new administrative apparatus. For Central Sulawesi, the Netherlands Missionary Society (*Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap*) served as a very first key to extending control to the uplands with the missionary A.C. Kruyt establishing the first missionary post in Poso in 1892. Two years later the first permanent colonial station in Poso was erected as late as 1894. The colonial administrative personnel of the new region nevertheless was left without any real power to exercise in the very beginning; “the *controleur* remained a powerless figurehead, his hands tied by the policy of abstention, and by ignorance of the language and culture of the area” (Schrauwers 2000: 46). This however changed soon. A couple of years earlier, in 1888, the Protestant Anti-Revolutionaire Partij, a right wing Christian party, was elected for Dutch government and the development of the Indonesian population became one major goal of the new Netherlands government. The “Dutch middle-class displeasure with what was perceived in Europe as a lack of moral and economic commitment to the betterment of the colonies” (Aragon 2000: 100) resulted in a new moral impetus of the so-called Ethical Policy of the Dutch Colonial government. The Ethical Policy was instigated through two publications published in the Netherlands,<sup>172</sup> that were deeply criticizing the way Dutch colonial practices had exploited the local population, appealed to the Netherlands’ honor and “called for the formulation of a policy that would protect native rights and promote moral and material development, in contrast to the past policy of exploitation” (Adam 1995: 90). A strong focus on Christian missions and associated moral values that were believed to be “the only way to achieve ‘the spiritual and cultural development of the [indigenous] population’” (Coté 1996: 90) became the new strategy in extending power to Indonesia’s outer islands. Economic and state-power oriented motives were covered well by the *ethical impetus* of the new colonial direction when in fact the invention of a new tax system and the urgent need for colonial products were driving forces behind the new approach to colonial outreach in the Central Sulawesi uplands.<sup>173</sup> The Ethical Policy

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<sup>172</sup> A pamphlet published in 1901 by the journalist P. Brooshooft: “The Ethical Direction in Colonial Policy” (1977) and an article titled “Een Ereschuld” by the Liberal leader C.T. van Deventer (1899; quoted in Adam 1995: 90).

<sup>173</sup> Tania Li’s chapter “Contradicting Positions” in *The Will to Improve* summarizes and analyzes these paradoxes of colonial arguing and acting. See Li (Li 2007b: 31–33)

started, paradoxically, with an armed initiative. Between 1905 and 1907 the highland regions of Central Sulawesi became a colonial target in a wave of military maneuvers to extend colonial control over the area; it was believed that “[t]he blessings of Dutch civilization were unavailable to the inhabitants of the formerly uncolonised areas of the Outer Islands without such intervention” (Coté 1996: 97). It was A.C. Kruyt and Adriani who had been travelling in the upland area of Western Central Sulawesi who recommended military action to the colonial government (Schrauwers 2000: 47). Eastern Central Sulawesi, administratively subdivided in the kingdoms of Tobungku on the coast and Mori in the interior, had so far not experienced any colonial presence at all (Henley 2005: 242).<sup>174</sup> A.C. Kruyt and Adriani’s efforts and research conducted in the upland region before Dutch intervention showed that progress in the hinterlands was slow to come by. The assistant-resident of Central Sulawesi A.J.N. Engelenberg wrote about A.C. Kruyts and Adriani’s suggestions

“[t]he rottenness of the political circumstances makes their work unfruitful. And the rottenness could only be cut away by the violence of a Government. [...] We are confronted with abuses which can only be eliminated with a rough hand and we need to clean it up because the interests of this people themselves bid us” (Engelenberg, quoted in Schrauwers 2000: 47).

As a result, in 1905 military forces landed on the coast and overpowered the sovereign of the area, the King of Luwu. Dutch colonial troops entered Central Sulawesi by means of “pacification” and to get hold of so called short contracts, *korte verklaring*, signed by local leaders opening the door for Dutch authorities to grant political rights and sovereignty over the region (Weber, Kreisel, and Faust 2003: 407). The invading troops handed out the information that the King of Luwu had accepted the Netherlands’ Queen as new sovereign and so were the interior chiefs in the region around Luwu to follow. Once local leaders had become compliant to the colonial regime, the Dutch troops demanded corvée labor (Aragon 2000: 100). In 1907, Dutch troops overran the Mori kingdom in the inland and by 1908 the kingdoms of Bungku as well as Mori became part of the “Government of Celebes and dependencies” (Makassar).<sup>175</sup> The uplands took

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<sup>174</sup> A census by 1930 shows a very small combined population density of the two kingdoms with only three persons per km<sup>2</sup>, in total under 42.000 people (Henley 2005: 243). However, exact numbers for the region of the Wana were not available: “in 1930 there must have been some peripheral groups, particularly among the remote To Wana [...] which were not included in the census” (Henley 2005: 227).

<sup>175</sup> In 1924 they were administratively integrated in the residency of Manado in the North (Henley 2005: 243).

longer time to be controlled when resistance from the uplanders was formed. Opposition by indigenous groups however was silenced with the help of weapons and a great number of uplanders died in the military fortification (Schrauwens 2000: 47–48).

After these initial military interventions, the colonial government further defined power and influence in the uplands. Beginning in 1906 upland people of Central Sulawesi were subjected to another new form of rule: The resettlement of upland inhabitants to centralized villages in the lowland.

### 5.2.2 Colonial Resettlement

As I have described earlier (see Chapter 2), by forcing households to move from up- to lowland areas, the government could implement rule on the “uncivilized” and “wild”, either through administrative proximity, new forms of village rule, the implementation of a new tax system, the banning of cultural specifics such as headhunting (Schrauwens 2000: 65) that were believed to be a hindrance to progress and last but not least the protection of the spread of Islam through simultaneously offering Christian alternatives in the newly erected villages.<sup>176</sup> That these initiatives were not easily realized, shows the following description by Kruyt who had come to the Wana area himself in 1928 for an exploration journey. He describes the suffering of Wana caused by early colonial state intervention:

“The To Wana have been a much disturbed folk. [...] Peace did not become their share either, when the [Netherlands] government put its powerful hand on them. In the beginning of the occupation the administrative government supposed that these shy people would get to know order and law most easily if they were forced to live near the coast. But the people did not wish that with the result [...] that many patrols of soldiers were sent repeatedly into this land to draw the people down to the coast. [...] The misery of these people must have been great. Of those who had let themselves be forced to settle near the coast, many died” (A.C. Kruyt 1930: 403–4).<sup>177</sup>

Taronggo itself was established as such a resettlement site for Wana from the upland regions of Posangke, Ratobae, Salisarao and probably Uewaju. During A.C. Kruyt's

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<sup>176</sup> While Central Sulawesi's uplands remained “animist”, lowland states like Luwu had come under Islamic influence the lowlands since the 17th century (Roth 2007: 129)

<sup>177</sup> Translation by Grumblies.



voyage in 1928, the village of Taronggo had already been erected, but success was a long time coming. The following description is taken from A.C. Kruyt's account while visiting the village of Taronggo:

“Where this plain ends is situated the village of Taronggo, in which the To Posangke [Wana] have gathered. This new village, and at all the other villages that I have visited later on, clearly shows that the To Wana have remained faithful to their old habit of living scattered on their fields. The kampongs, which they built by order of the authorities, are not inhabited, of which the houses clearly show signs. Many have become uninhabitable, others miss their stairs; not the least bit of furniture is found inside. There are no rice sheds – nor pounding blocks. When a visit from a civil servant is announced, the Chief of a field returns home, followed by his wife and some other folk who carry the necessary food and cooking gear in baskets, enough for a stay of several days. Some other people, probably from nearby gardens, come as well to accompany their Chief. No sooner is the visitor gone, though, or the village is empty again. On my journey through this land I often found not even a dog or chicken in some villages” (A.C. Kruyt 1930).<sup>178</sup>

Kruyt describes Taronggo as an uninhabited village, a proof of Wana strategies of resisting resettlement initiatives by the colonial government. Wana people regularly fled upland to escape the colonial administration and developed own creative strategies to trick them. The missionary's account vividly shows the strategy of resisting resettlement initiatives and how little success colonial initiatives among the Wana had. However, colonial violence left traces among Wana who still today recall bloody accounts of these early days of forced “civilization”. Apa nTee, the *kepala suku* of Taronggo, for example, recounts a story figuring iDao, also called Njao or Apa iMangka, who is well remembered by my Wana interlocutors as Taronggo's first *kepala desa* who came from the area of the Salisarao Mountains. Some people recall that many Wana followed him when he left the mountains to make *kampung* in Taronggo, forced by colonial intervention, simply for the reason that he was one of them. In Apa nTee's account iDao's role functions as an example of the violent colonial forces to which Wana people often had not opposition:

“Honestly, when they [the Dutch] arrived here, they governed us in the most violent sense. Wana had to work for them, were hit when they got tired. The Dutch were very naughty. They shot many Wana dead. My grandma came from Ratobae [in the mountains close to Posangke] and told me the following story:

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<sup>178</sup> Translation by Grumbliès.

Many Wana people had fled the Dutch to Ratobae [in the mountain], but what did the Dutch do? They followed them, climbed the mountains until Sangkioe at the mountain Toba. So there is this one Dutch man and he sees a man in the grass, walking by, carrying a large snake around his neck. The Dutch gets frightened although he is far away, more or less a kilometer, but he is so scared that he shoots and hits the Wana in the neck. Shot through. But only through the bone, fortunately the lungs have not been hit. He still lives and does not fall. He bandages up his wound and goes home to his house in the forest where his wife is shocked by all the blood.

Meanwhile people start hearing the sound of shooting guns, the Dutch keep on shooting Wana people and many got shot but no one dead so far. There is one Wana man who is brave and wants to defend himself with bow and arrow. At this point the Dutch hesitated and asked iDao, the stupid *kepala desa*, who had accompanied them to the mountains. They ask: Shall we shoot this guy? iDao does not know their language and wants to answer NO, but he does not know the words. The Dutch ask again: We want to shoot this guy? And iDao answers with wrong words: yes, let's shoot him. To this point the Dutch start shooting for real. EEEEEHHH: There is a Wana sitting on a cliff, defending himself with bow and arrow and then there are the Dutch who shoot once and dead he is, *habis*. From this day on, many Wana followed the Dutch government, left the mountains to build villages; they were just scared to get killed.”

As Apa nTee's portrayal shows the founding time of Taronggo is remembered not in a positive way. iDao is presented in accounts of these early days as a man who, on the one hand, tried to protect his community but on the other hand failed since he had not much knowledge to resist colonial efforts. Apa nTee presses iDao's missing education as a point of failure: “He was a stupid man, he had no school(-education) [laughing]”.<sup>179</sup> Another story of violent interaction with Dutch officials is also dated around these first years of Taronggo as a village:

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<sup>179</sup> See Chapter 4.4.5 for the importance of education and knowledge for Wana.

There was a very first school for Wana people located in Lemo, a settlement in the East. Numerous Wana from other areas in the mountainous regions around it were sent to Lemo for means of education. One day, the account goes, the residential Dutch officials who were living in Lemo at that time, pressed a number of Wana people to arrange a typical Wana funeral ceremony which was supposed to last seven days and seven nights. The ceremony had to be held in the school building of Lemo according to Dutch instructions. The Wana bended to the Dutch's will and began with the ceremony. On the seventh day the ritual members were exhausted and fell asleep in the school house. Those Wana who had come together in the school house were said to have constantly refused Dutch attempts to agree with Christian conversion. Therefore, the Dutch missionaries had given up effort on them. Instead they now followed a cruel plan: When the weary Wana in the school building fell asleep, the Dutch locked the door of the school building and set fire. More than 300 Wana are believed to be killed by the flames. Only one woman had managed to escape the building and fled to the mountains from where she could see the fire burning her friends and relatives; "from this day on, Wana decided again to keep away from the Dutch; they left for their mountainous homes", an informant recalls.

Considering missing data on the colonial era in Morowali Regency I cannot account for the reliability of this narrative. Nevertheless, the importance of this story has to be seen in the light of Wana experience with Dutch officials, in their struggle to keep their own belief system and their felt victimization and relative helplessness against violent assaults. Other stories of these early days account for Wana creativity finding their own strategies to fool government authorities. As I have shown above, Wana were obliged to build their own houses in the centralized villages in which they did not intend to live, for example in Taronggo. Similar to A.C. Kruyt's account describing Taronggo as an empty village, my interlocutors told me how their ancestors would by night light resin lamps in these houses of the *kampung* to trick patrolling officials. They would leave in the dark for the mountains or their fields to sleep among family members who not yet had been forced to resettle. In the morning they would return, unnoticed by their colonial authorities.

### 5.2.3 Schooling and Education

Although colonial intervention was not very fruitful in the beginning among Southern Wana, Kruyt was very successful in his missionary goal in the area of the Pamona speaking people of Central Sulawesi. The government as well as the mission put a lot of effort in the introduction of Christian education, that was perceived as “the best medicine to cure the indolence and immorality of natives in the colonies” (Aragon 2000: 101).<sup>180</sup> For the region, A.C. Kruyt was mainly left in charge of educating the local Pamona population, which he accomplished with great success. He opened a vast number of Christian schools in the area around Poso and although he received heavy criticism from the government side due to ongoing disagreements on schools, hospitals as well as economic ventures. But the Dutch government’s lasting fear of Muslim infringement eventually allowed A.C. Kruyt, and, after 1921, his missionary son, Johannes, called Jan, “to maintain a relatively firm grasp on eastern Central Sulawesi schools and communities” (Aragon 2000: 107). In the Wana region, missionary and government actions needed a longer time to note some success. This changed when the colonial initiative entailed further missionary strategies. In 1924 the *onderafdeling* Poso received the status of an independent station; the former assistant-controleur Emile Gobée was ascribed the new status as the Poso assistant-resident (Noort 2006: 101). It was under Gobée that the first inventions from Dutch side to begin missionary work among the Wana started (Noort 2006). A year after A.C. Kruyt’s visit, in 1929, the missionary path was opened and the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap* (Netherlands Missionary Society) erected the first local school in Taronggo aimed at educating and Christianizing Wana children.

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<sup>180</sup> Interestingly, although the Dutch government and the associated missionaries put a lot of effort in the quest of “modernizing” and “civilizing” Wana people, Atkinson states that her informants did not evoke religious attempts in accordance with colonial endeavors: “Asked what religion the Dutch had, older informants speculated that the Dutch probably possessed their own traditional religion just as the Wana do” (Atkinson 1988: 45). According to Atkinson, missionary attempts began only with the end of World War II. On the contrary, in Taronggo, itself built as a *kampung* by the colonial government, the first interaction with the Dutch is associated with early missionaries like A.C. Kruyt and his son, J. Kruyt. Ibu Lin, one of my Christian informants in Taronggo stated: “My grandmother was born in the mountains, in Posangke, where she lived. Then she came down from the mountains to Taronggo, which was newly built that time and she settled there, in the *kampung*, together with the *orang Belanda* (BI, Dutch man). She was the first Wana who converted to the Christian faith.”

In 1925, Gobée, who was already quite familiar with missionary work, had already asked to open schools for the Wana. He saw missionaries as best suited people for the act of searching the trust of local people (J. Kruyt 1933: 21). In 1926, a conference of the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap* agreed to Gobée's plan; his initial plan included the spread from the Northern territory,

“[f]rom there could then be gradually expanded. But because messages had come, which sanctioned the expectation that further contact would lead to fruitful activity also in the southern part of To Wana, which belongs to the administrative area of Boengkoe, the Conference took the proposal missionary K. Riedel there to make an exploration. This took place in September 1926. The people received him warmly throughout, when they learned who he was and what he was” (J. Kruyt 1933: 21).<sup>181</sup>

Albeit the initial approval by the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap*, some restructuration within the government positions required another delay of the “To Wana schooling project”. After a new resident had been placed in Manado and a new assistant-resident replaced Gobée in Poso, the first two Wana missionary schools were opened in 1929: one in Dasari (Barangas in the North) and one in Taronggo. J. Kruyt (1893-1978) born in Poso and educated in the Netherlands also came to work in Central Sulawesi as a district-missionary for the *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap*. Working as an assistant to his famous father, he also held the position of the director of the schoolmaster's training college in Pendolo (Kappelhof et al.; J. Kruyt 1970). J. Kruyt took a trip through the Wana region as well, a couple of years after his father had visited the area. In the short article “Een reis door To Wana” he writes in 1933:

“The Civil Service has been committed for years tried to get the To Wana to build some roads around their land and villages along these roads to live in. This free folk was unwilling to do so, as is understandable. In the beginning the *bestuurders* [rulers] believed that they had had to force them with the help of soldiers' patrols. The result, however, was that the people in the mountains drew back and were now quite impossible to get under the [Dutch] influence” (J. Kruyt 1933:24).<sup>182</sup>

During this voyage J. Kruyt also came to visit the settlement of Taronggo. At first, his impression of the village and its relatively new school was rather positive. Compared to his father's description (see above) who only found an empty village a couple of years

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<sup>181</sup> Translation by Grumbles.

<sup>182</sup> Translation by Grumbles.

earlier, J. Kruyt describes the jovial idea he got from the teacher's house, which was neatly built by the community. The missionary teacher himself was a married man who came from the Minahasa area and had already been living for three years in Taronggo. Albeit the presence of the teacher, for J. Kruyt the initial (but fragile) optimistic appearance of the village was mainly caused by the positive influence of the Wana local chief whose name was Njao. I have already introduced Njao in the foregoing subchapter as recalled in an account by Apa nTee, there called iDao.

Njao died during the short visit of J. Kruyt's exploration tour on 13th June 1932. His death was a point of concern for J. Kruyt's expectations for the local school's progress; "what is going to happen with Taronggo, now that the village head is missing? What is going to happen to this school for which the deceased showed a special interest?" (J. Kruyt 1933: 26).<sup>183</sup> According to J. Kruyt, Njao seemed to be the only person to keep the village together, making clear how resistant the local community of Wana people were to the resettlement initiative and schooling idea:

"This death has important implications, because this head [Njao] was deemed to be the only man who managed to hold the village. It is expected that the official village Taronggo practically will not become less a place of living for people than it already was. In general the Wana villages are not much more than mock villages [*schijn-dorpen*]: people do not live here what becomes visible upon first sight as soon as you enter the village. The walls of the houses are often made of a floor on poles and a roof and often with walls but mostly the back wall is missing. A fireplace is only rarely found in these homes; a proof that they are not occupied" (J. Kruyt 1933: 26).<sup>184</sup>

In J. Kruyt's account the role of the local school becomes well apparent. At that time two teachers from the Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap were located in the Southern Wana area: For Taronggo the above mentioned Minahasa, a second one was located further North-East in the Dasari school. J. Kruyt describes both schools for the still "comparatively primitive people" as pioneering schools whose first task it was to establish its position within a society that actually has no felt need for a school as a place of learning. In this regard, it was also to further clarify how it can be established within a place where enough adults and children do actually live since most Wana did not live in permanent villages. A second task would be to estimate the results of the school-chiefs

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<sup>183</sup> Translation by Grumbles.

<sup>184</sup> Translation by Grumbles.

themselves. These goals however were not easily accomplished although missionary work by the means of evangelization itself, at least in Dasari, seemed to be an easy task. The Dasari school received its pupils from the places of Salea, Dasari and Oee Karoeroe, all of them Boerangasi villages,<sup>185</sup> J. Kruyt writes (1933: 34). During times of *kerajaaan* the ruler of Bungku had pressed people there to "convert" to Islam, "upon his order the people had to be baptized [*zich laten doopen*]"<sup>186</sup> (J. Kruyt 1933: 24). According to J. Kruyt this fact had made it easy for the missionaries to convince Wana to "shake off" Islam and instead convert to Christianity (1933: 24).<sup>187</sup>

Looking at the numbers, J. Kruyt remarks a clear difference between Dasari and Taronggo "progress" in schooling. Both schools opened in 1929; Taronggo in March and Dasari in August. Taronggo in its beginning had a number of 20 children but soon nine of them were not noted any longer as pupils. The reason for this was that some of them simply did not show up any longer and went back to their far away gardens. They were listed as "stay-aways [*weggebleven*]" (1933: 35). From this first group of schoolchildren another six "stayed away" so that only five of the original group remained, J. Kruyt notes (1933: 35). In Dasari, 40 children were listed initially, of these 21 were not listed any further; 19 of these were stay-aways. The Dasari teacher complained heavily that during rainy season many pupils could not come to the school because of the flooded river people were unable to cross. J. Kruyt reports these numbers as "not encouraging [*niet bemoedigend*]" . He notes that Taronggo was a bad example against the situation in Dasari; the latter however had way more contact with the outside world compared to their Taronggo equals. By contrast, in Taronggo there were "still real, unbounded wild people [*nog echte, ongebonden wildernis-mensen*]" (1933: 35). In 1931, both schools accepted another group of children; in Dasari children were already more accustomed to the school idea and arrived on time in January; however, in Taronggo the curriculum still dealt with tardiness. The numbers of pupils were quite comparable to the first year; 15 children were enlisted, then 6 of them were depreciated (*afgeschreven*), four of them as stay-aways. However, in Dasari no children were depreciated for the second year of 1931. For J. Kruyt, this was a result that showed "how the To Boerangasi began to understand the

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<sup>185</sup> Today called Barangas, see for example Atkinson (1989).

<sup>186</sup> The mentioning of baptism for a conversion to Islam is of course misleading in this context since according to Muslim faith no such act as baptizing is necessary for successful conversion.

<sup>187</sup> J. Kruyt further notes an ongoing temporary misfeeling between the two confessions (1933).

purpose of the school and its nature and is therefore a very satisfying target, while the To Pesangke [To Posangke] had not come one step further in this regard” (1933: 36). J. Kruyts account on the first school of Taronggo makes clear how reluctant Wana in the area around Taronggo were to following government orders and accepting outside administration. It further underlines the significance of the forced resettlement of Wana from the uplands to the village of Taronggo and the question of marginality among the Wana. Apart from Wana who finally resettled in Taronggo there still existed a great number of those who successfully resisted resettlement strategies. Dutch troops continued to search for Wana upland settlements with unregistered inhabitants, forcibly taking resisting individuals to Kolonolade “to become familiar with ‘society’, whereupon they would be allowed to return home on the condition that they ‘build a village at a mutually agreed upon place’” (Atkinson 1989: 264). Most of them however would “disappear again into their inaccessible hiding places” (A.C. Kruyt 1930: 405; quoted in Atkinson 1989: 264).

Although reluctant to Dutch government intrusion, many Wana started to engage soon in the evolving regional resin market, a natural resource used for the production of varnishes. Resin became a popular product before and after World War II and Wana “energetically tapped wild damar trees and traded resin for cloth, knives, pots, salt, and other coastal luxuries” (Atkinson 1989: 264). While Wana were interested in the “benefit and hardship” (Atkinson 1989: 264) they saw in the opportunities of the resin market, political changes in form of World War II, the Japanese occupation and the political tumults of the 1950s and 1960s sent Wana, who had formerly accepted government impositions in favour of trade advantages, immediately back to the mountains.

As a matter of fact, resettlement again became a threat to Wana in the North, when the Indonesian government built new villages at the northern coast to relocate upland locals in the 1970s. This happened in a nationwide attempt by the Department of Social Affairs (DEPSOS) to “civilize” uplanders by relocating them in centralized villages in a similar manner the Dutch had started (see Chapter 2; cf. Colchester 2009; Haba 1998). Northern Wana were highly critical of these actions. By contrast, for other upland groups in Central Sulawesi Li recalls how they “had no nostalgia for life in the hills” (Li 2007b: 91) but were eager to “escape their isolation and improve their lot” (Li 2007b: 91). She notes hundreds of upland families in Rahmat who were willingly applying for resettlement



programs in hope for better access to education and markets. Atkinson recalls a very different picture for the Wana:

“Opposition to these plans was widespread among Wana, who felt that the coastal plains were unsuitable for farming, feared exploitation by local officials, and were anxious about forced conversions to Islam and Christianity. Plans to resettle interior peoples replaced any government interest in sustaining interior villages; they also provoked withdrawal by many Wana who would have been willing to cooperate with the government so long as they be allowed to remain in their hinterlands” (1989: 264).

In the Southern Wana area of Morowali, no new resettlement projects were initiated by DEPSOS but the scheme of relocating Wana from their upland livelihoods has continued to be a matter of concern until today. Hiding and escaping to the mountains functioned and still functions thus as an avoidance and resistance strategy to ongoing outside opposition to Wana culture as I will show in the following sub-chapter.

### 5.3 NATURAL DISASTERS AND RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS: THE *DUSUN* RIO TINTO

Up to today, Wana have thus more or less silently boycotted resettlement strategies. More current resettlement strategies do have different reasons and motivations but the effects on Wana livelihoods remain more or less the same. In Chapter 4 I described the settlement of Rio Tinto as a showplace of missionary action in the research area. The *dusun* (sub-village, BI)<sup>188</sup> of Taronggo is a relatively new part of the village, located south of the main village. It is situated at the border of the nature reserve to the north and surrounded by palm oil plantations to the south, east and west. The *dusun* was built in 2007 as a refugee resettlement site for Wana from the upland. Heavy rainfalls killing around 55 people in total in the Bungku Utara area (The Jakarta Post 2007), had also caused a disastrous landslide in the region of Ratobae, located in the mountains north of Taronggo and West of Salisarao. Eleven Wana died in this catastrophe.

Facing this tragic emergency in Morowali Regency, a help force consisting of experts from Tadulako University in Palu, funded by Rio Tinto, a multinational mining company, was soon established. The help force brought sorely needed medical and other supplies to Taronggo and erected a temporary refugee camp for those Wana from the upland who had lost their houses and families. In those years, the company Rio Tinto was heavily interested in investing in Central Sulawesi; internal research that was conducted in the 2000s showed an immense nickel deposit in Morowali Regency, “enough to support between 40 and 100 years of production” (Mills 2008: 5). The company was eager to show its commitment to the project and did pay attention to its overall image in Central Sulawesi: “Local communities in Sulawesi and Indonesian national political parties are, naturally, excited by the economic potential of a Rio Tinto project” (Mills 2008: 5), so Mike Jolley, the former president director of Rio Tinto Indonesia stated in a publication published by the company. He further determined:

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<sup>188</sup> While *desa* is the official administrative village unit, a *dusun* describes a hamlet that administratively belongs to the *desa* but may as well be located geographically outside of the *desa* (Novacek et al. 2001: 12). See also Law 5/1979 on Village Government, paragraph 5. The *desa* of Taronggo consists of four *dusun*; *dusun dua* for example comprises administratively all Wana living in the area of Salisarao and Ratobae and a number of other Wana settlements within the upland region. Each *dusun* has an administrative head, the *kepala dusun*.

“To keep the project ‘alive’ in people’s minds, but without raising unrealistic expectations, Rio Tinto is committed to investing US\$500,000 in a long term, broad based community development programme that is currently being planned and which will take place whatever the outcome of negotiations” (Mills 2008: 5).

Part of the money was spent for the immediate help of those families acutely affected by the floods and landslide or as Jolley noted, “[t]he Morowali disaster kick started this concept in a meaningful way” (Mills 2008: 5). Rio Tinto had been working with Palu’s state university, Tadulako University (UNTAD), before and transferred money to the task force from the university. The company gave an amount of 250,000 USD for two projects to help the victims; one project was meant to ensure education for children from flooded villages, the other project consisted of the building of a new settlement site close to Taronggo. This undertaking took place in order to “re-house an entire village” (Mills 2008: 5) and aimed at the resettlement of those families from Posangke and Ratobae up in the mountains that were directly affected by the causes of the natural disaster. Together with a local inhabitant from Taronggo the team from Tadulako University under the direction of Muhammad Marzuki (P4K – Research Center for Peace and Conflict Management) chose the location of the new settlement. Exactly 46 houses were built, “using traditional designs but modern materials and techniques” (Mills 2008: 5). The settlement became a sub-district of Taronggo village and was named after the sponsor: Rio Tinto. The immediate reactions were positive according to local sources since people were in deep shock by the catastrophe and were frightened to return to the uplands and thus relieved to have a new place to stay. The company Rio Tinto stated “that both projects have been well received by local people and by local and national governments” (Mills 2008: 5). So far, the project seemed to be a success.

Yet, when I entered the field for the very first time for a preliminary research stay in early 2011 and spent a day in the settlement of Rio Tinto I was astonished to find an almost empty village (Fig. 25-26). The 46 houses were still standing but most of them looked very damaged, some had missing walls and doors. Many of them were recaptured by nature and fast growing vegetation had entered the houses. It felt indeed like walking through a ghost village. It was only after this first stay in the area that I got to read A.C. and J. Kruyts accounts on Taronggo and their impressions of the village as a mock settlement in the early 20th century. It felt like reading a mirror of my own experience when I visited Rio Tinto. Although the resettlement site of Rio Tinto was an immediate

well-received accomplishment, those Wana resettled to the new *dusun* were soon beginning to return to the upland regions where they had lived before the natural disaster struck them. According to the *camat* of Bungku Utara and various local sources, location of the settlement was not well chosen. Although the new inhabitants of Rio Tinto received new houses in an environment relatively safe from flooding and landslides, no further land was included in the resettlement package. There was simply no chance to make a living from agriculture at all. The only proper way to earn a living was employment at the palm oil company. Except for the aforementioned small Christian group *Alesintowe* that has settled there and has opened an orphanage for Wana people (see Chapter 4), only the occasional Wana family has settled there permanently. Most Wana have returned upland, leaving behind an abandoned settlement, as a testament to unsuccessful resettlement goals. Therefore, resettlement in the context of Rio Tinto was a failure in the end and Wana people reacted in a similar manner as they did to other resettlement efforts; they refused outside administration and returned to their homes in the upland area.

Although the intention for the Rio Tinto resettlement was oriented towards direct help in times of a catastrophe, studies show that resettlement initiatives as solutions for natural disasters often fail to offer long-term acceptable living conditions and may add to social inequalities.<sup>189</sup> In their study of a resettlement project at Mt. Tungurahua in Ecuador that included the relocation of 26,000 people, Whiteford and Tobin reveal how such a project strongly marginalizes those who already have fewer resources to rely upon, whether they be economic or social. The authors thus ask provocatively: “If we accept as a given the world has become a more hazardous place [...], then the question is ‘How do we protect those who are most vulnerable’? The unmasking of social policies that reify class-based discriminations while masquerading as aid is one way” (Whiteford and Tobin: 198–99). The Mt. Tungurahua and Rio Tinto resettlement projects are hardly comparable since they differ in a number of ways, let alone the size of the population that was displaced. Both examples were overall surely well intended. Nevertheless, a discriminative nature is certainly lying underneath the example from Ecuador as well as underneath the Rio Tinto project. As Hohmann points out: “When states marginalize or ignore certain populations,

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<sup>189</sup> See for example Cernea (1999), Hohmann (2013), or UNDP (2010).

placing them at greatest risk of loss of housing, even seemingly natural forces such as floods may amount to forced displacement” (Hohmann 2013: 194).<sup>190</sup>

In an interview with a local source from Taronggo who was working together with UNTAD for the resettlement project, I learned about a conflicting motif. The source was a middle aged, well-educated man who came from another region from Sulawesi and only moved to Taronggo a couple of years ago. In an interview he explained his main motivation to help to resettle the Wana from Ratobae:

“It is good for them, those up there, if they come down to make a living in a village. If they have their own village here. You know, they are practicing swidden agriculture and do not want to go to school, the poor people from the mountain (*kasihan*). They want to come down, want to work, their children need to go to school.”

This position illustrates a highly important aspect: The intention underlying the UNTAD help force and the government involved was possibly mainly focused on the immediate recovery of a disaster-struck area and its inhabitants. However, in some way the will to improve upland peoples’ livelihoods according to “modern” ideas of state citizenship and progress played an important role in the whole project. Hohmann highlights how “[...] forced displacements and relocations have repeatedly been used as tools in policies to assimilate and to ‘modernise’ indigenous people. [...] it was always implicitly accepted that removing indigenous individuals and communities from their lands could be used as a tool of acculturation” (Hohmann 2013: 194). It is in this context that the parallels between colonial resettlement projects and the relocation in case of natural disaster become clear.

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<sup>190</sup> However, the project of Rio Tinto was not a forced relocation as people in the beginning were moving lowland due to a emergency situation.



**Figure 25** The *dusun* Rio Tinto.



**Figure 26** Empty house in Rio Tinto.



## **5.4 CURRENT LAND CONFLICT AND RESETTLEMENT PLANS: UPLAND WANA IN THE PALM OIL GRIP**

After the installation of Rio Tinto it took only four years until another resettlement idea started to affect Wana in the area around Taronggo. This time however, Wana faced another, third reason nested behind relocation concerns. It was economic profit combined with political endeavor that put a new plan of forced resettlement for Wana into focus. Although Wana had already had some experiences with palm oil, Indonesia's second largest export product, the pressure caused by this economic sector and government related concerns reached a temporary peak in 2011. It sincerely affected Salisarao Wana who were in order to make space for a new plantation area to be relocated to a new lowland settlement. To gain a better understanding of Wana political-economic standing and their concurring spheres of agency and resistance within this situation it is necessary to depict the motives and strategies of company and government aimed at resettling Wana first.

The palm oil industry is a fast growing branch of Indonesia's economy; together with neighboring Malaysia, both countries produce over 85 percent per cent of global palm oil products. The overall plantation area for palm oil plantations currently cultivated in Indonesia are estimated more than 10 million hectares of land and currently producing over 27 million tons of crude palm oil (United Nations Development Programme 2011). The country is planning to increase palm oil production up to 40 million tons by the year 2020 (Yuniar 2014). A heavy side effect of the palm oil sector are environmental damages and effects on biodiversity (e.g., Fargione et al. 2008; Butler and Laurence 2009; Belcher and Schreckenberg 2007; Fitzherbert et al. 2008). While the palm oil sector is known to be a major cause for deforestation, it comes as no surprise that Indonesia "has recently been acknowledged as the country with the highest rate of deforestation" (Pirard et al. 2015). Although palm oil industry is sometimes described as "an attractive pathway out of poverty for many rural households" (Teuscher et al. 2015: 307) palm oil plantations and companies have received heavy criticism from numerous NGOs and land right activists as a cause for deforestation, natural disasters such as landslides and forest fires, changing socio economic conditions in a negative way, land grabbing and

supporting illegal logging (e.g., Colchester and Jiwan 2006; Pye and Bhattacharya 2013; Rist, Feintrenie, and Levang 2010; Steinebach 2013).

The forests of Sumatra and Kalimantan are so far Indonesia's areas with the highest number of palm oil plantations. Central Sulawesi as the archipelago's greatest producer of cocoa with plantations covering in 2010 an area of around 126,000 hectare has a relatively young history with the palm oil sector. Cocoa, copra, cloves as well as palm oil are the main products of the province. Palm oil productive outcome "in this region is very low, which is about 6 tons per hectare per year" (UN+REDD), covering an area of 1,600 hectare in four different *kabupaten* (Wulan 2012). However, Central Sulawesi has several palm oil companies investing in the region, companies like PT. Astra Agro Lestari, a sub-company of the global Astra International Group as well as local companies like PT Kurnia Luwuk Sejati.

The latter has its head office in Luwuk, *Kabupaten Banggai*, to the east of the research area of Taronggo and operates on a mere Central Sulawesi based outreach. No exact numbers on the size of PT Kurnias land were available but WALHI Central Sulawesi suggested an overall amount of planted and non-planted plantation land belonging to PT Kurnia to 20,000 hectares in total. The company mainly operates in Banggai in the regencies of Toili, West Toili, Luwuk and Batui, but is currently expanding its territory in the *kabupaten* of Bungku Utara (WALHI n.d.). In 2010 this company aimed to establish their oil palm plantation in the Salisarao area and was thus deeply involved in an ongoing threat for Wana people living in the area.

Already in 1997/8 PT Kurnia started to buy land in the area around Taronggo and established a great amount of oil palm fields. The village today is nested in an ocean of palm oil plantation coming from the South; to the West lies the border of the nature reserve, to the East another *dusun* and a river and to the north the mountains of Salisarao (Fig. 26). Like other palm oil companies, PT Kurnia used the nucleus-plasma system (*Perkebunan Inti Rakyat*) to allocate land for the plantation of oil palms. The nucleus-plasma model has a long history in Indonesia and has become a common form of plantation cultivation for the country. Between 1978 and 2001 it played an important role for Indonesia's resettlement strategy project called *transmigrasi*, where citizens from the densely populated islands of Java and Bali were relocated to the archipelago's less populated outer islands "to start a new life" (Vermeulen and Goad 2006: 19; see Chapter



2). Policy support from the government and financial support from the World Bank provided the foundation of the nucleus-plasma system in the *transmigrasi* programme and companies could allocate land for small holder plots that “would be transferred to individual smallholders after 3-4 years” (Vermeulen and Goad 2006: 19). After 2001, government support for the *Perkebunan Inti Rakyat* stopped but it is still widely practiced in Indonesia’s palm oil sector. The nucleus-plasma process follows a complex scheme: the government gives land to the palm oil company according to its development plan. In a second step the government decides how much land of the plantation is fixed for the nucleus estate and how much for the communities’ smallholders. Usually the share happens in a 5: 2 or 6: 4 ratio, so that smallholders generally receive between 2 or 4 hectares (Colchester and Jiwan 2006: 12). The problems in this process are manifold and deeply influence local communities. For example, land allocations are usually not discussed with the local inhabitants nor are local people asked what land parcels shall become smallholder shares and what hectares shall become *inti* – the part of the plantation area used only by the company. Even in cases where the community or individuals protest, their complaints are usually objected or ignored by the deciding government. Further, a lack of information often adds to unequal share of profits since often small holders were unaware “that the lands allotted to the nucleus estates would thence be considered as State lands [...] [e]ven when the leaseholds granted to the companies expire [...]” (Colchester and Jiwan 2006: 12–14). The chosen land is usually well-cultivated land from local peasants that is handed over to the company. White and Dasgupta refer to Sirait’s study on indigenous cultivators from Kalimantan where local peasants usually gave around 7.5 hectares for the plasma model while the company takes 5.5 hectares for their own profit and convert it to state land; 2.0 hectares remain with the individual but “will be charged by credit loan for the land clearing, planting materials, maintenance, road construction, and land certification” (Sirait 2009: 31; see also White and Dasgupta 2011: 28).

The irony behind this system is critically portrayed in the following statement:

“The idea that taking away 7.5 ha of sustainably cultivated land from local cultivators and returning only 2.0 ha planted with a single low-value monocrop, with many costs attached, represents progress for indigenous cultivators is a remarkable construction to justify the process of expropriation” (White and Dasgupta 2011: 28).

Wana people in Taronggo and its surroundings were lured into the nucleus-plasma system with similar promises that were only partly fulfilled. Every local person would receive 2.0 hectares of *plasma* for individual smallholding, it was told, but many upland Wana claim they never saw any hectares of plasma to cultivate.

In the past, PT Kurnia had already received heavy criticism for its plantation business in Toili and raised public awareness. In 2009, the local community in Toili protested heavily against the company when PT Kurnia evicted local farmers from their “disputed 275 hectares of land, arguing that it owned the property. The farmers, however, claimed the land was theirs because the company, which initially granted concessions to 100 migrant families, later asked them to pay for the fields in installments, citing financial problems” (The Jakarta Post 2009). A great number of local farmers in and around Taronggo claim that they as well have lost land that was *tanah adat* to the company. The ultimate promise by the company that every inhabitant would receive two hectares of land was never fulfilled for many local families living in the area and no one received compensation. The arbitrary allocation of land as well as uneven share of economic profit had been a thorn in many Wana’s sides right from the start. The feeling of being disadvantaged and marginalized compared to their lowland neighbors and kin nests deep among those who were left without any benefit from the palm oil boom in the area. Apa Ensi explains:

“What is happening now, well just look how it started. The PT Kurnia came in with a lie, said once the conversion [of the land] is done there will be a distribution [of the land]. [But] there are Wana without any share at all. There are some people who get 30 are only, others get dozens of hectares. This is always the case in Taronggo. People who are already smart (*pinter*, BI), those who are rich, those who indeed have a [nice] life; those people want to take more .... Even if there is a community that is poor, here and here. Their poverty is because of the actions of the leader (*dari ulah pemimpinnya*, BI) so that the pressure on the people continues.”

However, Wana cannot easily be described as victims of market forces in agricultural terms; they adapt to a changing market, and increasingly engage in cash crop cultivation evidenced by the intensification of cocoa cultivation in the uplands. Numerous studies

show that indigenous groups are indeed successful cultivators (Sitorus 2002) and Li for example has shown how the modern agriculture of the Indonesian uplands have been mainly based on the initiative of upland cultivators; thus “the complaint is not against market oriented production, but against terms under which such production takes place, terms which reflect the uneven distribution of power” (Li 1999a: 31).

These unequal power relations in Taronggo were driving forces of the new resettlement strategy in 2011. People were well aware of the questionable nature of the activities by those actors in power who were pulling the strings of the palm oil expansion plan. Although the company played its own part in the unequal share of land and production, the role of the local government was also critically assessed by local people as the following extract of a group interview that I took with three middle-aged Wana men of Taronggo in March 2011 exemplifies. Apa Fero who worked together with Apa Dheri for PT Kurnia (Fig. 27) and had a positive attitude towards the company, while Apa Tolo was rather skeptical:

Apa Fero: Well the company is good because they have to listen to the government as well, the *camat*, the *bupati*, all of them. If the *camat* tells them this and that, the company has to follow.

Apa nTolo: But the *camat* is also willing to listen to the company when they pay money.

Apa Fero: Oh yes, of course. He [the *camat*] came in to report that the company is going [to open] a plantation around here for example palm oil. We are going to need so much land, we need around 1.000 hectares, he said. He already talked about *inti*, how much for *inti*, he said it should be fifty-fifty or *pola* [*pola*= *Pola Patungan*<sup>191</sup>]. So he maybe already talked about *pola* but the community does not know about the shares of *pola*. Things like this were always hidden in the dark, always kept a secret from the community. So he just ordered 2 hectare per person

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<sup>191</sup> Pola is a slightly different version from the plasma inti system, where smallholders can choose whether they work only in plasma cooperative or in the nucleus staff. A model, that tries to “pr-empt conflicts arising from the variable performance of individual blocks, but another outcome was greater efficiency” (OECD 2012: 276).

although his game in fact was not like that, so that people gave all the land to him. After planting the land, he already planted so many hectare, that the land was already over here; he just went to the people down there to start again.

By the end of 2010 the situation had come to the point that land had become very scarce in the area of Taronggo but the company PT Kurnia was still trying hard to expand its plantation territory. The fast growth of the plantation resulted in a new goal for expansion that was located in the upland area of Salisarao – the same region where Salisarao Wana were living and cultivating their swiddens. In an interview with the village headman, the *kepala desa*, he told me that the plan “was already fixed”. The *kepala desa* and PT Kurnia seemed to have closed a deal while no person from Salisarao was asked for his or her will. At that time many Wana households were located in the area of Salisarao. However, the *kepala desa* had new plans for them already: The whole community from Salisarao was to be relocated, resettled to a new village that was still to be built. In early 2011, a day or so after I had heard for the first time about the new resettlement plan, I was able to attend a meeting between PT Kurnia and the *kepala desa*. In this get-together it was stated that plans were already in progress and as soon as by April 2011 the first oil palm was to be planted up in Salisarao. Both company affiliates as well as government officials stated on further occasions that they were highly enthusiastic about the new plan to provide upland Wana with a new modern way of living in a brand-new village with road access, a church and a school for the children. The new joint plan completely ignored Wana realities living in the upland. Wana in the area of Salisarao were active swidden agriculturalists plus they had been successfully engaged in cocoa smallholding farming for more than 15 years. The government as well as the company narrowed their goal to the expansion plans and disregarded that a resettlement would result in a new lowland community of Salisarao Wana as landless peasants similar to their kin from Ratobae, who were resettled to Rio Tinto only a couple of years earlier (see above). Neither independent cash crop cultivation nor subsistence economy would be possible for them. Additionally, most locals did not wish for road access to their community nor did they ask or aim for a church in their settlement (see Chapter 4).

Interestingly, when I asked my Wana interlocutors shortly after I had learned about the plan for their opinion on the resettlement, they had not heard about it at all. I was startled

that such a plan could progress so far without even trying to include the community in question.

The situation was alarming to everyone and especially threatening for Salisarao Wana who were facing the actual loss of their land.

This novel case of resettlement threat adds another dimension to this chapter and shows the economic entanglement between a profit-oriented company and the government. Although in the scenario described above, the first goal for both main players was clearly the expansion of the palm oil plantation for increasing productivity and profit. However, the other impetus was simply given by Wana marginal standing. Through resettlement, Salisarao Wana could have easily been transformed to “civilized people” and letting them become part of the Indonesian mainstream according to the national discourse as I have described earlier. Statements pointing out how those unfortunate Wana could now live with electricity and finally could find a way to religion easily exposed the neocolonial structure and thinking that were conveniently utilized by the company and the government while presenting their idea. It is in this regard that that all three resettlement projects stand in one line and are part of the same underlying discourse of control mechanisms and progress orientation.



**Figure 27** Palm oil plantations around Taronggo, 2011; view from the border of the nature reserve.



**Figure 28** Apa Dheri during his work on the palm oil plantation, harvesting oil palm fruits.



## 5.5 MARGINALITY IN TRANSITION: DYNAMICS OF RESISTANCE

As I have shown above, Wana in the past rarely used open and active resistance to counteract government actions aimed towards them. Instead, they insisted on subtle resistance strategies that seldom aimed to oppose outside pressure in an active way. Silently boycotting resettlement strategies while moving back to the uplands or, as in early colonial times, faking a living in early “mock” villages can be portrayed as acts of indirect and elusive resistance against a changing system of political government and timeframe. This time however, the usual practice of being resettled and then escape back to the mountains was no solution, since land in Salisarao was about to be transformed into a plantation that would never be used as land to practice swidden agriculture afterwards. This time, they needed a new strategy.

### 5.5.1 Finding a Way to Resist

One of the biggest problems counteracting the resettlement plan that my interlocutors referred to was the missing information about their rights to their land. Apa Jendi expresses his thoughts in an interview about the new resettlement plan:

“You know, I am worried. I am not sure if he (the *kepala desa*) is right or not. He says we have no right to the land, so we have to believe it. It’s like that, of course it is our land, we here (in Salisarao) have been living here a long time, I know this land, we have everything here. And now, shall we go there (to Taronggo) and work for the palm oil (company)? Ha, no I say, that is not going to happen.”

Since most upland Wana have no or only little knowledge about land rights, most people believed the words spread by PT Kurnia and the government that the land in focus was in fact state land (*tanah negara*, BI) and Wana, although living there for generations, had no right to it. In fact, many Wana from Salisarao had no legal documents certifying their right to their land. It is indeed a matter of complicity to receive a certificate for land that is only used as a swidden. As I have discussed in detail in Chapter 2.2 natural resource

management in Indonesia is declared as subject to special property rights to land that is *hak ulayat*, i.e. part of customary tenure systems. This means, that individuals cultivating a part of communally owned land may in fact receive individual land rights. Once he or she is no longer in need of the land, for example in case of shifting agriculture, the land goes back under the responsibility of the community (Barkmann et al. 2010: 146).<sup>192</sup> However, it is also noted in the Basic Agrarian Law that all land that is not permanently cultivated by wet-rice and tree crops or in fact is habituated is regarded as state land, *tanah negara*; “the state thus reserves the ultimate right of disposal rather than the land being allocated under jurisdictional rights of access (*hak ulayat*) dictated by local *adat*” (Acciaoli 2007: 312). Fitzpatrick has described how only around 20 percent of the Indonesian people hold formal land certificates (Fitzpatrick 2007: 139). Even more significant is Sangaji’s result for Central Sulawesi: He showed that of 6,803,300 hectares of total landmass in the province, about 4,634,904 hectare were allocated to plantation, forestry and mining concessions and another 2,447,637 hectares belonged to protected areas. This makes a sum of already allocated land of 7,082,541 hectares – more land than Central Sulawesi encompasses, individual land certification holders not even included (Sangaji 2007: 326). In 1991 the governor of Central Sulawesi decreed that in his province no customary land exists and all land is thus to be perceived as state land (Barkmann et al. 2010: 146). It is by this means in sum that the local government of Taronggo referred to the upland Salisaro region as state land and ignored the community’s call for acceptance as *tanah adat*.<sup>193</sup> Apa Ensi described the difficulties obtaining legal land certificates, called SKT (*Surat Keterangan Tanah*):

“It is difficult to get SKT for the land in Salisarao. There are gardens that always change location (*pindah-pindah*, BI). Nobody owns a single piece of land; it is shared communally, because we always move our gardens. But now then, the government comes and says, go get your SKT, you need that document if you are scared to move and lose your land. But for which land shall I get a certificate? In

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<sup>192</sup> Purchasing land from community own tenure areals is a common scheme for migrants. They often obtain SKT for this communally owned land, which often results in conflict with younger members of the masyarakat adat. Therefore, Galudra et al. show in their example from Jambi, Sumatra, how migrants usually prefer to buy land that is cultivated with typically monocultures so that no further land claims from the local community are to be expected (Galudra et al. 2014: 724).

<sup>193</sup> *Tana adat* is a term that is used in Indonesia synonymously to *ulayat* (Steinebach 2013: 65; see also Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann 2011).



the past no one owned it. We moved to another place, made new gardens and nobody said: Take your fingers of my land, it's mine! But now, the government does not understand we up there are different from us here in the *kampung* or in other villages.”

However, as I have already described, peasants from Salisarao do not merely rely on swidden agriculture. Many of them are successful cocoa cultivators nowadays, so that at least some of them would easily be able to obtain a SKT for the land. Apa nTina gives another example:

“Take for example Apa nTolo, he is planting cocoa, maybe around 1 hectare. But then he takes around 4 hectare to get an SKT. So he can apply for this with a complex of land. 4 hectares in which he can plant cocoa but also practice swidden agriculture (*kebun pindah-pindah*).”

In the national regulations, Salisarao Wana thus did find some way to make their claim for SKT eligible. Yet the *kepala desa* responsible for getting these land certification letters issued through the National Agency of Land Affairs (BPN, *Badan Pertanahan Nasional*) and handing these certificates to his local community had long promised to do so; despite this, by 2011 most people were still left without any legal document. Instead, the *kepala desa* claimed that the land in Salisarao was currently not in use but only *alang-alang* with no use for the community up there – a statement that simply was not true. He insisted that land in Salisarao was *tanah negara*, state owned land, and people had no claim to it – a declaration to the effect that most community members from Salisarao and also numerous Wana from Taronggo believed his words. Legal uncertainty, as Tania Li has called it, provides persons in power at the local level with the opportunity to act on the one hand in favor of the local community while on the other hand to follow their own intentions, to sell and resell land (Li 2007a: 342) and thus theoretically can act arbitrarily. Local headmen thus may “act as sovereigns who can dispossess a land holder when they want to access the land themselves” (Li 2007a: 342). “New” rules are then coming in charge when headmen tell the community that customary rights to their swiddens are heavily restricted as it was the case in Taronggo. These rules that Li describes are also

part of the whole argumentation that I found in Taronggo: customary land rules would not apply if the land in question encompasses for example more than 2.0 hectares per individual, if there was no payment of taxes or a legal certification letter like the SKT noted with the village government as well as when land had not been used for more than five years. As Li puts this situation in Central Sulawesi together:

“The legal standing of any of these ‘rules’ would certainly be disputed by legal experts on customary land rights. But in the absence of countervailing knowledge and support, a headman’s bullying is sufficient to unsettle villagers who are isolated and unsure of their ground” (Li 2007a: 342).

Indonesia has undergone major changes and the process of decentralization has transferred more rights to the provinces, regencies and villages. Nevertheless, although regional autonomy was introduced to strengthen local level entities like the *desa*, in early 2011 the situation in Taronggo looked very frustrating to the local community. In a situation where it seemed to my interlocutors as if no right existed for Wana people, it felt hard to believe in the outcome of decentralization or as the authors such as Erb et al. argue: that decentralization and regionalism has not always worked in favour of *masyarakat adat* who “are still not being given the kind of autonomy that they desire, to design and arrange their own culture and communities” (Erb, Beni, and Anggal 2004: 150).

For instance, declared in the Law 22/1999 on Regional Autonomy is the invention of the *Badan Perwakilan Desa* (BPD), also called village representative body. According to the 1999 Law, the BPD consists of a number of people whose job it is to guard a community in the way that local *adat* is protected and accepted; “to make the rules of the *desa*; to make sure that the needs and desires of the population are heard; and to make sure that the local village government acts properly and does its job”.<sup>194</sup> The BPD is also supposed to watch over the *kepala desa*, the village head. In sum, the village representative body was acknowledged in Law 22/1999 as a motivator for local participation and functioned as an effort to finish the era of KKN (*korupsi, kolusi, nepotisme*, BI; abbreviation for corruption, collusion and nepotism), that was part of the New Order era until 1998. Because of this immanent position, the BPD is described as a highly important and even critical medium in local community affairs or as Erb et al. explain the setting: As a

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<sup>194</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 22/1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah* (Law 22/1999 on Regional Government), Passage 104, translation by Erb et al. (2005: 170).

counterpart to the *kepala desa*, the BPD will remain the target of the former, who if “he still wants to be involved in corruption, etc., will do his best to keep control of power in the village and obstruct the BPD” (Erb, Beni, and Anggal 2004: 170). Nevertheless the power of the BPD was significantly weakened in the new legislation of 2004<sup>195</sup> which retitled the BPD from “Village Representative Council” to “Village Deliberative Council” (*Badan Permusyawaratan Desa*) (McCarthy et al. 2014: 256). However, neither in the Law 32/2004 nor in the current Draft Law of 2012 the BPD is elected by the community but receives its status by appointment.<sup>196</sup> Antlov and Eko point out that while the village unit is currently receiving increased funds and functions, “it would be desirable to further strengthen the independence and oversight function of village councils [...]. With proper guidance and facilitation, village accountability bodies can improve service without causing disorder and conflicts) [...]”. The authors suggest that a return to the original formulation to the Law 22/1999, when the BPD was still elected by the community, could strengthen the role of the BPD; “Making the village government accountable for the community and the BPD would improve its responsiveness and capacity to manage funds and provide services” (Antlov and Eko 2012: 14). Although the function of the BPD has nowadays less power as was originally proclaimed in Law 22/1999, it nevertheless is still the local medium that can become a guardian over the village head’s operations, in more than just cases of conflict. This circumstance becomes remarkable when looking at the situation in Taronggo where Salisarao Wana were facing resettlement plans by *kepala desa* and PT Kurnia. The BPD could have functioned as a mediator between community and government interest and probably could have helped clarify local community rights and needs that clearly differed from the *kepala desa*’s standing. However, the head of the BPD (*Ketua BPD*) in Taronggo was no less than the *kepala desa*’s very own father. Thus, it is no wonder the BPD did not play a role in countering the resettlement plan for good.

Another instance showed how power on the local level is essentially nested in the position of the *kepala desa*. Apa Asan was *kepala dusun dua*, the elected headman of one administrative sub-village of Taronggo,<sup>197</sup> that included people from Salisarao, Ratobae and those Wana living not in the area of the actual *kampung*. When he heard about the

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<sup>195</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 32/2004 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah* (Law 32/2004 on Regional Government), Passage 209-210.

<sup>196</sup> According to a local source the current BPD consisted of individuals that appointed themselves.

<sup>197</sup> See also fn. 163.

plans of the company to expand to the area of Salisarao he went directly to the *kepala desa* to ask for the background of this new initiative. He explains:

“I was very upset when I heard about the plan that he let [them, the company] enter because there was in fact no approval; so I went to ask him: Why does the company already has the data [about the land]? I heard there already was a meeting? I said, I alone am *kepala dusun*, I do not know about this meeting, even though I have people up there (*warga di atas*). How in fact did held the meeting? Who invited [the people]? Wah, he said, that’s wrong the way you say it. [...] He fired me. He said I am not organizing the people well; that I am doing my job disorderly (*kacau*). He fired me. So I said, *silahkan pecat*.”

For my interlocutors it was a situation where they felt left without any power for opposition or counteraction. Although after the end of the New Order the law had changed significantly, but without access to it (or knowledge about it), the situation for Salisarao Wana had not changed much after 1998.

### 5.5.2 “Powerful Friends”

Within this field of uneven allocation of power and knowledge it became clear for Wana that they needed legal advice and assistance in order to resist the current resettlement plan. In this threatening situation they turned to their, as I call it, “powerful friends”. This category is in need of some thorough explanation.

Cultural Anthropology has a long history of dealing with questions of what may be called activism. Early anthropologists like Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead have placed their research to some extent in the field of critically assessing the role of the own academic discipline and thus inspiring a later emerging field that is variously called collaborative anthropology, action anthropology, public anthropology or engaged anthropology (Lassiter 2009: 72).<sup>198</sup> In the 1990s the American Anthropological

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<sup>198</sup> The AAA also refers to the role of engagement within the goal of the disciplines: “Anthropologists collaborate closely with people whose cultural patterns and processes we seek to understand or whose living conditions require amelioration. Collaboration helps bridge social distances and gives greater voice

Association was pushing further towards a deeper focus on engaged anthropology and Nancy Scheper-Hughes called for a militant anthropology (1995). Coming back as an anthropologist to a shantytown in Brazil where she formerly had worked as a community worker, she faced the dilemma that community members did not understand how her role was different now and that this would prevent her from helping them the way she had helped them 20 years ago. She tried to explain how her focus as an anthropologist was now “to observe, to document, to understand, and later to write about their lives and pain as fully, as truthfully, and as sensitively as I could” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 410). When community members asked her to further engage in bettering local conditions, she answered “I cannot be an anthropologist and a *companheira* at the same time” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 410). But when the community gave her an ultimatum to support them as a *companheira*, she became more and more involved in political work and realized that “the times and anthropology had changed” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 411). She concludes

“that cultural relativism, read as moral relativism, is no longer appropriate to the world in which we live and that anthropology, if it is to be worth anything at all, must be ethically grounded: ‘If we cannot begin to think about social institutions and practices in moral or ethical terms, then anthropology strikes me as quite weak and useless’” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 410).

Scheper-Hughes’ call for the “primacy of the ethical” opened the stage for a thorough approach to engaged anthropology within the discipline, for instance exemplified with the appearance of a new journal called “Collaborative Anthropologies” in 2008.<sup>199</sup> Low and Merry present a detailed overview of the development of the field of engaged anthropology and provide a typology that helps to sharpen the plural attempts that are hidden within in this field, including sharing and support, teaching and public education, social critique, collaboration, advocacy and activism. Advocacy is the type of engaged anthropology that encompasses those actions that aim to “assist local communities in organizing efforts, giving testimonies [...]” (Peacock 2010: 210) and includes the role of the anthropologist as intermediaries between local people, government and various institutions. It is in this sphere in which the category of the “powerful friend” can be

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to the people whose cultures and behaviors anthropologists study, enabling them to represent themselves in their own words. An engaged anthropology is committed to supporting social change efforts that arise from the interaction between community goals and anthropological research”. Accessed 13th December 2015. <http://www.aaanet.org/about/whatisanthropology.cfm>.

<sup>199</sup> Collaborative Anthropologies. Accessed 13th December 2015. <http://coll-anth.anth.ubc.ca/>.

located.<sup>200</sup> Engaged anthropology is made by engaged anthropologists claims James Peacock righteously (Peacock 2010), but when we combine local agency with the role of engaged anthropologists, I believe the local perspective becomes even further meaningful. Although anthropology needs to think of its commitment and usefulness in new and more engaged ways, the question of why anthropologists become engaged should not be neglected. As Scheper-Hughes' example shows, it was her local contacts that brought her in the situation to broaden her focus during fieldwork and to become an active, militant or collaborative anthropologist. Dorothy Hodgson has shown how she perceived her role as an anthropologist as an interlocutor within the Maasai indigenous movement. She refuses to see herself as a collaborator but instead describes her position as a:

scholar who shares her ideas and work with Maasai activists and organizations in ongoing, constructive, and perhaps, even occasionally contentious dialogues and debates in an effort to inform and shape their policies and practices, without directly aligning myself with one group or faction of the movement (Hodgson 2011: 15).<sup>201</sup>

Although I completely understand and agree with Hodgson's description of her role in the field as an interlocutor, I cannot apply it easily for my own research setting. The rather neutral term of an interlocutor would not fit the idea my local informants had of me. The people I met, lived with, engaged in interviews, and so on perceived of me as a person with significant power – something they lacked substantially while facing the threat of land loss. Even though Wana people did not approach and issue an ultimatum to help them as was the case for Scheper-Hughes, the sheer fact that I received information about the resettlement before they had, put me in a position where they simply expected me to suggest a solution. For them, it was no matter of debate if I would use the power they believed I had, to support them as their “powerful friend”. I do not think that using any other word than friend makes sense in the specific setting. *Yuno*, friend, is the word they used for me, it was a role they ascribed to me, just the way Scheper-Hughes was not only anthropologist from her perspective but also *companheira* from her local counterparts' point of view. It is in this sense that the power aligned with their “friend”, the anthropologist, became part of Wana agency. Aligning myself with one group or one side of the protest was a decision that I thought I had to make – but it was also already made

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<sup>200</sup> Alas, I believe the distinction between activism and advocacy as found in Low and Merry's typology is not a very helpful one since I believe both encompass the same form of commitment.

<sup>201</sup> See also Grumbly (2013).

for me by my Wana interlocutors. However the category does not apply only to the anthropologist but is extendable to those actors that were in possession of power and knowledge that would and did offer Wana support and help in their way of practicing resistance in the specific situation of land struggle I have described above.

### 5.5.3 Chronicles of Resistance

After a number of discussions and debates about the scope of the opportunities Salisarao Wana had to resist, actual and active resistance began finally with the idea to put a signature list into life. This idea – but not its implementation – was my responsibility. I suggested this form towards several Wana, among them Apa Asan, as a first solution to reveal whether indeed most Wana in Salisarao were against it and as a document for further communication with government officials and PT Kurnia. It is important to note that Apa Asan as one of the leading figures of the process of “becoming indigenous” is himself a Muslim from Bungku who had come to live in Taronggo several years ago, searching for work. He married Indo Asan, a Wana woman who converted for him to Islam but still has very close ties with Wana – in terms of belief as well as culture. Apa Asan and his wife are frequently in the upland region of Salisarao, where they also plant cocoa and they were widely accepted as mutual and trustworthy kin. In the following I will describe the process of enabling a new form of resistance among Wana people, drawing on field notes and interviews I took during this time.

In mid-February 2011 Apa Asan together with Apa Jendi, Indo and Apa De’u as well as Apa Yare and Indo Felu organized a meeting for all Wana that were interested to hear about a way to offer resistance in a house in the Salisarao area. Just as we had expected not many people came; the distances are far, the weather was not good but most importantly, people from Salisarao were hesitant to easily believe their kin from the *kampung* and feared personal interest and profit were the main intention of one of the main speakers. However, most of them had meanwhile heard about the new resettlement plan and as I knew from many discussions I had in advance with people from Salisarao, the majority was upset and alarmed by the plan. Two individuals nevertheless were skeptical and declared on that evening they indeed wanted the company to invest in Salisaro since they were hoping for road access which would make the smallholder cocoa

plantations easier to manage. When I was asked about my opinion I explained that the signature list was a chance to hinder the government plans to enter Salisarao. However, I made clear to those two who were skeptical, without the company there would probably be no road to Salisarao. Although the main speaker of this meeting, Apa Asan, made it clear how it was very crucial that everyone put his signature under the list, I insisted that no one should feel any pressure. After the meeting, Apa Yare, one of the elders of Salisarao took the list back to his house and would circulate it from *lipu* to *lipu* so that people could sign it. The list was backed by the following text (Fig. 29):

Surat Pernyataan / Letter of statement

We the community who signs this list does not agree with the development of oil palm in Salisarau.

Only four days later I wrote in my field diary:

“Around sixty signatures have already come together. There is an excitement in the air that everyone seems to be part of. There is no talking about something else; everything circles around the idea that no palm oil should be planted in Salisarao” (18.02.2011).

As I have shown above Wana usually never actively opposed government plans, but this time they had made their veto very clear. The letter thus signifies in some way the genuine beginning of “open Wana resistance”. Once all signatures were given, the letter was sent to the *bupati*, the forest office and various other instances. While numerous discussions followed with neighbors from upland as well as lowland, finally the *kepala desa* as well as the company planned to initiate a community meeting on that matter. It was initially planned to be obtained in the upland region of Salisarao; Pak Muhrad, the local representative of PT Kurnia, and the *kepala desa* planned to hike upland and had already commanded Apa Nevi, one of the village Wana, to organize a couple of chickens to be slaughtered for the upland meeting. People were curious why the meeting would be held upland, since many people who had signed the letter were in fact also lowland Wana.



The strategy behind this was simple: If the meeting would be held in the upland region not many people from the village, who were brave enough to speak in public and more fluent in Bahasa Indonesia compared to their upland neighbours, would join because of the hiking distance. Apa De'u explained to me:

“We will go to the *kampung*, we will meet them there, where everyone can come and listen. We do not want them up here, where they can keep on telling lies to us. Look, Apa E. (Wana from Taronggo) for example, he supports this, but will he come and hike up all the way? He is too tired and old. But when we are in the *kampung*, he will come and will get angry.”

Salisarao Wana thus aimed instead for a meeting in the community hall of Taronggo where meetings were usually held; they basically had high hopes for support from their “more educated” kin and neighbors in the village.

Thus, when the day of the planned meeting arrived, 27 February 2011, Salisarao Wana interfered with the initial plan and instead hiked down to the village to hold the meeting there. Preempting the *kepala desa*, they had to wait a very long time. The day chosen by *kepala desa* and PT Kurnia was a Sunday and interestingly the *kepala desa* decided to attend church service, followed by an unofficial gathering afterwards. It was said that as the waiting people were starting to get upset, the *kepala desa* feared to discuss the matter within the “realm of the law” and they were sure that an upland meeting had strongly supported *kepala desa* and company to keep on lying about rights and manipulation the non-educated citizens from above (Fig. 30). Here, it becomes clear again how the upland served the idea of a stateless and lawless hinterland, where the uncivilized and primitive dominated. However, in the end the meeting took place with a serious delay. The representative from the palm oil company explained how the development of a new plantation in the upland would bring progress and the opportunity to buy a car for everyone; one of my interlocutors whispered during the meeting that no one in Taronggo owned a car although PT Kurnia had been around for a couple of years. The representative continued to ask whether Wana did not want their grandchildren to be rich and happy one day. Apa Yare from Salisarao replied and asked where his grandchildren should take land from when every parcel of land would be covered with palm oil one day.

He and his upland neighbors further complained about the unequal share of land that they had already experienced when PT Kurnia initially started their business in Taronggo. Although only few of the lowland villagers attended, Salisarao Wana were speaking up for their rights, bravely, loudly and in their own language.

In the end, the representative of the company explained that if the community did not want them to establish a new plantation in their area, they would not further continue their plans; they would not force anyone against their will (*kami tidak akan paksa*, BI). This decision marked the end of the meeting. The statement was celebrated as a first success of resistance and Salisarao Wana as well as myself, were momentarily relieved.

Nevertheless, as the days passed, more people in the community began to lose faith in the decision. More and more people reported that the official's "helping hands" had intimidated them. I was myself cautious about my own involvement in the affair; even before the meeting I wrote an episode in my diary that made clear, that the government as well as the company knew about my involvement in the act of resistance:

"Two days ago I was walking through the village and passed the house of the *kepala desa* and we had some small talk. He mentioned that Pak Muhrad (representative of PT Kurnia) had visited him the evening before and they had had a look at my letter (*surat*, BI). I became suspicious, how did he suddenly came to look at my research permit that he never had been interested in before?"

Later, in March 2011 I spoke to a contact from outside who himself was a member of a political organization of the region and thus knew local politics and the government very well. He told me that chances were very low that the plan could still be hindered; the company was strong and its head had very solid ties with the regency's government in Luwuk; according to my source, he had invested a huge amount of money in the *kabupaten*. My source warned me to stay out of this conflict if I wanted to continue my research, because it might become problematic for me. Not long afterwards, as my fieldwork was coming to an end, I met the local representative of the company while walking alone through the area of Salisarao. I was curious what he was doing in the upland region and while chatting with him, he asked for the exact day of my departure.

He then told me that once I returned to Germany, the original plan for expansion and resettlement would immediately start again.

It became clear that the signature list had been a good start but in a setting where legal expertise was hard to come by, it was simply not enough. Because of the continuing threat to lose their land, Wana people searched for more “powerful friends”. They turned to NGOs to help them further. A member of Yayasan Sahabat Morowali (YSM), a local NGO from Kolonodale, came to Taronggo for a meeting with Salisarao Wana. As YSM already had worked with Wana within the Cagar Alam, they were well familiar with Wana culture and needs. He explained a lot about their rights and opportunities and requested a copy of the signature list. Furthermore, it was the cooperation with NGO Yayasan Merah Putih (YMP) that was an urgent wish by Salisarao Wana. I had met members from YMP a couple of times when I went to Palu. The NGO is based in Central Sulawesi’s capital Palu and already had a lot of experience working with Wana people from the northern area of Bulang.<sup>202</sup> The staff of YMP provided me with great knowledge about the northern area and insights into land right questions and indigenous peoples’ struggles in Central Sulawesi. YMP had, among other things, successfully supported Northern Wana’s fight against a resettlement plan in that region. Additionally, they had invented the *sikola lipu*, a special form of school named after the Wana word for their local settlements, the *lipu* (see introduction). This self-organized school teaches basic skills and offers at least some education for Wana people, for example writing and reading. It is led by NGO-trained Wana individuals and thus organized by Wana people themselves. Most importantly, it is a school without any religious commitment.

Because YMP had focused in their work on Northern Wana I had only mentioned the NGO once and more in passing towards my local interlocutors. I was surprised by the great interest from Salisarao Wana side. As I have shown in the previous chapters, Wana ground their marginalized standing also partially on insufficient education. Although the distances from their upland *lipu* to lowland schools are one reason, most importantly upland Wana are reluctant to send their children to Christian schools. While lowland Wana do encourage their children to go to school they are not too excited about it

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<sup>202</sup> For a description of Bulang Wana (Kabupaten Tojo Una Una) and their entanglement with YMP, see the work of Nasution Camang (2003).

because, as I have shown above, teaching Christian values, praying and singing religious songs are perceived of as tools to missionize Wana children.

After I had told them about this NGO initiative of the *sikola lipu*, my local interlocutors kept on discussing this option and on numerous nights people were asking me over and over again about the details of this school. They decided to write a letter to the NGO and asked YMP for help in their current situation. Here are some extracts of the letter:

“Our community of Salisarao, area of *desa* Taronggo, is asking the *bapak-bapak* and *ibu-ibu* of Yayasan Merah Putih for help. For around eight months we have been alarmed that PT Kurnia wants to enter our area, although still we do not agree [with this plan] because this land is our ancestor’s land and *adat* land. If palm oil enters this area we will have no place left to cultivate our gardens [...]. Also, many members [of our community] still follow our culture and have swidden gardens (*kebun pindah-pindah*). In 1997 PT KURNIA entered the region of *desa* Taronggo. At that time they already had promised that every person would get 2 hectares of land but many of us only received 70 area or less and some did not receive anything at all. There are many problems with PT KURNIA for Taronggo, currently around 90 percent of the land that belonged to Taronggo is now owned by people from outside. There is not much land left. Therefore PT Kurnia now wants to enter Salisarau, *dusun* of Taronggo. [Explanation of signature list and meeting with company and *kepala desa*] Pak Muhrad from Kurnia had sworn during that meeting not to enter Salisarau. Now we know that he was not telling the truth. After the community meeting they still tried to talk to people to make them sell their land [...] We are very worried [...]. We wish that our children will become smart so that if there are more problems like the one with PT KURNIA and village government or with Alisintowe [sic] we can help ourselves. But we probably need a school for that. We already got some information from the people of YMP about your help for other *suku-suku* in Sulawesi. We already saw a movie about palmoil and we have already been talking long about the YMP program of *sekolah lipu*. We were really glad to get

these information and we hope that YMP will maybe help us as well. So, we really beg YMP: Please help us before it is too late.”<sup>203</sup>

As a result of this initiative, the NGO invited Wana people for a visit. In July 2011 two members of the Wana community, Apa Asan and Apa Feli, went to Palu to meet with the members of YMP (Fig. 31). I helped them arranging transportation and accommodation but since I was soon about to head back home to Germany I decided not to follow them. They had never been to Palu so it was an exciting experience for all of Salisarao Wana. At that moment it seemed to be important that this interaction between Wana and their new “powerful friends”, the NGO, would happen without my involvement. When Apa Asan and Apa Feli came back, they were very excited and brought with them many new ideas, new knowledge about right and the feeling that they were not alone with their problems. It was shortly after that I returned to Germany and meanwhile kept out of the dynamics between the NGO and Wana. It took around six months before I returned.

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<sup>203</sup> Translation by Grumbles.



Figure 29 Collecting signatures in Salisarao.



Figure 30 Waiting at the community hall in Taronggo for the meeting with *kepala desa* and PT Kurnia.





**Figure 31** Apa Fik discussing community boundaries during a meeting with Yayasan Merah Putih in Palu (Photo: Apa Ester 2011).



**Figure 32** Indo Laku with an NGO magazine focusing on palm oil.

## 5.6 BECOMING INDIGENOUS: SUDDENLY *MASYARAKAT ADAT*

When I returned to Indonesia for my last research stay in March 2012, something was different; “the atmosphere in Taronggo changed a lot, people seem to be way more enthusiastic about the whole situation. The plans for the *sekolah lipu* have become very serious” I wrote in my field diary. The community I met in 2012 had a very different attitude than the one I had left when I returned to Germany the year before. Cooperation with NGOs was in its infancy while I was still around and Salisarao Wana still had not much knowledge about other indigenous groups fighting for their rights; they had not much heard about NGOs at all and about a movement concerned with indigenous communities like they themselves were. In 2012 however, they were suddenly using a different scheme to describe their setting. They presented themselves no longer as uneducated and poor victims in a palm oil conflict but were now using the term *masyarakat adat* (adat community) as a way to describe their standing as a unique indigenous group that comes along with a specific status and set of rights. The change was obvious: While I had been gone they became part of a nationwide process often called *masyarakat adat* movement.

Let me briefly recall the outset of this movement. A global indigenous peoples movement started in Australia and America and spread to Asia and Africa by the 1990s. In Indonesia the revival of local custom that marked the indigenous peoples movement in the archipelago started with the decentralization and democratization processes after the downfall of Suharto regime in 1998. Especially the marginalized standing of indigenous communities and factors like poverty and suppression added to the nationwide movement. Thus, the movement was not simply formed and directed by global structures and processes but had specific national historical roots or as Henley and Davidson describe: “the current interest in *adat* is not just a national offshoot [...]. The revival also reflects a specifically Indonesian ideological tradition in which land, community and custom [...] provide the normative reference points for political struggles” (Henley and Davidson 2008: 849).

Wana entered the movement out of the necessity to find opportunities to resist resettlement plans and thus to fight for their land. This is the same reason why the movement in Indonesia started 1999 with a first meeting of the Aliansi Masyarakat Adat



Nusantara (AMAN) in Jakarta, using the slogan “If the state does not recognise us, we will not recognise the state” (Moniaga 2007; Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 6; see also Chapter 2). Adat communities came together to find a way to express violations of their rights; for example, in the case of land loss and other experiences of suppression and neglect that were not a mere product of the New Order regime but a result of specific historical circumstances and constellations beginning in the colonial area (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 7). The *masyarakat adat* movement gained widespread interest and became a powerful organ for indigenous peoples in the country.

Against the background of a debate around the ecological noble savage (Raymond 2007, Redford 1991; see Chapter 1), NGOs have often been criticized for painting a romanticizing picture of indigenous peoples as the only possible protectors of the environment. Tania Li has shown how AMAN activists in Central Sulawesi in 2003 were still upholding such an image of *masyarakat adat* as “ecologically noble savages” (Raymond 2007; Redford 1991) and were stating “that there still exist communities in Indonesia living in harmony with their environment, possessed of indigenous ecological knowledge” (Li 2007a: 343). Additionally they would share communal land right systems and practice an indigenous form of democratic autonomy, described by activists as “an oasis in the middle of the desert” (Li 2007a: 343). In this sense, the idea of an indigenous group in Indonesia “that is reminiscent of the noble savage of earlier times” (Hauser-Schäublin 2013: 12) but likewise as “self-organized people” uncovers a national context in which the imagination of indigeneity is closely connected to local or countrywide experiences. For Li, in Indonesia the idea of *masyarakat adat*

“presented [...] the direct inverse of everything that was problematic about New Order development: individualism, greed, ecological destruction, an emphasis on modernity understood as Westernization, control by international financial institutions, burdensome glossed as globalisation” (Li 2007a: 343).

However, a definition of indigenous people still does not come easy since it is a highly political issue not only on a national but international scale (Göcke 2013; Cabrera Ormaza 2013; Dove 2006; Kuper 2003; Pelican 2009). *Masyarakat adat* in Indonesia are quite diverse and have multiple motivations and interests entering the movement (Klenke 2013, Hauser-Schäublin 2013), a reason why Li insists on a “difficulty of locating the perfect *adat* subject” (2007a: 343). Dove et al. elucidate on anthropologist’s exaggerated interest in the concept of indigeneity itself and ask: “What do we make of the

extraordinary coincidence that anthropology (and the social sciences) began to critique the concept of indigeneity at the very time that it was being legitimised by mainstream global organizations like the United Nations and the International Labour Organization?” (Dove et al. 2007: 147–48).

Thus, instead of trying to find a fitting definition of indigenous people or to assess the relevance of the *adat* movement for the nation itself, I focus here on the politics of becoming *masyarakat adat* for the Wana.<sup>204</sup> Framing them as *masyarakat adat* has far-reaching consequences for Wana people since it meant empowerment through indigeneity or as Li has called out: “the discourse of *adat* is a political force” (2007a: 338). *Adat* can be an important source of power for historically marginalized people, as the Wana of Central Sulawesi are; but Wana first had to learn how to gain access to it, with the help of their “powerful friends”, and then faced the task to handle it properly. As I have already mentioned, Salisarao Wana were not aware of the power that lies within the labeling as *masyarakat adat* nor had many of them heard about AMAN, YMP or Sawit Watch – NGOs that could definitely play a role as a “powerful friends” for them. As Li has shown: “Most Central Sulawesi villagers are not aware of definitional debates among activists and scholars taking place in the provincial capital Palu and in other urban centers” (2007a: 345).

However, in 2012, the situation had changed: suddenly Wana people had become *masyarakat adat*. When I returned to the field, almost every household I visited in Salisarao and also lowland Wana households were now equipped with information material from NGOs in form of leaflets, magazines and books about indigenous groups, land rights and the palm oil problematic in Indonesia (Fig. 32). In the *kampung* of Taronggo, Wana from the upland as well as from Taronggo, came together to watch explanatory DVDs handed out by NGOs. I learned that a great number of meetings with YMP and other NGOs had happened while I had been gone. Salisarao Wana even met the *wakil bupati* (vice *bupati*) in December 2011 – an incident that had great motivational effect for them. Apparently three members went to the regency’s capital to meet the *wakil bupati*. Every *masyarakat adat* was invited to send three representatives, so people not only from Taronggo but also from Lemo, Salubiro and other places went to follow the

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<sup>204</sup> For a detailed overview of the politics of *adat* in Indonesia, approaches and definitions see the edited volume *Adat and Indigeneity in Indonesia* (Hauser-Schäublin 2013).

invitation. The *wakil bupati*, so it was told to me, gave a long speech and promised to back up everything the indigenous groups wanted. According to local interlocutors, he was very fond of Wana culture and mentioned that it was important to write down Wana law (*hukum*, BI), so that it could officially be recognized. The Wana representatives expressed their needs and mentioned that many people were keeping up the idea of Wana people as people who *belum punya agama*. “Who says that (*Siapa bilang?* BI)? The government is stupid if it does not want to deal with Wana people”, he is supposed to have said – coming from the mouth of a government man. I was not there to witness this episode and cannot count for the accuracy of the details. However, what is relevant for the process of becoming indigenous is the changed attitude that comes with this incident and signifies the change that took place among Wana people. The feeling and impression of being marginalized had experienced serious transformation at least for some people. Many of my interlocutors, though not all of them, expressed enhanced self-confidence when talking to officials or merely outsiders. Now they were using Indonesian language in a sense of using the authority’s language, although not always fluent, but were thus “able to speak to power” (Jackson and Warren 2005: 557). Had they felt highly shy (*mea*) before, they now were content to have learned how to express needs and how to address political matters. Tania Li has observed similar transformations during interviews she had conducted between 2001 and 2003 at AMASUTA (*Alliansi Masyarakat Adat Sulawesi Tengah*, Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of Central Sulawesi) meetings in Central Sulawesi. Here she met leaders of indigenous groups who stated that they had learned by NGOs like WALHI practical tasks to make their needs more visible for government officials and who had “learned to talk bravely” (2007a: 346) in a similar meaning as my interlocutors stated in 2011, when they further described how they were now no longer afraid to speak up for their rights and had now learned how to behave *berani* (courageous). Now they knew about their rights and would no longer shy away when facing a government official.

Apart from these changes in attitude another and probably more important change that occurred among Wana people was connected to the aforementioned wish for their own school, the *sikola lipu*. Members of YMP had recognized this urgent wish when they received the letter from Salisarao Wana in 2011. Accordingly they soon started with their schooling program. In January 2012 a group of YMP affiliates, including the organization’s head, Nasution Camang, arrived in Taronggo to assess the area. In a two-

day workshop they trained six locals to become teachers for their community. Nevertheless, no one from the area of Salisarao had attended; an instance that was also explained by weather conditions. Thus, the six individuals were in fact four Wana women and one man who were living in Taronggo, all of them closely connected to their upland kin. One man, Apa Eka, also received training although he was no Wana but had married a Wana woman; he was Muslim and his wife had turned to Muslim faith as well. Nevertheless, he was very understanding and cared a lot for Salisarao Wana. However, his involvement as a teacher was a bone of contention for some Wana. The most important aspect of the idea of *sikola lipu* was its independence of any religious content. With Apa Eka some Wana worried that he would use his position as a teacher to hide Muslim intentions behind his efforts. Further, he was not able to communicate in *Bahasa Taa* and was not very well known among upland Wana. By contrast, Apa Asan, one of the leading figures in the process, was a Muslim and outsider as well as I have mentioned above. But he was frequently in the upland region and had developed very close ties with Salisarao Wana so that distrust towards his person was not as big as it was against the person of Apa Eka.

Four months later, two of the trained teachers among them Apa Eka went to Palu to receive further training in the NGOs headquarter. Meanwhile, a group of Wana from upland who were highly enthusiastic about the whole idea, started to build a house for the school project in the area of Salisarao. When I came back to Taronggo for my last research stay I stumbled right into the preparation for the opening of the school. I took the chance and talked long to the trained teachers and community members that had been to Palu.

By mid of April a meeting was announced to happen in Pumbatuu, a place half way between the village and Salisarao. This meeting was announced to discuss the inauguration of the *sikola lipu* and to ask for everyone's opinion. Around 60 people came which was considered a big success. Three of the trained teachers appeared as well and explained the idea of the school to the community. Apa Eka, the Muslim teacher, was worried that his involvement would hinder Wana to send their children to the *sikola lipu*. He gave a long speech about his involvement and insisted that religion will not be a matter for the school and that people should not worry about him being a Muslim. In the end, the outcome was in favor of the school, although some Wana were still skeptical

about the concept. The community decided together that the school should take place every Monday and Thursday.

Two days afterwards, on 19 April 2012, the first day of the *sikola lipu* started.

While six teachers who were literate had been trained, two of them had already resigned from the task and I was not sure whether the school would be a success. But when the remaining four teachers hiked uphill to the schooling house they were startled by their welcome committee (Fig. 33). More than 50 children and around 15 adults from the upland region had gathered in the school building, some of them had hiked for more than two hours to attend their first day of school (Fig. 34-35). While Apa Eka started to teach the adults in writing, the children were given a first introduction to counting. It was a loud and enthusiastic atmosphere and pupils and teachers were more than excited. This inauguration day again was thus celebrated as a great success. The school is of course and first of all an opportunity to gain knowledge and education. It is in this meaning that the *sikola lipu* becomes a highly meaningful marker of self-determination and will-power for Wana people. The school thus expresses Wana agency in its purest form. For them, it is part of *becoming masyarakat adat*.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> In addition, YMP and other NGOs are currently working on a PERDA (*Peraturan Daerah*), a regional regulation, for the Kabupaten Morowali, to monitor the protection and recognition of Wana people and their rights.





Figure 33 The teachers of the *sikola lipu* crossing the Soelato river on their way uphill.



Figure 34 Old and young learning at *sikola lipu*.





**Figure 35** First day of *sikola lipu* in Salisarao.

## 5.7 CONTESTED INDIGENEITY

The changed attitude described above however does not apply to all Wana in the same way. The general change in form of new interaction with NGOs had come fast and of course only a handful of people so far had got to know closer contact to NGO allies. Those had clearly profited a great deal in terms of how to discuss important matters with officials, a process an interlocutor of Li has described as “learning how to conduct politics’ (*belajar berpolitik*), and his recognition that political involvement is not an evil to be eliminated [...] but rather an entitlement, something to be encouraged” (2007a: 346) – all with the help of NGO allies. Others, however, were facing these new developments with hesitation and reluctance.

No wonder such a rapid change of what I call “being Wana, becoming indigenous” was not going to happen without any contestations. The aforementioned politics of representation produced new constellations and understandings of power within a community that had come to embrace a completely new concept of themselves in a relatively fast process. Consequently, the idea of indigeneity as a form of empowerment was not achieved and used in a uniform and even way by all community members. Understanding, imaging and applying the concept of *masyarakat adat* to a community that had long perceived of themselves in a mere marginal stance, deeply embedded in cosmological and historical traits, did not happen without any problems.

One field of problems was settled in the field of shifting power relations within the community. As I have described above, access to knowledge is an important source of power. Wana “powerful friends” like the NGO as an agent of this knowledge, however, could not communicate with every individual equally. This led to some difficulties between old leaders and new leaders. There were Wana who had taken a central position in communicating with the NGO; they had developed closer ties to the organization, were regularly keeping community and NGO updated about the developments via telephone and had for example traveled to their headquarter in Palu. These individuals thus were put in a position as a new kind of leader in the current development. While, on the one hand, they were the ones who had pushed the development in the current direction, they were, on the other hand, regarded with distrust by some people. Their motivation seemed to be somehow doubtful to the community. Further, coming back from the province’s capital



where they received new information and training, some had developed a new vocabulary filled with NGO phrases, a phenomena Li has described as “talking the language of customary rights” (2007a: 346) – a language that was somewhat incomprehensible for their upland kin and thus produced a sense of distance among Wana members.

The discussions with NGOs happened mainly with these new leaders while respected elders were often not included or were not summoned to informal meetings. This happened partly because of allegations of corruption towards some elder leaders, usually those living in the village, who were regarded with distrust in relation to their former and current involvement with the village government. As a result of these new alignments of power, some elder leaders intensified their bonds with the official sector and highlighted their role as administrative, although not elected, representatives of the *suku*. By this development, new poles of power were becoming more and more visible. Tyson has noted a similar process: “a return to *adat* has, in many places, been found to perpetuate clientelism by creating ‘opportunities for powerful groups to advance their interests in the name of a revival of distinct traditions’” (Tyson 2011: 660).

Another big problem was ascribed to the status of the teachers of the *sikola lipu*. They were believed to be receiving money from the NGO for their job and making a big profit with their new occupation. Jealousy, a general threat for community solidarity, played a big part in these frictions but distrust paired with religious fears was also a matter of concern. The initial six teachers who received first a training by YMP partially were converted Wana from Taronggo now officially following Christian or Muslim religion. Although they were still very close to Wana religion and would not be involved in missionary attempts, distrust was still noted by upland Wana. This was in some way caused by a general reluctance towards the celebration of the school as a *sekolah tanpa agama* (BI), a school without a religion. Some Wana individuals had difficulties with this declaration and were suspicious that the school indeed had either a Muslim or Christian missionary background connected to it. In face of the historical experiences of strong religious pressure described in the chapters above it is no wonder religious motives were a matter of concern and distrust among community members. Many Wana still do not fully trust the NGO – or me, the anthropologist – to be free of religious intentions. Nevertheless, Christian and Muslim Wana teachers also experienced high pressure from their religious communities. The school was not very welcomed among Christian and

Muslim lowland neighbors and was instead perceived of as a source of trouble. Apa Ela for example was frustrated, “this school is forbidden (*dilarang*), don’t let them go there”, he told me. The school itself was regarded as illegal, strongly backed up by the *kepala desa* who stated this a couple of times and complained that he was not included in the planning. The NGO had tried to contact him and the *ketua* BPD twice but not one of them followed their invitation, I was told. One Christian woman in Taronggo complained towards me:

“How is this up there a school? There are no teachers, they are just normal people. There are some who never went to school themselves, I do not understand what they want to teach them. They (Wana children) should come down here. Here is a school, a good school, where they can really learn. But this (school) up there I do not understand the point in it.”

The so far missing acknowledgment of the school by the state as well as its missing religious curriculum leaves non-Wana community members suspicious about the purpose of the school. Thus, converted Wana teachers experienced high pressure by their religious communities (see Chapter 4, the story of Indo Mika). Within the first month of the *sikola lipu*, four of the trained teachers already resigned and were followed by other, non-trained Wana.

Religion was also a cause for another important concern. Not all of my interlocutors in the area were immediately enthusiastic about the new development due to cosmological explanations. As I have shown in Chapter 3 marginality among Wana is deeply rooted in cosmological explanations and reasoning. According to their belief, their current condition of poverty and marginality makes them suitable for the predicted Golden Age that is expected in cosmological narratives. Breaking out of this current marginalized standing by becoming powerful, educated and rich due to their new empowerment will make them no longer suitable for their spiritual friends, the *taw baraka*. They would no longer fit the bill of the pitiful marginal people; a picture that they needed to attend. Thus, some of my interlocutors expressed fears that once they would experience empowerment they would no longer be proper candidates for the *taw baraka*. Indo Felu for example told me that although she was very pleased with the school and the success they had in the

fight against the resettlement plan, she also felt insecure if this progress would go to far, if they would become too powerful, too educated.

Based on these consternations, the involvement in the current *masyarakat adat* movement is, at least for some Wana, not an easy task. The contestations resulting from the process of “becoming indigenous” showed how heterogenous the positions among Wana in the upland as well as lowland came out. Individuals are looking at the new developments with mixed feeling and are reluctant towards their new political status as *masayarakat adat*. It is thus a complex process of becoming indigenous by taking on modern means of empowerment that raise suspicions among Wana members. Hirtz has talked about the bureaucratic orientalism, a term he borrows from Said (1978), and shows how it takes an idea of modernity to embrace the indigeneity category,

“it takes modern means to become traditional, to be indigenous [...]. Modernity needs the contrasting concept of indigeneity and tradition, whereas traditional societies in pre-modern or pre-colonial times did not need to establish their ‘otherness’ in opposition to modernity or their own history. In other words, through the very process of being recognized as ‘indigenous’, these groups enter the realms of modernity” (Hirtz 2003: 889).

For the Wana, it is this modernity that, against the described cosmological background, might hinder their way towards salvation. This is for some a tragic paradox in itself. While salvation implies the outbreak of the current marginal stance through cosmologically founded expectations, it is also the labeling as *masyarakat adat* that would bring salvation in the form of political empowerment. However, the latter conflicts seriously with the former.

Further, the recognition of the Wana ethnic group as *masyarakat adat* as a solution for the current situation is, according to the movement, a way to empowerment. This process however implies at the same time the recognition of the nation state, its power and its apparatus from Wana side, although as Li rightfully asks: “Why should *masyarakat adat* demand recognition from a state whose claims to sovereignty they wish to challenge?” (Li 2001: 653). It is in fact a contradiction: Following the rules of the state and adopting its strategies by those who originally were challenging the state in itself, the legitimacy of the state itself first obtains acknowledgment (Li 2001; Tyson 2011). A circumstance that in fact, based on their experience-based and millenarian point of view has never been the goal of Wana people.

Entering the *masyarakat adat* movement did not come about effortlessly for Wana. Adopting this label, the process of becoming an indigenous people is a political decision that Wana used for their own empowerment – a decision that was at least thought to be their last resort in the struggle against land loss and resettlement. However, the process was no unilateral decision and with shifting power relations, internal consequences are at this point not fully visible. It is a process that takes time to settle; the Wana have not transformed immediately “from peripheral minority groups with little recognition or power vis-à-vis their nation-states to transnational activists with formidable international lobbies and leverage”, as Hodgson explains for the Maasai (Hodgson 2011: 2). Wana turned towards a movement with growing international entanglements in times they were looking for “powerful friends” that would be able to help them. They had no high expectations, since action-based discourse on *adat* and *adat* rights is rather a subject to be discussed among educated activists in far-away cities and not among people who are actually deeply affected by it. Like many other indigenous groups all over Indonesia, Wana have engaged in a movement where they have “found [...] a language, a sense of solidarity, and a set of allies that have helped them articulate and advance their claims, especially claims against the state for control over ancestral lands” (Li 2007a: 346). The acceptance of their status as an indigenous people, thus turned their marginal position into a more or less powerful *masyarakat adat*, against the background of a society that is experiencing a revaluation process of formerly called *suku terasing*, backed up by international discourse and organizations like AMAN and WALHI recognition. Thus, their indigeneity and the acceptance of their new status brought with it a new concept of their ethnic identity and explained at least part of their marginalization to them. It is by this means that their redefinition as *masyarakat adat* became a strong weapon of resistance and opposition for the Wana. The process of becoming indigenous is thus an expression of specific Wana agency.

## 5.8 INTERIM CONCLUSION

The relocation of Wana settlements to lowland centralized villages has been a continuing peril for upland Wana, threatening their social life, culture and economic standing as swidden agriculturalists. Involuntary relocating of ethnic minorities has a long history in

Indonesia, beginning with times of colonial rule. Just like other upland people Wana were facing resettlement initiatives by the colonial government at the beginning of the 20th century. The village of Taronggo itself evolved from such a project. Wana were reluctant to get relocated to the lowland and incorporated in a state system that induced them with Christian values and a new political system. Resistance against government schemes happened in a subtle way, opposing resettlement claims and continuing to make a living in the upland regions. Although a small number stayed in Taronggo, most Wana remained in the uplands and kept away from the state initiatives. When the New Order government followed colonial schemes in the 1970s while relocating upland *suku terasing* in centralized villages all over the nation, Northern Wana were again opposing these threats and resisted continuously. In 2007 a resettlement after a natural catastrophe in the Posangke area resulted in a failed initiative that left an almost empty settlement next to Taronggo, now claimed by a Christian missionary group. Wana again, left the lowland settlement in a silent pose of opposition to continue their way of life in the uplands. In 2011 Salisarao Wana experienced a serious threat for their land rights, when in order to make place for a new palm oil plantation the local government again planned to relocate them. Resettlement schemes are thus recurring processes of marginalization that affect Wana political standing. In 2011 the long well established strategy of resisting resettlement schemes would not serve them since ultimately they would have lost their land. Instead many Wana decided to search for help and entered a process of reframing their very own identity as indigenous people. Their new alliances with NGOs offered great support to oppose the 2011 relocation project. It also offered them the new opportunity to receive at least some education with the erection of the *sikola lipu*.

Becoming indigenous happens in Central Sulawesi generally in opposition of unequal power constellations; the region's whole movement as described by Sangaji, an insider, "is in the first place a reaction to restricted and unjust forms of economic development" (Sangaji 2007: 333). Wana, as I have shown, entered the movement for just the same reasons. However, their reframed identity positioning is a way of articulation that came from outside or as Li formulates: "Those who demand that their rights to be acknowledged must fill the places of recognition that others provide" (Li 2001: 653). Indigeneity has the lure of global meaning and importance; it "is a worldwide field of governance, subjectivities, and knowledge [...]. Indigeneity itself materializes in an intricate dynamic among converging and competing agendas, visions, and interests that

transpire at local, national, and global levels” (La Cadena and Stan 2007: 9). When Wana decided to become indigenous they however did so by searching for “powerful friends” agents; they had no motivation of entering neither a global nor a mere Indonesian movement. Therefore, the process of Wana becoming *masyarakat adat* is less part of an international movement but shows mainly the importance of actual local aspirations and circumstances.

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## 6 CONCLUSION

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This thesis set out to explore the idea and meanings of marginality from the perspective of people who are often described as marginal. It has shown how the concept of marginality is perceived, formed and framed in academic positionings and how it is applied to upland groups in Indonesia. It has moreover presented a heterogeneous picture of the concept, as it is in itself a social construction and thus receives manifold interpretations and understandings. The study has sought to investigate whether the conception of marginality changes profoundly when taking a new viewpoint, particularly the perspective of a “marginalized people”, and whether such a new perception can help to enhance the idea of marginality. Therefore this thesis has sought to answer the question of how marginality is constructed in a cultural sense by Wana people in the Central Sulawesi uplands. The general theoretical literature on the subject of marginality in the context of Southeast Asia and particularly Indonesia is deficient with regard to three highly important issues:

- 1) The role of religion in the discourse on marginality for Southeast Asian upland groups.
- 2) The role of “powerful friends” for marginalized people and the formation of marginalization processes.
- 3) How knowledge and the access to knowledge influences power relations between margins and center.

This thesis has attempted to address these three deficient areas and sought to discover how these three issues impact upon the Wana and their marginal status, both ascribed and self-ascribed.

In Chapter 2 I have presented the idea of marginality as a theoretical concept and outlined its connotations for upland groups within the Indonesian context. The birth of the use of the concept of marginality in academia can be traced back to personality studies where individuals’ identities are to some extent shaped by their experiences of marginality. However, these applications of the concept were soon followed by ideas of structural,

geographical and cultural marginality within sociological approaches, all of which are somehow still relevant for research, though none of them proved to be sufficient on their own. Nevertheless, in anthropology marginality has become an important term in scholarly discourse to guide debates on social and economic inequalities. The works of scholars like hooks, Shields and Tsing have revolutionized the idea of marginality, revealing the potential that marginal spheres have to resist and counteract hierarchical center–periphery relations.

Within the Indonesian context, territorialization, historicity, and the dynamics of politics are important issues for the investigation of marginalized regions all over the archipelago. People's socio-religious, economic and political environments on Indonesia's outer islands are comprised by, and related to hegemonic schemes, which constitute them as peripheral. Upland groups have continuously been framed as backward communities, distant and excluded from the Indonesian mainstream. Beginning in colonial times, upland groups were subjected to marginalization processes, for example in the form of unjust management of land rights, and also resettlement projects. During Indonesia's New Order, upland people were considered as isolated tribes (*suku terasing*, BI) and a hindrance to national progress. Land-rights formulations continued to ignore indigenous claims and upland communities were still subject to intensive resettlement strategies. With the era of decentralization a new form of empowerment for indigenous and upland communities was established: the *masyarakat adat* movement offered new opportunities to counteract their marginal standing within the society. Wana people as a "classic" Indonesian upland group have thus been deeply affected by historical relations, territorialization and state rule – all aspects of the framework in which upland marginality in Indonesia is constituted.

Against this general background Wana have developed their very own notion of their marginality. The empirical findings showed that marginality has a number of representations relevant for Wana people: The cosmological foundation of Wana marginal standing in which marginality can be explained as a self-constructed identity discourse (Chapter 3); the socio-religious dimension, in which Wana as people with a marginal belief system are excluded from the Indonesian mainstream and experience processes of marginalization, including on a day-to-day level in terms of interreligious



dynamics (Chapter 4); and finally, political and economic positionings, access to knowledge and education, and dynamics of resistance (Chapter 5).

In Chapter 3 I have shown how Wana perceive themselves only partially as marginal. Drawing upon cosmological narratives, they have constituted a cosmological center that through its mere existence becomes a tool of contestation against patterns of political and economic inequality. Wana need to remain in their constant state of religious marginality in order to reverse the current center–periphery relationship that, in the meantime, is disadvantageous for them. Religious conversion would block the way towards a new Golden Era with Wana people at the center. Instead they have elaborated a notion of self-marginalizing performance in order to break out of their marginality; they choose their cosmological center as the point of hope and promise. By this means, Wana marginality in a cosmological understanding is a temporary condition that will be reversed in the future.

For Wana as a group following their own *agama Wana* in a state that does not officially recognize other religions than “world-religions”, religious affiliation becomes a highly politicized marker of identity. In regard to marginality-related issues religious association is closely intertwined with a Wana self-marginalized positioning and socio-religious hierarchies. In Chapter 4 I have discussed how, within the interreligious community of Taronggo, Wana obtain a marginalized standing among their Christian and Muslim neighbors if they have not converted; for example, marriages between Wana people of the same faith have no chance of being officially recognized. Another aspect relevant to religious marginality is access to education. In Taronggo, Wana children can attend the Christian elementary school, but many parents are highly reluctant since school attendance encompasses Christian education and is interpreted as leading Wana children towards religious conversion. Since Wana oppose most conversion attempts education becomes a highly important aspect of marginalization processes. Wana can be portrayed as marginal people with a marginal belief, who are expected to become part of a religious center as adherents to a center-acknowledged belief. However, as I have shown, Wana constantly resist state power and discursive strategies to make them reorient towards a national ideal. Religious conversion here would be the solution to “social backwardness”, a way out of their marginalization in relation to the political center.

In the introduction to this thesis I made clear that I use the term Wana in a way that includes a religious meaning. Nevertheless, I have shown how the category Wana is not an easy one to define. A number of people living in Taronggo who are ethnically Wana have converted to other religions, either recently, or as second-generation converts, and are presented as either Christian or Muslim Wana. Then, even for (non-converted) Wana, the category Wana cannot be but oversimplifying and homogenizing. The category Wana in the way I used it in this work is based on individual representations and actions of individuals that I met and documented during my research. However, the category Wana is conceived as a complicated heterogeneous picture of individuals following their own specific agenda. While religion played a significant role, the category upland and lowland were also of high significance affecting individual's living and positionings.

Chapter 5 has shown how Wana more or less embraced the idea of being "indigenous". Historically Wana have avoided direct confrontation with people and institutions affecting them in a marginalizing manner. Resistance against resettlement strategies for example happened in a subtle way, with the Wana remaining in the upland terrain instead of openly opposing government initiatives. When in 2011 a new government initiative threatened Wana in the upland region of Salisarao, Wana turned to a new strategy to counteract the resettlement plan. Drawing back on the help of people who had more access to sources of power than they did, they established long-lasting relationships with several NGOs, which educated them about their rights. Ultimately the resettlement plan was cancelled and instead Wana have managed to establish their very own school, the *sikola lipu*, dedicated to Wana children and adults and celebrated as a new form of empowerment. In this process Wana have welcomed their new status as indigenous people that are part of a national movement to strengthen the role of *masyarakat adat* all over Indonesia. Nevertheless, their new status as *masyarakat adat* ultimately led to a set of new problems. Some members of the community perceive this new positioning as a chance to one day break out of their marginalized status – a status they in fact need to keep, at least in some sense, to enter their millenarist idea of a new Golden Era as I have described in Chapter 3. This has become a point of solemn distress among Wana families in the area of Salisarao. "The process of becoming indigenous [...] does not end when one acquires the label. It begins there", Pratt notes (2007: 399). The occurring problems described in Chapter 5 are part of this process; its outcome still remains to be seen. Some Wana are using the discursive power of their new label as *masyarakat adat*, while others

might back away and keep out of these new initiatives while returning – some in a metaphorical, some in an actual sense – to the uplands, waiting for the *taw baraka*, while others will keep on searching for new strategies. These are just some examples of consequences that arise due to their entering the *masyarakat adat* movement. Becoming indigenous in Taronggo is a highly political decision and its consequences are at this moment not fully visible.

Dynamics between upland and lowland, center and periphery, Wana and non-Wana, inside and outside are thus continuously challenged and reformulated, bringing to light the cultural specifics and symbolic meaning of Wana marginalization. Wana turned to their “powerful friends” or searched for them in times when the Wana marginalized standing was becoming a source of land loss. Their distance from the political center prompted them to look for allies with close ties to centers and more access to center-related power. Once Wana became part of the *masyarakat adat* movement, they themselves moved a little closer to a center. This however increased, in a spiritual sense, their distance from their cosmological center. The hope of becoming once again part of the cosmological center, the future Golden Era, is closely linked to Wana current marginalized status. Only by upholding the current condition of misery will their future “powerful friends” in the form of the *taw baraka* recognize them. Therefore, a positioning between margins and centers is highly complex and often conflict-laden for Wana.

Marginality is a highly relational concept and its character must be critically examined. Thus, I ask with Ferguson: “When we say marginal, we must always ask, marginal to what?” (Ferguson 1990: 9). Wana refer to a political center to explain their political and economic marginal status (see Chapters 4 and 5), a center that is in some way analogous to state power. On the other hand, a more important center for them is the cosmological center that transgresses time and space and is not easily graspable.

Anna Tsing has engaged deeply with perspectives on marginality within the realm of anthropology. Looking at precisely how the Meratus Dayak in Indonesia “engage their marginality by protesting, reinterpreting and embellishing its exclusion” (Tsing 1993: 5), she approaches the idea of margins as sites of constructed meanings and identity, where processes take place that shape a marginal distinctiveness, to be taken on by mainstream opinions: “the Meratus are *defined* by their marginal status in nationally and regionally dominant ways of thinking” (Tsing 1993: 253). The same counts for Wana, themselves at

least partly living in the mountainous terrain of Morowali Regency, who are interpreted as primitive uplanders, not-yet-full citizens of the Indonesian state. But they have developed their own notion of marginality, which is not so deeply connected to outside marginalization processes as it is rather culturally constructed according to cosmological explanations. Therefore, Wana are not casualties within a static model of state-periphery-based marginality; nor have they become specialists in avoiding state power altogether. They are, however, creative agents of their culture and of their own concepts of their marginal standing, constantly renegotiating and reformulating their position as an upland group.

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## GLOSSAR

<i>adat</i>	(BI)	local right system but also culture, customs, traditions or values
<i>adi adi</i>		part of a spell in the <i>baraka</i> myth
<i>agama</i>	(BI)	religion
<i>AMAN (Alliansi Masayarakat Adat Nusantara)</i>	(BI)	Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago (NGO)
<i>AMASUTA (Alliansi Masayarakat Adat Sulawesi Tengah)</i>	(BI)	Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of Central Sulawesi (NGO)
<i>baraka</i>		power
<i>bartapa</i>		keepig vigil as part of seeking to become a shaman
<i>bea</i>		stupid, dumb
<i>BPD (Badan Perwakilan Desa)</i>	(BI)	village representative body
<i>budaya</i>	(BI)	culture
<i>Cagar Alam</i>	(BI)	Nature Reserve
<i>camat</i>	(BI)	head of a district
<i>DEPSOS</i>	(BI)	Department of Social Affairs
<i>desa</i>	(BI)	village, can also mean sub-district
<i>do'a</i>		Wana spell
<i>du'e</i>		music instrument, also called geso-geso
<i>duku</i>		ritual offering tray
<i>dusun</i>	(BI)	sub-village
<i>geso-geso</i>		See: <i>du'e</i>
<i>hak milik</i>	(BI)	private ownership right
<i>hak pakai</i>	(BI)	right to use land
<i>hak ulayat</i>	(BI)	customary land rights
<i>hukum</i>	(BI)	law
<i>inti</i>	(BI)	land within the Nucleus-Plasma-System reserved for a company
<i>joe n tana</i>		go to the end of the word
<i>kabupaten</i>	(BI)	regency
<i>kaju parambaa</i>		the felled tree in a Wana myth
<i>kampung</i>	(BI)	village

<i>kasugi</i>		wealth
<i>katuntu</i>		powerful creation myth
<i>kayori</i>		artistic verse form, only used in connection to <i>katuntu</i>
<i>kecamatan</i>	(BI)	district
<i>kepala desa</i>	(BI)	village head
<i>kepala suku</i>	(BI)	head of a clan
<i>kepercayaan</i>	(BI)	belief
<i>lipu</i>		Wana settlements
<i>LKMD; Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa</i>	(BI)	village community resilience board
<i>LMD; Lembaga Musyawarah Desa</i>	(BI)	village consultative assembly
<i>mabolong</i>		see momago
<i>mafuti</i>		to lie
<i>magule manu</i>		Wana ritual of deconversion
<i>makole</i>		Wana leader in the past, also called <i>basal</i>
<i>mangaya</i>		converted Wana
<i>masi yasi</i>		pitiful
<i>masyarakat adat</i>	(BI)	adat community
<i>measa</i>		Wana demon
<i>molawo</i>		most powerful healing ritual
<i>momago</i>	(BI)	healing ritual
<i>motaro</i>		a shaman's dance during a <i>momago</i>
<i>naraka</i>		hell
<i>niat</i>		a vow-making ritual
<i>orang (yang) belum beragama</i>	(BI)	people who do not follow a religion yet
<i>orang gunung</i>	(BI)	mountain people
<i>Orde Baru</i>	(BI)	New Order
<i>pagansani</i>		knowledge
<i>Pancasila</i>	(BI)	preamble of the 1945 Constitution
<i>panti asuhan</i>	(BI)	orphanage
<i>patoe</i>		opening chant of a shaman during a momago
<i>pembangunan</i>	(BI)	development

<i>pemekaran</i>	(BI)	blossoming; a process of evolving numerous new regencies and districts, initiated after the New Order
<i>plasma</i>	(BI)	land within the Nucleus-Plasma-System reserved for an individual smallholding
<i>popondo</i>		music instrument
<i>propinsi</i>	(BI)	province
<i>Pue</i>		the Owner, God
<i>Pue lamo</i>		The Owner or God of thunder
<i>Pue ri ara n tana</i>		The Owner below the earth
<i>pusen tana</i>		the navel of the earth
<i>Puskesmas, Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat</i>	(BI)	local community health station
<i>sanga</i>		the true name
<i>Sawit Watch</i>		Indonesian network against oil palm plantations (NGO)
<i>sekolah dasar</i>	(BI)	elementary school
<i>sikola lipu</i>		Wana school, see lipu
<i>SPN or Sisdiknas. Sistem Pendidikan Nasional</i>	(BI)	National Education System Bill
<i>suku terasing</i>	(BI)	a term created by the government in 1976 and meaning isolated tribe.
<i>suruga</i>		heaven
<i>taw bolag</i>		invisible people living in the Wana forests
<i>taw walia, kawalia</i>		shaman
<i>tempo baraka</i>		the lost Golden Era
<i>tendebomba</i>		artistiv verse form
<i>timbuso watu</i>		stone statues
<i>tolali</i>		flute-like music instrument
<i>Toraja</i>	(BI)	ethnic group of South Sulawesi
<i>tradisi</i>	(BI)	tradition
<i>Tunda'n tana</i>		seat of the world in creation myths
<i>transmigrasi</i>	(BI)	a resettlement project that started in 1978 and aimed at relocating people from the densely populated regions of Java and Bali to the outer islands
<i>wali m pantoo</i>		the becoming of the word
<i>WALHI (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup)</i>	(BI)	Indonesian Forum for Environment (NGO)
<i>walia</i>		spirits

<i>wiaa siwangoe</i>		liane connecting heaven and earth
<i>YMP (Yayasan Merah Putih</i>	(BI)	The Merah Putih Foundation (NGO)
<i>YSM (Yayasan Sahabat Morowali)</i>	(BI)	Friends of Morowali (NGO)
<i>yuno</i>		friend



