

The Invisible Aristocrat: Benny Giay in Papuan History

By

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Thesis submitted as partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Arts/Asian Studies (Hons).

Discipline of Asian Studies
Australian National University

December 2002

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisor, Chris Ballard, for your generosity, encouragement and patience, and for continually leading me towards new directions and ideas.

Thank you to Benny Giay for so generously giving up your time and answering my questions so candidly. Thank you also for providing thought provoking and complex material. The translations were relatively easy but I am still unravelling many of your ideas.

Thank you to Mike Cookson for so generously helping out by lending me papers, documents, and books, and reading my thesis so thoroughly at such short notice.

Thank you to Theo van den Broek for your comments on the Catholic Church in Jayapura.

Thank you to George Quinn, my secondary supervisor – enjoy the jaffas.

Thank you to my parents, Andrea and John Kjar, for supporting me through the *long* years of my degree, for making time to read my thesis, and for always offering your help. Thank you to my sister, Tamara Kjar, for being an extraordinary last-minute saviour and for always finding ways to help me out. And to my other sister, Silla Kjar, thank you for providing the food and entertainment and putting up with me, I am very grateful.

Thank you to a great friend, Jenny Pinkerton, for taking an interest in my thesis – even when it was unjustified – and for all the feedback, comments, and constructive advice.

Thank you to the Nash and Basham distractions – Angie Bexley, Tambah G, Amrita Malhi, Greta Jones, Tracy Rowe and the rest of the Honours crew – good luck.

Thank you to the people who have taken an interest in my welfare: Amelia Henty, and the staff at Home Care Services, in particular Lynn, Candy and Jane.

Finally, thank you to Alan Swain for getting me to Indonesia in the first place and to the Pelni posse – Herman, Frits, Ferly, “Abang” and Diana – for giving me such a wonderful introduction to Papua.

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INTRODUCTION: Writing for a Nation

To counteract this encroachment upon individual rights by the raison d'Etat, this stifling of spiritual vitality by l'esprit industriel et utilitaire, Renan calls for the formation of a spiritual elite, in his words an imperceptible aristocratie... These invisible aristocrats, he hoped, would constitute a spiritual state within the political state, a cité idéal or église d'élite radiating outward and revitalizing a society benumbed by "vulgarity" and "mediocrity".¹

In May 2000 a small blue book was published in Waena, in the Indonesian province of Papua. Entitled *Menuju Papua Baru*, the book comprised a selection of "principal ideas concerning the emancipation of the Papuan people."² The author, Dr. Benny Giay, sets out his motivations for writing *Menuju Papua Baru*:

Menuju Papua Baru was written for the PDP³. I was part of that. We didn't know where we were headed. I wrote that book for the PDP. I was a moderator of the PDP, and I thought, hey where are we going with that? Let's talk about this. So we had a seminar, all of us had a seminar in early May 2000 so we could talk about this...The idea for Papua Baru came from the ordinary people. They talk about it in some discussions and I saw twice, at least once, it appeared in a newspaper. Maybe this also has something to do [with] Papuans who [have] started religious movements. They always – they want a new era.⁴

Three simple words: *Menuju Papua Baru – Towards*⁵ a New Papua. The crucial word being *towards*. Where nationalist and millenarian movements in Papua⁶ have envisioned

¹ Richard M, Chadbourne, *Ernest Renan* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968), 87.

² Benny Giay, *Menuju Papua Baru: Beberapa Pokok Pikiran Sekitar Emansipasi Orang Papua* (Jayapura: Deiyai, 2000). Translated as *Towards a New Papua: A Few Principal Ideas Concerning the Emancipation of the Papuan people*.

³ The PDP is an acronym for Presidium Dewan Papua, the People's Representative Council. The Council was established in 2000 with financial support from the then President, Abdurrahman Wahid.

⁴ Benny Giay, *West Papua Project*, 2 September 2002.

⁵ The word *menuju* is commonly translated as towards, however, in this context, it is perhaps better defined as actively working to reach a particular destination.

an apocalyptic and immediate break from Indonesia, Giay focuses on the process of attaining a new future.

Menuju Papua Baru emerged amidst an atmosphere of renewed hope for the future and, more specifically, renewed hopes for independence (*merdeka*).⁷ As the people cried out for *merdeka*, Giay took a step back and asked, “what is it, this *merdeka*, what does it mean?” When asked about his own interpretation of *merdeka*, Giay replied:

to be independent we have to start with this whole process of decolonisation, this awareness that we have been forced to look at ourselves through Indonesian spectacles in the past.⁸

For Giay then, independence entails more than a break from Indonesian rule; it requires that individuals consciously reflect on the thought patterns they have acquired during the period of Indonesian occupation and free themselves from an internalised form of colonisation. Giay’s aversion to colonial inheritance is perhaps best illustrated in his conscious rejection of predecessor nationalisms and deliverance of an entirely unique approach to writing history.

Benedict Anderson, in his original edition of *Imagined Communities*, proposes that colonised nationalisms consciously borrowed elements from their predecessors. Colonised nationalists, inclusive of Indonesians, were akin to past Creole nationalists who imagined their future nation in the (European) languages of the colonisers. As

⁶ Papua has been referred to by many names in history. During Dutch colonisation, the province was called West New Guinea. At the time of integration into Indonesia, the province took the name, Irian Barat (West Irian). In 1973, the name was changed to Irian Jaya. Prior to the takeover, Dutch officials established a new name for the province, Papua Barat (West Papua). Whilst many Indonesians still refer to the province as Irian Jaya, the current name in use amongst Papuans is Papua. This essay refers to the province as Papua except where it is of historical significance to refer to the name in use at the time.

⁷ Following the downfall of former President Suharto, the Indonesian Government became more receptive to dialogue with Papuan leaders. In February 1999, a team of 100 Papuan leaders, known as Tim 100, initiated the first dialogue between Papuans and the Indonesian Government. On a visit to the province in December 1999, Former President Wahid announced he would allow the Papuans to raise the Papuan flag (the Bintang Fajar, also referred to as Bintang Kejora), sing their own anthem (Hai TanahKu) and refer to their province as West Papua – referred to as Irian Jaya by the Indonesian Government. He gave funding of Rp 1 billion to the Papuan Congress, Kongres Rakyat Papua II, which convened in Jayapura from 29 May to 4 June 2000.

⁸ Interview with Benny Giay, 2 September 2002, International House, University of Sydney.

pilgrims travelled to the centre of power (in Indonesia's case – Batavia), they met people from whom they were geographically removed but with whom they shared the common bond and identity as an inlander (inferior native).⁹ Such an identity was imposed by the colonial state to denote inferiority but actually served to forge a bond for these previously unconnected peoples. The stamp of European populism on nationalist models required that aspiring nationalisms secure an inclusive support base from within the boundaries defined by the colonists. Education and a nation-wide administrative system, features of official nationalisms, enforced the idea that people within a demarcated boundary were somehow linked to one another.

In the revised edition of *Imagined Communities*, Anderson reprimands himself for having overlooked the influence of the colonial state in shaping such nationalisms. He contends that the post-colonial state appropriated three phenomena of the colonial state: the census, map, and museum. He asserts that these three institutions:

profoundly changed the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion, the nature of human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry.¹⁰

Anderson's implication is that the post-colonial Indonesian state derives from a conscious borrowing of past models of nationalism and an appropriation of colonial techniques in wielding power. The privileged position of twentieth century-nationalisms, according to Anderson, stems from their access to the experiences and mistakes of prior models of nationalism.¹¹ Yet they suffer the same fate as past revolutionaries when they ascend to power and inherit the “wiring” of the old state in the form of files, laws and archives.¹²

⁹ Inlander was a term used by the Dutch colonial administration to denote inferiority and imply that these people, as opposed to the Dutch, were native to Indonesia and ‘belonged there’. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Spread and Origins of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1993), 122.

¹⁰ Anderson, 163-164.

¹¹ Ibid. 135.

¹² Ibid. 160.

Anderson cites Papua as an example of such national and colonial legacies.¹³ In defiance of Dutch colonial rule, Indonesian nationalists rejected their inferior status but retained their native identities. This common identity served to link all other inlanders to each other as belonging to a single, unified territory that spanned from Sabang to Merauke. As it was the experience of Dutch colonialism and subjugation that forged this common bond, it was only fitting that the borders of the post-colonial territory encompassed all inlanders. The far eastern province of Papua was drawn into this vision by virtue of its role as the temporary home for exiled Indonesian nationalists. The map of the colonial era gave legitimacy to Indonesia's claims to Papua.

The educated elite was instrumental in the nationalist movement of Indonesia. Their bilingual literacy may have alienated the intelligentsia from both Dutch and native quarters, but it allowed them to appropriate the knowledge of the colonisers and adapt it to the understandings and situations of the colonised.¹⁴ They drew from the knowledge of the colonisers and re-articulated it such that these European ideologies of liberation and nationalism came to defend post-colonial freedoms.

If, as Anderson contends, Papua is located within the Indonesian state in much the same way as Indonesia was located in the colonial state,¹⁵ then it could be inferred that the Papuan intelligentsia will pursue a sense of nationalism reflective of Indonesian resistance to colonial rule. But is this the case? Anderson's theory makes no allowance for the conscious rejection of colonial or national legacies; he writes only of conscious borrowing and unselfconscious adaptation. In drawing parallels between past and present models he overlooks the possibility that an intelligentsia, or a people for that matter, may rupture the process of inheritance before a nation is inherited. Furthermore, his revised edition accounts for a fourth modular nationalism, colonial nationalism, but nothing more; presumably he is implying here that future nations will be recycled versions of the old.

¹³ Ibid. 178.

¹⁴ Ibid. 116.

¹⁵ "In a way that reminds us how Indonesia came first to be imagined within the racist structures of the early-twentieth-century Netherlands East Indies, an embryo 'Irianese' national community, bounded by Meridian 141 and the neighbouring provinces of North and South Moluccas, emerged." Ibid. 178.

Yet, once created, what is it that sustains the national identity? Manzo suggests that an alien presence is fundamental in defining and reviving a national identity. She argues that the concepts of alien and nation are inextricably linked to one another because the concept of alien bounds the identity of those within the nation.¹⁶ Nations can therefore only thrive in the presence of alien nations. Nationalisms and, by association, identities draw sustenance more from what is without rather than within the boundaries of a nation.

References to Indonesia, alien to the Papuan nationalists, are conspicuously absent in much of Giay's writings. He cites occurrences of resistance, previously misconstrued as nationalist movements, to demonstrate how Papuans have related to each other. His internal view of Papua relies minimally on Indonesia, or other foreign identities, to define Papuan identity.

Giay's fluency in Dutch and English provides him with access to European experience and past models of nationalism, and yet he chooses not to incorporate this information into his writing. Rather than seeking to borrow and adapt modular nationalisms, Giay draws on the culture and experiences of Papuans as a means to resolve some of the issues confronting Papua today. He does not take on the Indonesian re-formulation of inlander, the primitive Papuan, for the purpose of uniting a people based on Indonesian terms. His acknowledgement of Papuan collaborators and Papuans "with the souls of Indonesians," denies any naturalised conception of a Papuan community. His disregard for the "Russifying"¹⁷ policies of the post-colonial Indonesian state is evidenced in his vision for the church as watchdog.

Giay is thus a counter for Anderson's speculation that access to modular nationalisms is synonymous with the appropriation of them. He consciously rejects the models of predecessor nations and consciously borrows from the experiences and beliefs of those amongst whom he lives. Where Anderson might call this process adaptation, Giay terms

¹⁶ Kate Manzo, "The Practice and Promise of Nationalism," *Political Theory Newsletter* 7: 1 (1995): 46.

¹⁷ Anderson refers to Russifying policies as the installation of "nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations." Anderson, 114.

it contextualisation: locating the people of Papua within their own circumstances. Giay thus delivers a response to the previous accounts of Papuan history that wrote of Papuans only in terms of their relations with outsiders, foreigners, or the alien presence. He seeks to explore how the indigenous inhabitants of Papua relate to each other.

Chapter One

This first chapter follows the trail of justifications that emerged in Indonesian accounts of Papuan history in response to Dutch protestations that Papua had no place in the Indonesian nation. Indonesian nationalists inherited the imaginings of the expanse of their nation from the experience of Dutch colonialism. It was the Dutch who linked Papua to Indonesian national imagining by exiling prominent nationalists to Boven Digul, Papua. Yet it was also the Dutch who refuted any claims that the Papuans were in anyway connected to the Indonesians. The history of Papua therefore becomes a battleground for proving sovereignty. The Indonesian Government's sanctioned accounts of Papuan history inevitably follow the same path: they seek to prove the legitimacy of Indonesia's claim to sovereignty of Papua. This claim is premised on the three tenets of nationalism, anti-colonialism and legitimacy. Papuan history is thus presented within the framework of these three points of evidence.

Chapter Two

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section follows the path of an alternative account of Papuan history termed the "negating discourse". This account questions the truth of all three of Indonesia's claims to a legitimate sovereignty of Papua. By refuting these claims, and prioritising the refutation of the claims in writing a history, the negating discourse arrives at an impasse of locked logic and morals with the Indonesian account. The second section looks at some of the forms of resistance that have emerged in Papua since the arrival of the Dutch. It examines how these movements have been interpreted by the negating discourse and questions whether these resistance movements establish a Papuan nation as their objective.

Chapter Three

The third chapter follows the writings of Benny Giay who addresses the failings of both accounts of history by critiquing them in his own terms. The chapter explores how Giay presents a vision for the church in Papua and how he attempts to rectify some of the omissions in Papuan history.

CHAPTER ONE: Writing Papua into the Indonesian Nation

Photo courtesy of Kal Muller

Introduction

The clock read three o'clock on the dot. The Merah Putih waved triumphantly from atop the flagpole. Relief for all! This was an occasion for history, for on this day in May 1963 the UN flag was brought down. We had at last freed the people of West Irian from their colonial shackles and they could truly become a free and independent Indonesian society.¹⁸

On 1 May 1963, the Indonesian Government heaved a sigh of relief as the “issue of West Irian”¹⁹ was at last laid to rest. For Herlina, a Javanese female participant in the Trikora²⁰ campaign, it was a day to rejoice as on this day West Irian was *returned*²¹ to the fatherland, Indonesia.

Since 1949, Indonesian officials had driven a diplomatic campaign with the intent to banish the lurking threat of continued Dutch intervention in Indonesian affairs.²² The Indonesian Government attempted to initiate dialogue at the United Nations General Assembly on four occasions from 1954 to 1957 yet failed to secure a majority for the matter’s inclusion in the Assembly’s agenda. In 1962 the United States of America initiated a tri-partisan agreement between Holland, Indonesian and the United Nations

¹⁸ “Djam menundjukkan pukul 12.30 tepat. Merah-Putih berkibar dipuntjak tiang bendera dengan megahnja. Legalah hati semuanja! Tinggallah saat jang harus ditjatat kembali didalam sedjarah kita, jaitu saat penurunan bendera P.B.B. pada bulan Mei 1963. Disaat itulah kita benar-benar membebaskan rakjat Irian Barat dari segala belunggu pendjadjahan. Mereka akan benar-benar mendjadi rakjat Indonesia jang bebas dan merdeka.” See J. Herlina, *Pending Emas* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1964), 235.

¹⁹ The issue of West Irian refers to Indonesia’s diplomatic battle (and military campaign – Operasi Mandala) to integrate Papua into the Republic of Indonesia.

²⁰ Trikora is an acronym for Tri Komando Rakyat. It is translated as “The Three Demands of the People”. The first demand was to crush efforts to make Papua a puppet government for the Dutch. Secondly, Sukarno announced his intention to raise the Indonesian flag on West Irian soil. Finally, Sukarno called on the people to prepare to mobilise to defend Indonesian independence and unity.

²¹ The Indonesian Government spoke of Papua’s integration into Indonesia as a return to the fatherland. For example, the book *Sejarah Kembalinya Irian Jaya ke Pangkuan Republik Indonesia* (The History of the Restoration of Irian Jaya to the Indonesian Republic) (Jakarta: Direktorat Organisasi Internasional. Departemen Luar Negeri, 1998).

²² In 1949 the Dutch government ended its campaign to regain sovereignty of Indonesia and entered into negotiations to finalise the transfer of sovereignty. The matter was discussed at the Round Table Conference, held at The Hague between August and November of 1949. The Dutch agreed to hand over all territories of the former East Indies, except West New Guinea, to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia. The matter of West New Guinea was postponed for one year. However, the two parties were unable to reach an agreement and the battle over sovereignty continued. In 1961 the Indonesian Government launched Operasi Mandala (Operation Mandala), a military campaign to invade West New Guinea, sparking international concern. The United States responded by re-opening negotiations.

(UN) relating to the sovereignty of West New Guinea. The agreement, termed The New York Agreement, required the Dutch Government to transfer sovereignty of West New Guinea to the United Nations Temporary Executive Administration (UNTEA) on 1 October 1962. UNTEA subsequently transferred administration of West New Guinea to Indonesia on 1 May 1963. Although Papua's integration into Indonesia was not made official until 1969²³, the Indonesian Government treated matters pertaining to West Irian as internal, Indonesian, affairs from 1963.²⁴

This chapter begins with the Indonesian nationalist movement of the 1920s whose leaders sought to justify the establishment of an independent Indonesian nation free from colonial rule. As the Dutch refused to break entirely from the colonial state by retaining sovereignty of Papua, the Indonesian Government sought to condemn colonial interference and justified its claims to sovereignty of Papua on the basis that Papua should be returned to the Indonesian nation. Thus, a discourse emerged that attempted to prove that Papua had always belonged to the Indonesian nation and its rightful place in the world was with that nation.

Establishing an Indonesian Nation

During the independence struggle, Indonesian nationalists claimed that an embryonic Indonesian nation had emerged in the archipelago prior to Dutch colonisation. Tobing refers to a sense of awareness that the Indonesians possessed their own, distinct culture.²⁵ This notion of unity, however, only crystallised when Indonesians faced a common

²³ In accordance with the conditions set out in the agreement, Indonesia had a responsibility to conduct a vote, PEPERA (Penentuan Pendapat Rakyat - "The Act of Free Choice"), to determine whether the people of Papua opted for integration with Indonesia or independence. The UN General Assembly ratified the results of PEPERA, a unanimous decision for integration, in 1969.

²⁴ From 1963-1969 the Sektor Khusus Irian Jaya (Special Section for Irian Jaya) administered the central government departments that operated in Papua. The Sektor Khusus itself was administered from the Department of Internal Affairs. See Ross Garnaut and Chris Manning, *Irian Jaya: The Transformation of a Melanesian Economy* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1974), 21.

²⁵ Prof PH. O.L. Tobing, *'Bhineka Tunggal Ika Dasar Kepribadian Indonesia': Pidato Diutjapkan pada Perajaan Lustrum Pertama Universitas Hasanuddin di Makassar pada Tanggal 10 September 1961* (Makassar: Universitas Hasanuddin, Fakultas Sastra dan Filsafat, 1961), 4.

threat: the Dutch colonial administration. It was arguably the Dutch who inspired this sense of unity by identifying Indonesians as inlanders.²⁶

By labelling Indonesians as inlanders, the Dutch imparted a sense of commonality to those over whom they ruled. Yet this imagined community of inlanders did not originally conceive of a unified, Indonesian nation. The early nationalists envisioned an independent Java; not Indonesia as a totality. Javanese students founded Budi Utomo²⁷ in 1908 with the aim of establishing an independent Javanese nation. Their goals were to rekindle Javanese pride and, in doing so, ignite economic progress. The Indische Partij made the initial political step in 1912 to promote an Indonesian nation. The idea was criticised at first for being artificial and colonial but eventually garnered support so that by 1927, Budi Utomo was forced to accept the idea of Indonesian unity.²⁸

Sukarno endorsed Indonesian unity on the premise that it gave the nationalist movement a numerical advantage in fighting the Dutch. In 1927 he delivered a speech encouraging the indigenous peoples of the Dutch East Indies to form a “brown front”. At the time, a Dutch journalist of the *Soerabaiasch Handelsblad*, Zentgraaff, had proposed that the Dutch form a “white front” to deal with the increasingly vocal natives. Sukarno envisioned a reactionary brown front that would prove impenetrable should the natives establish a sense of unity.²⁹ The notion of an Indonesian community thus derived from a recognition of the need to broaden the support base of nationalists in opposing the Dutch.

By the time Sukarno delivered his speech, “*Indonesia Menggugat*” (Indonesia Accuses), in 1930, the desire for an Indonesian nation was well entrenched within the community. In that speech, Sukarno asks what it is that constitutes a nation. He refers to Ernest Renan and Otto Bauer to provide part of the answer. He says that, for Renan, the

²⁶ Inlander was used as a derogatory label for the Indonesians and implied that the Indonesians were inferior and ‘belonged to’ Indonesia. See Anderson, 122.

²⁷ Budi Utomo was a political party formed by the *priyayi* (Javanese upper class). Its members opposed the colonial status quo but advocated cooperation with the Dutch Government.

²⁸ David F. Henley, “Ethnographic Integration and Exclusion in Anticolonial Nationalism: Indonesia and Indochina,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37:2 (1995): 314.

²⁹ Sukarno, “Towards the Brown Front,” in *Indonesia: Selected Documents on Colonialism and Nationalism, 1830-1942*, ed. C.L.M. Penders (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977), 311-313.

requirement for a nation is the desire to be united whereas Bauer claims that a nation develops out of shared experiences. Sukarno consciously borrowed from the experiences of predecessor European nationalists and adapted their models to Indonesian nationalism.

Sukarno's theory of nationhood did not end with unity and collective experience. Sukarno's third notion of nationhood, geopolitics, implied a naturalised configuration of the Indonesian state:

Even if a child looks at a map of the world, one can point out that the Indonesian archipelago forms one unity... Even a child can tell that the islands of Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, Halmahera, the Lesser Sunda Islands, the Moluccas, and the other islands in between are one unity.³⁰

For Sukarno, the Indonesian nation had always existed. However, he adds that Indonesia has only existed as a *nation-state* twice in history. The Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms, according to Sukarno, constituted nation-states because they contained all of the provinces from Sabang to Merauke.³¹

However, the Indonesian nationalists' desire to be united and sense of collective experience were inextricably bound to Dutch colonialism. Bhabha contends that part of the process of identification for the native is the desire to claim the place of the Other while "keeping his place in the slave's avenging anger."³² For Indonesians, the desire to be united stemmed from the desire to claim the place of the Dutch colonialists whilst simultaneously distancing themselves from the Dutch by the remembrance of colonial oppression. The desire for unity, if only initially, existed because and in spite of the Dutch presence.

³⁰ Sukarno, "The Pantja Sila," in *Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965*, ed. Herbert Feith and Lance Castles (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), 41.

³¹ *Ibid.* 43.

³² Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 44.

Linking Anti-Colonialism to Nationalism

Following the official transfer of sovereignty of the Dutch East Indies to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia in 1949, the newly independent country was plagued by a spate of ethnic rebellions from 1950 to 1964.³³ For Anderson, the nation survived the trauma of the rebellions, in part because Batavia (Java) remained the educational centre of the Indonesian nation: it was the ultimate destination for pilgrims.³⁴ As local Muslim schools came to be replaced by the national school system, a sense of shared identity emerged as students from across Indonesia read the same books and learnt the same language, Bahasa Indonesia.³⁵

However, it was the campaign to reclaim Papua that really served to unite Indonesians and rekindle nationalist sentiment. Sukarno arguably used the campaign to divert attention from internal factionalism and rumours of an imminent coup³⁶ and to refocus discontent with the Indonesian government towards the more potent threat of revived colonialism:

As soon as the Netherlands East Indies Government stopped to exist [sic] at the end of 1949, revolts started to break out in several places of the country, such as in the Moluccas, South Sulawesi and West Java. All of them were instigated by the Dutch and their collaborators. Therefore, the Indonesian Government anticipated that a similar pattern of colonial resistance would arise in the question of Irian Jaya.³⁷

By reviving the threat of Dutch colonialism, the government re-established the presence of the foreign and re-ignited anti-colonial vengeance, thus tightening the bonds of the Indonesian nation.

³³ Anderson, 132.

³⁴ Ibid. 132.

³⁵ Ibid. 122.

³⁶ Dutch radio reported that Sukarno was arrested by the Army and would soon be replaced by three leaders: the Prime Minister Dr Djuanda, Former Vice-President Mohammada Hatta, and the Army Chief of Staff, General Nasution. These rumours gained strength after Dr Djuanda announced Sukarno was to take an imminent “rest”. See James Mossman, “Soekarno Denies Reports of Arrest, Sees Press,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 December 1957, p. 1.

³⁷ *OPM, Aftermath of Colonialism* (Jakarta: Department of Information, 1976), 7-8.

Challenging the Dutch Claims to Sovereignty

The Round Table Conference of 1949 established the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty of the former Dutch East Indies to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia. Article One of this charter stated that this transfer should be complete, irrevocable and unconditional. The Dutch Government ceded all former territories of the East Indies except for West New Guinea. The issue of West New Guinea stalled negotiations to the extent that delegates consented to postpone any decision and promised to meet within one year to finalise the agreement. The Indonesians were emphatic about their decision to retain West New Guinea. On 29 October 1949, Vice President Mohammad Hatta emphasised that “the Dutch East Indies had always been governed as a totality, and it was unheard of that West Irian should be separated from the rest of the Dutch East Indies.”³⁸

On 12 November 1946 the Commission-General and the Indonesian Republic Government finalised the Linggajati Agreement. This agreement effectively recognised the Indonesian Republic’s authority over the former East Indies. Article Four of the document specified that the federation of Indonesia was to consist of the Indonesian republic, Borneo and eastern Indonesia. Both the Indonesian and the Dutch Governments agreed at the time that New Guinea formed a part of the state of eastern Indonesia. It seemed that the ethnic divide between the Papuans and Indonesians no longer compelled the Dutch in their claim to Papua.

However, two weeks after this announcement, Dutch opinion changed and officials argued that West New Guinea should remain a colony of the Netherlands. On 27 November 1946, Lieutenant Governor General H.J. van Mook wrote to the Minister of Colonies, Jonkman, claiming that the province of Papua should be given special status. van Mook claimed his decision was based on Papuan opposition to Indonesian

³⁸ C.L.M. Penders, *Milestones on My Journey: The Memoirs of Ali Sastroamijoyo, Indonesian Patriot and Political Leader* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1979), 207.

sovereignty and the possibility that Papua would be disadvantaged by the claim. However, as Penders contends, it was more likely that he was motivated by Dutch discontent following the Linggajati Agreement as it was seen to be a complete surrender to the Indonesian republicans.³⁹ Dutch Parliament eventually rejected the Linggajati Agreement and announced on 10 December 1946 that New Guinea should be kept under Dutch control.⁴⁰

The Indonesian Government spoke of the continued Dutch presence in Papua as a threat and claimed the Dutch would use Papua as a staging point for a renewed attack on Indonesia.⁴¹ However, the real frustrations stemmed from the Dutch refusal to hand back the entire territory of the former colonial state. The realms of the Indonesian nation, both past and present, were imagined as containing the full stretch of the Dutch East Indies. Nationalists argued that Indonesia could not exist without Papua.

Locating Papua in the National Imagination

In retaliation to remarks that Papuans did not participate in the nationalist movement, former Foreign Minister Subandrio commented that Papua was arguably the heart of nationalist sentiment. Since 1927 the Dutch Government had exiled nationalists and freedom fighters to the outer province. Boven Digul hosted some of the great leaders of the nationalist movement and, according to Subandrio, these exiles ingratiated themselves with the people of West New Guinea during their stay. He contends that although they did not take part in the Youth Pledge of 1928, Papuans were just as firmly connected to the independence movements as any other peoples of Indonesia.⁴² Thus, the memory of Papua as a home for exiled Indonesians invigorated nationalist imaginings.

³⁹ C.L.M. Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonisation and Indonesia, 1945-1962* (Adelaide: Crawford house Publishing, 2002), 65.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 70.

⁴¹ Ibid. 78.

⁴² Dr. Subandrio, *Meluruskan Sejarah Perjuangan Irian Barat* (Jakarta: Yayasan Kepada Bangsa, 2000), 12.

Nationalist Contradictions

Yet, it was not the Papuans who dwelt in the imaginings of Boven Digul but rather the Indonesian exiles, outcast to Papua during the nationalist uprisings in the 1920s. Boven Digul was the ultimate punishment for nationalists because of its isolation from Indonesia and Indonesian affairs:

Yes, who does not remember themselves in this place of exile, exile, oh exile, far from their family, far from their loved ones, far from the land of their birth, oh exile. It is this they regret. In fact there are many who weep.⁴³

This sense of exile was compounded when the nationalists looked around them and saw a people who were so entirely different to their own:

Humans knew of that place, it was only a jungle inhabited by people who were uncivilised, people who were naked, people who ate the meat of fellow humans, parts of the neck, people who roamed the jungle like animals.⁴⁴

Thus for the nationalist exiles, Papuans were different to other Indonesians. However, in nationalist rhetoric, it was their difference to the Dutch that made them the “same” as Indonesians. That is, differences to Dutch culture had to be seen to supersede the differences that existed between the Indonesians and the Papuans.

The Indonesian Government thus emphasised the importance of the national slogan, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), in relation to Papua. The fact that Papuans

⁴³ “Ya, siapakah yang tidak ingat bahwa dirinya di dalam tempat pembuangan, pembuangan, oh pembuangan, jauh dari sanak familie, jauh dari orang-orang yang dicinta, jauh dari tanah kelahiran, oh pembuangan, demikianlah mereka mengeluh, malah tidak sedikit yang mengucurkan air matanya.” Oen Bo Tik, “Darah dan Air-Mata di Boven Digul,” in *Cerita Dari Digul*, ed. Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2001), 27.

⁴⁴ “Manusia mengenal tempat itu, hanya suatu hutan besar yang didiami oleh manusia yang masih biadab, manusia yang masih bertelanjang, manusia pemakan daging sesama manusia, pemenggal leher, yang hidup berkeliaran berupa hewan di dalam hutan.” Abdoe’IXarim, “Pandu Anak Buangan,” in *Cerita Dari Digul*, ed. Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2001), 83.

were different to Indonesians was seen as a source of pride for the government in establishing a “unity” between the two groups:

The example of Indonesia is a clear demonstration that differences in anthropological and ethnological conditions do not prevent the development of a nation.⁴⁵

The incorporation of Papua into the Indonesian nation was a testament to the principle of political unity, on which the nation was founded.

However, after the takeover, the Indonesian Government initiated a policy in Papua that demonstrated its intolerance of ethnic difference. In 1970 the Indonesian Government launched a program called “Operasi Koteka” (Operation Penis Gourd) aimed at bringing (Indonesian) civilization to the people of Papua. The program identified the main obstacle to development in Papua as the assumed primitiveness of the people who inhabited the land. They were regarded as specimens of the Stone Age in want of clothing, housing, and education.⁴⁶ The term “primitive” is reminiscent of the Dutch colonial use of inlander. Primitive implied that the people of Papua were inferior to Indonesians because they had no culture. However, rather than distinguishing themselves from them, the Indonesian Government attempted to assimilate Papuans into “Indonesian culture.” Inherent in this reasoning is the assumption that Papuan culture was not synonymous with the standardised Indonesian culture.

The struggle for sovereignty of Papua was pursued on the grounds that Papua belonged with the Indonesian nation. Papua was captured in the national imagination by its association with Boven Digul and nationalist martyrs. However, the ethnic and cultural differences that existed between Papuans and Indonesians caused even the nationalist exiles some consternation. The Indonesian Government claimed that the nation existed as a political unit and that ethnic differences were irrelevant. That is, membership to the Indonesian nation gave ethnic groups a common identity: Indonesian. However, in the case of Papua, the government was unwilling to be associated with

⁴⁵ *The Future of West Irian* (London: Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, date unknown), 7.

⁴⁶ *Operasi Koteka*, (Jayapura: Angkatan Darat, Komando Daerah Militer XVII/Cenderawasih, 1971), 7.

Papuan primitiveness and thus sought to civilise the population. The government saw Papua as a possession and its people as intellectually inferior in much the same way that the Dutch had initially viewed Indonesians:

The Irian question is not a question of ethnology; neither is it a question of having reached a sufficient stage of maturity. As a matter of fact, imperialists have always advanced the argument of maturity, but this argument has never been a sound one... The argument "intelligent or not intelligent" does not hold good at all. I hope the Dutch will remember that they have also applied this argument of "intelligent or not intelligent" to us for dozens of years and thousands of times – without result.⁴⁷

The Indonesian nation developed out of a desire to be free from Dutch colonialism. The sense of nationalism, however, relied on a continual remembrance of suffering experienced during Dutch rule. Yet, the nation inherited more than its borders from the colonial state. As the Indonesian Government took on some of the practices of the Dutch, it became increasingly important to justify its uneasy position as both the inheritor and the critic of the colonial state.

The Power of Discourse

In an acute observation of post-modern approaches to Indonesia, Heryanto reminds his reader that deconstructionist theory developed as a challenge to the hidden power structures inherent in Western discourse. He contends that the purpose of post-modern critique in European discourse is to unearth hidden power structures that have previously gone unnoticed. However, power and violence in Indonesia is excessive, brutal, and a spectacle, but very rarely is it hidden. Therefore, as Heryanto contends, a post-modern critique can be better utilised by examining how the state uses discourse to enhance its power and to justify violence.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *The Future of West Irian*, 2.

⁴⁸ Ariel Heryanto, "What Does Post-Modernism Do in Contemporary Indonesia?" *Sojourn* 10: 1 (1995): 41-42.

In the case of Papua, the government has claimed that the takeover was a reintegration of a lost province. Sukarno spoke of Papua as if it were a stolen possession waiting to be claimed by its rightful owners. The image of Papua as a place of suffering for nationalist exiles had a powerful resonance, however, the Papuan people occupied an uneasy place in the national imagination. They had not taken part in the Proclamation of Independence in 1928. They were not granted independence from the Dutch in 1949. As the battle for sovereignty continued, Papua came to be seen as a possession, as opposed to an equal member, of the Indonesian nation. The discourse of Papuan history is thus a legitimisation of Indonesian sovereignty rather than an affirmation of its place as an equal member of the Indonesian nation.

Official Indonesian accounts of history⁴⁹ claim that Papua comprised part of the two past Indonesian Empires: Sriwijaya and Majapahit. Indonesian historians also attest to the legal foundations of the integration. This account of history therefore seeks to justify Indonesia's inheritance of the full territory of the former colonial state.

Proving Papua's Place in the Nation

Official Indonesian accounts of Papuan history invariably begin with a refutation of Dutch claims that Papua should take no place in the Indonesian nation:

Dutch scientists and pseudo-scientists have spent much effort in proving, at least to their own satisfaction, that the peoples of West Irian have no racial affinity with the rest of Indonesia, and that therefore the Indonesian claim to the territory cannot be admitted...There is, in point of fact, strong evidence to indicate the ethnological, cultural and philological connection between West Irian and the rest of Indonesia. Historically, the affinity is indisputable, for West Irian, up to the time when sovereignty was transferred to Indonesia, was regarded by Indonesia, by Holland and by the rest of the world as belonging to the vast complex of islands making up the Indonesian Archipelago.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The official Indonesian account refers to accounts of Papuan history that are sanctioned by the Indonesian Government.

⁵⁰ *West Irian and the World* (Jakarta: Departemen Luar Negeri, 1954), 6-7.

Although few Indonesian historians ventured to prove that Papuans had any such racial affinity with the rest of Indonesia, most official Indonesian accounts of history attest to the historical ties between the two peoples.

The official Indonesian account of Papuan history draws on archaeological evidence to prove that Papuans and Indonesians have long been in contact with each other. Cave drawings dated from the Mesolithic era discovered at Triton Bay, Bitsyari Bay and several other locations in Papua reportedly share similarities with cave drawings at Marros in South Sulawesi. Findings in Papua from the Neolithic era such as axes and certain ceramics are also said to be similar in appearance to those found throughout Indonesia. Finally, stone graves dated back to the Neolithic era resemble sites of worship common to Indonesia.⁵¹ This evidence suggests that there may have been some trade links between Papua and the chain of islands to the west:

These Neolithic, Mesolithic and Megalithic articles were brought to Irian Jaya by successive waves of migration from outside the province presumably directly after the end of the Neolithic era.⁵²

Although the author does not expressly claim that Papua and Indonesia had social ties in the prehistoric era, he cites evidence from archaeological diggings to enforce the idea of long-term relations between the two.

For the Indonesian official account, the first significant ties between Papua and Indonesia were established during the reign of the Sriwijaya and Majapahit Empires.⁵³ Indonesian anthropologist, Koentjaraningrat, wrote that two powerful empires in history united the provinces of present day Indonesia.⁵⁴ The Indonesian official account of

⁵¹ *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya* (Jakarta: Kerjasama Universitas Cenderawasih dengan Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah Tingkat I Irian Jaya, 1989), 30-31.

⁵² “Benda-benda Neolitik, Mesolitik dan Megalitik tersebut di bawa masuk ke Irian Jaya oleh pendatang dari luar Irian secara bergelombang yang diperkirakan langsung sejak akhir masa Neolitik.” *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya*, 31.

⁵³ See diagrams 1.1 and 1.2 for the extent of the Sriwijaya and Majapahit Empires.

⁵⁴ “Dua buah kerajaan Indonesia telah mempersatukan secara social-ekonomi (dan mungkin juga secara politik) negara-negara kecil yang sebelumnya saling bersaing, ialah kerajaan Sriwijaya pada abad ke-7 M dan 8 M, yang pusatnya berada di Sumatra Selatan, dan kerajaan Majapahit, yang pusatnya berada di Jawa

history cites evidence to prove that Papua was integrated as a territory of both the Sriwijaya and Majapahit Empires.

Information about the Sriwijaya Empire is scanty; what is known is that in the seventh century, the Sriwijaya kingdom embarked on an expansionist campaign by securing the Malacca and Sunda Straits. This strategic move allowed for hegemonic control of the two channels through which ships from India to China passed. Van Leur contends that the Sriwijaya kingdom maintained two systems of control: tributary overseas possessions and overseas predatory expeditions.⁵⁵ Although the Sriwijaya kingdom did not establish its own bureaucratic form of control over tributary possessions, the administrations of these territories were subordinate to the Sriwijaya rulers.

At the beginning of the eighth century the Sriwijaya King, Indrawarman, included a native bird of Papua⁵⁶ (the Cenderawasih, “bird of paradise”) in his tribute to the Chinese emperor.⁵⁷ The presentation of a Cenderawasih was noted in the Chinese Yearbooks. Bachtiar mentions King Indrawarman’s gift to the Chinese emperor as proof of relations between the Sriwijaya kingdom and Papua.⁵⁸

Timur pada abad ke-14 M.” “Two Indonesian Empires have united socio-economically (and perhaps politically) small countries that were previously in competition with each other. They are the Sriwijaya Empire in the 7th and 8th centuries that ruled from South Sumatra, and the Majapahit Empire that ruled from East Java in the 14th century.” Koentjaraningrat, *Masalah Kesukubangsaan dan Integrasi Nasional* (Jakarta: UI-Press, 1993), 8.

⁵⁵ J.C. van Leur *Indonesian Trade and Society* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd, 1955), 105.

⁵⁶ Papua was referred to as Jenggi, or Djanggi, during the reign of the Sriwijaya Empire.

⁵⁷ Harsja W. Bachtiar, “Sejarah Irian Barat,” in *Penduduk Irian Barat*, ed. Koentjaraningrat and Harsja W. Bachtiar (P.T. Penerbitan Universitas, 1963), 55.

⁵⁸ Indonesian rulers frequently sent missions to China to demonstrate their political importance as regional overlords and, consequently, demonstrate the extent of their power in the region.

Diagram 1.1 The Sriwijaya Empire in the eighth century

Diagram 1.2 The Majapahit Empire in the fourteenth century

The Majapahit Empire replaced the Sriwijaya Empire as the leading power in the region. It reached the height of its power and reach in the 14th century. The *Nagarakertagama* provides an insight to life in the court during the Majapahit era. This court document specifies the regions that existed within the empire's sphere of influence. Court officials made records of tributes from Wwanin and Seran.⁵⁹ Indonesian historians have referred to the *Nagarakertagama* to prove that West Papua belonged to the Majapahit Empire.⁶⁰

Despite the paucity of writings on the Sriwijaya and Majapahit Empires, it is generally conceded that their authority in the region did not go uncontested. Hall writes that Palembang, a center of the Sriwijaya empire, struggled to maintain control of the fourteen cities under its control. Javanese kingdoms, such as Jambi, were just as fiercely contested. The reign of Prince Vijaya (Kertajarasa Jayavarddhana), was plagued by a conflict between two parties. Hall refers to these as the pan-Indonesian party, who supported Kertanagara's holy confederacy, and the anti-foreign party. The anti-foreign party was opposed to the possibility that a foreign, Malay prince⁶¹ would soon govern the Majapahit Empire.

Henley contends that the Sriwijaya and Majapahit Empires were timely cultural artefacts for Indonesian nationalists because their rule in Indonesia had elapsed long ago. In a comparison of Indonesian and Vietnamese nationalism, Henley argues that because the memory of Vietnamese expansion was relatively recent (the Vietnamese Empire had extended into Cambodia and Laos in the nineteenth century), the people were less accepting of the idea of its return. In the case of Indonesia, the empire's sins were long forgotten and the people therefore more eagerly embraced their memory.⁶²

⁵⁹ Regions on the coast of New Guinea. Theodore Pigeaud, *Java in the 14th Century: A Study in Cultural History Vol III* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), 17.

⁶⁰ "Dengan bukti ini Prof. Yamin berpendapat bahwa beberapa daerah Irian Jaya pada abad XIV merupakan wilayah Majapahit." "Based on this evidence [in *Nagarakertagama*], Professor Yamin concluded that the region of Irian Jaya constituted a region of Majapahit in the 14th century." *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya*, 36.

⁶¹ In 1295, Kertarajasa's son, Jayanagara, was given the title of Prince of Kediri, next in line to Kertarajasa. His mother was from Malaya and on this basis faced opposition from the anti-foreign party. D.G.E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*. 3rd ed. (New York: St Martin's Press, 1968), 82.

⁶² Henley, 288.

Indonesian historical accounts recall the glory of the Sriwijaya and Majapahit Empires and envision them as precursors to the modern nation. These empires are significant national constructs because they had authority in the region; they did not bow down before foreign rulers. Indonesian nationalists referred to these empires as a way of generating a collective sense of spirit. The two empires were icons for the Indonesian nation as envisioned by Sukarno and his contemporaries. Yet, both empires were distant memories until rediscovered in the twentieth century for the purpose of nationalism and resistance. Resistance is the key word here, for it was resistance to a common and foreign enemy, the Dutch colonial administration that sparked such sentiments of nationalism.

Proving Papuan Anti-Colonialism

Arguably the most notorious of all Papuan resistance movements, *Koreri*⁶³, is included in official records dating from 1855. The *Koreri* example is used to establish that Papuans did resist Dutch authority:

With this, the *Koreri* movement originally aimed to defend indigenous culture from the influence of foreign cultures. However, this movement eventually developed into a movement that opposed foreign domination.⁶⁴

The Simson movement of 1946-1947, based in Jayapura, was another millenarian movement that attempted to unite the Papuans in resistance to the Dutch but was eventually crushed in 1947 when members of the Merah-Putih were arrested.⁶⁵ A third movement referred to as Kasiep emerged in the Nimboran region in 1948-1952 that

⁶³ *Koreri* is a local truth originating from the Yapen Waropen area. The central character is a man known as Manamakeri who found prosperity but was later exiled by his people. The followers of *Koreri* believe that Manamakeri's return to Papua is imminent and he will bring with him an era of abundance for the indigenous and downtrodden people.

⁶⁴ Dengan demikian gerakan *Koreri* ini pada mulanya bertujuan mempertahankan kebudayaan asli Biak dari pengaruh kebudayaan asing. Namun akhirnya gerakan ini berkembang mengarah kepada suatu gerakan menentang kekuasaan asing. *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya*, 68.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 62. Bachtiar, 73.

promised a time of abundance.⁶⁶ Finally, the Ekari people, led by Zakheus Pakage⁶⁷ initiated a movement called Wege from 1952 to 1954 in the region of Paniai.⁶⁸ Bachtiar mentions that some Papuans collaborated with the Dutch:

Although some natives collaborated with the Japanese forces (for example, J. Ariks⁶⁹ and N. Jouwe aided the Japanese in Manokwari whilst M. Kaisiepo worked in Kenpeitai, many natives resisted the authority of the occupied Japanese forces.⁷⁰

It is worth noting that Nicolaas Jouwe and Markus Kaisiepo were later elected to the New Guinea Council (Nieuw Guinea Raad). Dutch officials and the Papuan elite⁷¹ established the council before the transfer of sovereignty. The Indonesian Government was particularly sceptical of the intentions of the Dutch in establishing this council. They saw it as a means for the Dutch Colonial Administration to continue interfering in Indonesian affairs. This concern was raised in Sukarno's declaration of Trikora on 19 December 1961 at Yogyakarta.

Trikora was a demand made by Sukarno on behalf of the Indonesian nation to the Dutch administration to free West New Guinea from the shackles of colonialism. The first demand of Trikora was to crush efforts to make Papua a puppet government of the

⁶⁶ *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya*, 65. And Drs. R.Z. Leiussa, Drs. Soewadji Sjafei, and Drs. M. Soenyata Kartadarmadja, *Sejarah Perlawanan Terhadap Imperialisme dan Kolonialisme di Irian Jaya* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Direktorat Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah Nasional, 1983/1984), 38.

⁶⁷ An interesting re-interpretation of the Wege movement will be examined in chapter three.

⁶⁸ *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya*, 68.

⁶⁹ Johan Ariks formed a political party, PONG (Partai Orang Nieuw Guinea) in Manokwari in September 1960 with the objective of an independent Papua in cooperation with the Netherlands in a constitutional union. See Justus M. van der Kroef, 'Nationalism and Politics in West New Guinea,' *Pacific Affairs*, 34 (1961).

⁷⁰ Meskipun ada orang² pribumi bekerdja sama dengan angkatan perang Djepang – J. Ariks dan N. Jouwe, misalnja, membantu Djepang di Manokwari sedang M. Kaisiepo bekerdja pada Kenpeitai -, banyak orang² pribumi jang memberikan perlawanan terhadap kekuasaan tentara pendudukan Djepang. See Bachtiar, 73.

⁷¹ In 1944, the Resident J.P. van Eechoud established a school in Jayapura, Papua, educating around 400 students between 1944 and 1949. Djopari claims this school formed a Papuan elite, many went on to play important political roles in the years leading up to the transfer of sovereignty. See John R.G. Djopari, *Pemberontakan Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Jakarta: Grasindo, 1993), 30-31.

Dutch.⁷² Sukarno called on the Indonesian people to rescue the Papuans from the Dutch. Papuans who were elected to the New Guinea Raad were written off as puppets whilst those who fought to defend Papua became heroes:

The fact is, people have suffered because of Trikora. People have died as a result of Trikora. Those people are our national heroes.⁷³

Like the exiles of Boven Digul, Indonesians gave a heroic face to the land of Papua.

Establishing the Legitimacy of the Transfer of Sovereignty

For the Indonesian Government, The New York Agreement was a resolution to the New Guinea issue. For thirteen years, the Dutch Government had avoided entering into any negotiations with the Indonesians over the status of New Guinea. The Dutch government reneged on its initial decision to include West New Guinea in the transfer of sovereignty.

Subsequent efforts by Dutch officials to prepare Papuans for independence were condemned by the Indonesian government as an opportunity for the Dutch to preserve a foothold in the area. Sukarno warned Indonesians of the puppet government in his Trikora speech and demanded that the nation unite to repel the lingering colonial presence. The “issue of West Irian” was subsumed under the spirit of anti-colonialism that was gathering strength amongst African and Asian nations. The battle over sovereignty was won by Indonesia on 1 May 1963 when the United Nations flag was brought down and the *Merah-Putih* was hoisted up in its place.

Indonesian officials deemed the requirement of an election to determine the people’s intention for the status of Papua as erroneous. Subandrio contends that Indonesia had

⁷² The other two demands were to raise the Indonesian flag, the Merah Putih, on Papuan soil (referred to at the time by the Indonesians as “Irian Barat”, or West Irian) and to prepare to mobilise to defend Indonesian independence and unity.

⁷³ “Jang nyata sekarang, ada jang sengsara karena Trikora, ada jang mati karena Trikora. Orang-orang itulah termasuk pahlawan-pahlawan Bangsa.” Herlina, 114.

already declared independence on behalf of Papua in 1945. He adds that, although the agreement stipulated that a vote be carried out, and Indonesia had agreed to this condition, the vote itself was no longer the business of the Dutch but rather an internal affair to be conducted in accordance with Indonesian laws and regulations.⁷⁴

The New York Agreement set out provisions for the transfer of sovereignty. The Indonesian government was obliged to conduct a plebiscite to determine the fate of West Papua. The UN did not stipulate how the plebiscite should be carried out; it only required that it be conducted before 1969:

The New York Agreement did not specify the procedure and method for the aforementioned plebiscite. There was therefore a need to select a particular method in accordance with social, economic and cultural development and the geographic situation of Irian. This is because the New York agreement did not demand that the “one man one vote” system be applied in the self-determination plebiscite.⁷⁵

The plebiscite was conducted from 14 July to 2 August 1969. The official Indonesian account notes that the 1026 elected representatives⁷⁶ voted unanimously in favour of integration with Indonesia. The UN accepted this result on 19 November 1969 and Papua became Indonesia’s twenty-sixth province.

Conclusion

Indonesian nationalists articulated their resistance to the Dutch colonial administration in terms of nationalism. They supported the claim of nationalism by referring to past empires and argued that the Indonesian nation had always existed. That

⁷⁴ Subandrio, 11.

⁷⁵ *Sejarah Kembalinya Irian Jaya ke Pangkuan Republik Indonesia*, 4. Persetujuan New York tidak secara spesifik menyatakan prosedur dan cara pelaksanaan penentuan nasib sendiri tersebut. Oleh karena itu, maka suatu cara yang tepat dan cocok dengan tingkat perkembangan sosial, ekonomi, budaya dan keadaan geografis Irian harus ditentukan. Hal ini adalah karena Persetujuan New York tidak mewajibkan sistem “one man one vote” atau satu orang satu suara diterapkan dalam pelaksanaan penentuan nasib sendiri di Irian.

⁷⁶ The Indonesian Government claimed that, due to difficulties of communication and access to the interior, it was necessary to select representatives to vote on behalf of the Papuan people.

nation comprised all of the territories of the former East Indies. Thus, when the Dutch refused to hand back Papua, the Indonesian Government fought to reclaim the province. However, it was the province, and not the people, that dwelt in the imagination of the nationalists. Papua was the site where Indonesian nationalists were exiled and Indonesian heroes lost their lives. The nationalist rhetoric claimed to embrace ethnic diversity, however, the government ultimately sought to eradicate some ethnic difference by attempting to “civilise” Papuans.

The discourse of Papuan history has evolved into a legitimization of sovereignty. The official Indonesian account claims that Papuans belonged to past empires but it does not discuss whether Papuans were willing members of those past nations. The account mentions that Papuans resisted foreign control, however, it excludes Indonesians from the category of foreigner. Resistance to Indonesian authority is cast aside as being orchestrated by the Dutch.

A subsequent discourse has emerged that reflects back on the version of Papuan history as presented by the Indonesian account and questions whether Papua did belong to past Indonesian empires, whether Papuans wanted integration, and whether the measures undertaken by the Indonesian Government within the procedures of the Transfer of Sovereignty were legitimate. This discourse will be presented in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO: Writing Papua out of the Indonesian Nation

The New York Agreement was signed at the United Nations on 15 August 1962. Indonesian Foreign Minister, Subandrio, shakes hands with the Netherlands Ambassador, J.H. van Roijen in the presence of U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations. Looking on are Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, of the United States; General R. Hidajat, of Indonesia; and Ambassador W.A. Schurmann of the Netherlands.

Introduction

On 19 August 1969, the UN Assembly adopted a resolution “taking note” of the UN Secretary-General’s Report containing the report by Ortiz Sanz on the conduct of the Act of ‘Free’ Choice. Fifteen African countries voted against the decision, including the Ghanaian delegation which described the Act as a “travesty of democracy and justice”. By its decision, the General Assembly endorsed the results of the Act during which, it was claimed, all the councils had, “without dissent...pronounced themselves in favour of the territory remaining with Indonesia”. This must surely rank as the most damning betrayal of the UN by its very own principles...

The UN General Assembly chose to ignore this grave indictment⁷⁷ and closed the books on the issue of West Papua, leaving the Papuan people to the mercies of a ruthless colonial power which had already taken important strides towards exploiting and plundering their abundant natural resources.⁷⁸

Introduction

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section introduces an alternative discourse of Papuan history that has been written in response to the Indonesian official account. This discourse seeks to negate the claims made by the Indonesian Government that Papua rightfully belongs with the Indonesian nation. However, on each point of negation the Indonesian Government has a counter-claim. Thus, the two discourses are at an impasse: they are locked in a cycle of legitimisation and negation.

The second section examines resistance movements. *Koreri* is a myth from the Biak Numfoor region and has been documented in history as a resistance movement that is revived in the face of a foreign threat. Organisasi Papua Merdeka (The Free West Papua Movement) developed in response to the Indonesian takeover of Papua. Its ultimate objective is a free Papua, however, factions of the OPM have divided ideological

⁷⁷ Reference to the report handed to the UN by Ortiz Sanz that contained several paragraphs that alluded to Indonesian fraudulent activities in the time leading up to, and during, the Act of Free Choice. In paragraph 251 of that document, Sanz wrote that the Indonesian government did not adhere to the principles of free speech, freedom of movement and of assembly of Papuan people during the Act of Free Choice.

⁷⁸ Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, *West Papua: The Obliteration of a People* (Surrey: TAPOL, 1988), 26.

positions to support the claim to independence. Since the downfall of Suharto, Papuans have established several political bodies and organisations to facilitate Papuan participation in dialogue and decision-making. This section concludes with a discussion of the complexities in understanding Papuan resistance.

Negation

The negating discourse⁷⁹ is a collection of works that support Papuan independence today on the grounds that Indonesia's claims to sovereignty of Papua are unfounded and because Indonesian rule in Papua has been categorised by violence, exploitation and human rights abuses. Its authors consist of people living outside of Papua who support the cause of independence for Papua. The discourse developed during the New Order period, a time when criticism of the government from within the country carried weighty consequences; it spoke on behalf of Papuans in an international arena. International support for Papuan independence is often articulated on the basis of the evidence presented in this discourse. Thus, it is important to examine carefully the reasoning of the negating discourse and question whether it provides a viable alternative to the account of Papuan history provided by the Indonesian Government.

Chapter One illustrated how Sukarno depicted the Sriwijaya and Majapahit empires as precursors to the Indonesian nation-state. He inferred that part of the glory of these empires were that they were free from *foreign* domination. The negating discourse asserts that Indonesians are foreigners to Papua by refuting Indonesian claims that Papua belonged to any former Indonesian nation. Whilst the Indonesian official account argued that the takeover of Papua was a reintegration, the negating discourse contends it was an appropriation.

⁷⁹ The works that comprise the negating discourse are: Robin Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War: The Guerilla Struggle in Irian Jaya* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985); Gavan Breen. *Let Them Be: Papua Revisited* (Collingwood: The Australian West Papua Association, 1993); Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, *West Papua: The Obliteration of a People* (Surrey: TAPOL, 1988); *West Papua: Plunder in Paradise*, Anti-Slavery Society: Indigenous Peoples and Development Series, Report No. 6 1990; and *The West Papua Information Kit* (Sydney: Australia West Papua Association, 1995).

Ethnicity and Ethnic Difference

The authors of the negating discourse invariably begin their account of Papuan history with the assertion that Papuans are ethnically different to Indonesians. Budiardjo writes:

the people of West Papua are Melanesians, of the same ethnic origin as the people who inhabit the eastern half of the island and the Pacific islands to the east.⁸⁰

For the negating discourse, ethnic differences constitute sufficient grounds for a Papuan nation. However, as illustrated in Chapter One, the Indonesian Government downplayed the ethnic differences by speaking of Indonesia as a political, not an ethnic, unit.

Negating Nationalism

The negating discourse discounts the Indonesian official account of the history of Papuan-Indonesian relations prior to Dutch colonialism and contends that Papuans never belonged to either the Sriwijaya or Majapahit Empires. As Budiardjo claims, Indonesians visited Papua only for the purpose of exploitation:

Neither the Mojopahit [sic] adventurers nor the Tidore missions established control. Rather, they were precursors of later foreign predators who profited from brief incursions but shied away from lasting penetration because of the inhospitable nature of the country.⁸¹

Although the Tidorese sultanate arguably had no authority over West New Guinea, the Dutch accepted its claims to sovereignty and administered the territory indirectly through agreements with the sultan.

Dutch claims to West New Guinea extend to 1660 when the East India Company signed a treaty with the Sultan of Tidore. In 1780, the sultan signed an agreement with

⁸⁰ Budiardjo, 1.

⁸¹ Ibid. 2.

the Dutch confirming its status as a vassal of the Dutch colonial state. The Dutch were prompted to reconfirm this agreement in 1779 after an English adventurer, Captain Forrest, contested the legitimacy of Tidorese claims to sovereignty.⁸² When the Ternate Residency was established as part of the Government of the Moluccas in 1817, it claimed indirect sovereignty over Papua through the sultanate of Tidore. Continued raiding by Moluccan pirates threatened Dutch trade and the colonial administration was prompted to formally annex the province, establishing Fort de Bus at Triton Bay in 1828. The fort was abandoned in 1836, however, the Dutch returned in 1898 to set up permanent administrative posts in response to the threat of European expansionism in the area.⁸³ Although the Dutch officially incorporated West New Guinea into the Dutch East Indies in 1901, the Tidorese territories of West New Guinea remained under the administration of the Ternate Residency until 1911 when it was transferred to the Residency of the Moluccas.⁸⁴

Dutch sovereignty over West New Guinea prior to the twentieth century was therefore characterised by uncertainty and periodic reaffirmations of control. The Anti-Slavery society contends that Indonesia's claim to Papua, based on the inclusion of all Dutch East Indies territories, fails to recognise that Tidorese, and therefore Dutch, authority was nominal. The Dutch recognised the tenuous claim only to prevent other powers from threatening the Dutch spice trade from Maluku.⁸⁵

⁸² Forrest noted that: "the Dutch seem to claim a right to all the Molucca islands, more from the forbearance of other European nations, than any just title. I am not certain whether the islands of Waygiou, Myfol, Batanta and Salwatty, may not also be claimed by them; but I resolved, from Tuan Hadjee's report, and what I had learned from others, to go beyond those islands, as far as the coast of New Guinea, where surely the Dutch can have no exclusive pretensions." And, "I was curious as to enquire how such a person as the Moodo, who was under the King of Tidore, had little power of his own, durst venture to purchase subjects of the Dutch. I was answered that here people did not much mind the Dutch, as they were far away; but, whenever the Dutch threatened vengeance to any chiefs, and sent to take off their heads, they, on such occasions, to represent the chief, drest up a slave, who, being really executed, so far deceived the governor of Ternate." See Thomas Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea and the Moluccas 1774-1776* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), 6 and 85.

⁸³ Henley, 117.

⁸⁴ Jeroen A. Overweel, *Topics Relating to Netherlands New Guinea: in Ternate Residency Memoranda of Transfer and Other Assorted Documents* (Leiden: Dsalcu, 1995), 2-3.

⁸⁵ Anti-Slavery Society, 25.

Furthermore, as the Anti-Slavery society contends, Indonesia's claim to Papua was only invoked in 1949 in response to Holland's refusal to cede the territory of West New Guinea. It adds that:

since the occupation, Indonesia has tried to claim that these two influences amounted to sovereignty over West Papua. Even if this were the case, and the argument is historically weak and unsubstantiated, the claim is merely a reference to a previous colonial power to the Dutch and ignores completely the issue of self-determination for the people of West Papua.⁸⁶

Thus, for the Anti-Slavery society, the issue of self-determination supersedes any historical claim Indonesia made to Papua. Budairdjo, in reference to Former Vice President Mohammad Hatta's initial concerns over Indonesia's takeover of Papua, contends that "Hatta's views regarding self-determination found no echo among Indonesian politicians or political parties."⁸⁷ However, such views were voiced amidst concern for the cost of the proposed takeover to the Indonesian economy whereas political reluctance to accept Papuan's right to self-determination stemmed from the association of self-determination with disintegration of the Indonesian state.

The Problem of Self-Determination

Hatta outlined five reasons for why Papua should not be included in the Indonesian nation. The first, he contended, was that Indonesia did not have the capacity to administer Papua and it was a strategic error to even try. Secondly, he advised the Indonesian government to be efficient in its administration and focus on national defence rather than wage war on Holland. Thirdly, he argued that Indonesia should claim only as much, if not less, than the former territory of the Dutch East Indies. He added that the decision should be left to the Japanese government. If the Japanese conceded that Papua should form a part of Indonesia, declared Hatta, *he would not oppose that decision*. Fourthly, Hatta warned that an annexation of Papua would look imperialistic and could therefore attract international disapproval. Finally, Hatta emphasised that the Indonesian

⁸⁶ Anti-Slavery Society, 17.

⁸⁷ Budiardjo, 7-8.

government needed to focus on developing the territories under its administration.⁸⁸ It was on these grounds that Hatta opposed the inclusion of Papua into the Republic. His recognition of Papua's right to self-determination was included only to supplement his other arguments for why Indonesia should not pursue its claim to Papua.

The division of Hatta and other politicians over the issue of sovereignty is an indictment of the atmosphere of the Indonesian Parliament at the time. Herbert Feith, in his analysis of post-independence parliament in Indonesia, categorised politicians into two distinct groups. Hatta belonged to what Feith termed the "administrators" group whereas Sukarno (along with Muhammad Yamin) led the "solidarity makers". The administrators argued that the government's top priority was to administer the state. The solidarity makers embraced the takeover of West New Guinea because they viewed it as a prime opportunity to strengthen Indonesian unity by establishing a common goal and reaffirming the Dutch as the common enemy.⁸⁹

Thus, for politicians such as Former Foreign Minister Dr Subandrio, self-determination was viewed as a Dutch-imposed obstacle to Indonesian unity:

'Self determination' has lately been invented and introduced into the West Irian problem...The application of the Netherlands' concept of self-determination with regard to West Irian would mean in fact that we should accept also the same concept with regard to the other islands or regions of Indonesia and consequently accept the disintegration of the Indonesian National State.⁹⁰

International opinion on the issue of sovereignty was divided. The Dutch Government endorsed the principle of self-determination and public opinion in Australia was generally in favour of it.⁹¹ Indonesia sought support from the Afro-Asian group. The

⁸⁸ *The Territory of the Indonesian State: Discussions in the meeting of the Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia: Background to Indonesia's Policy Towards Malaysia* (No place given: Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia, 1964), 16-19.

⁸⁹ Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), 158.

⁹⁰ Subandrio. Quoted in Osborne, 21.

⁹¹ "Realism demands that Indonesia should recognise, as both the Netherlands and Australia have recognised, that New Guinea, east or west, is held in trust for its native inhabitants, and that the aim of its

Indonesian Government convened the Asia-Africa Conference in 1955 as an opportunity for colonised countries and recently liberated countries to air their grievances about continued colonial presence in the region. One of the resolutions of the conference was that all attending countries were required to show “respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations.” For Indonesia, the right to freedom from colonial interference superseded the right to self-determination. Furthermore, because the Dutch promoted self-determination, it was dismissed as a colonial construct designed to enable continued Dutch interference in Indonesian affairs.

The Indonesian Government pursued the claim to sovereignty of West New Guinea at the UN General Assembly with the support of the Afro-Asian countries⁹² but was unable to secure a majority. Relations between Holland and Indonesia were at a virtual standstill until the American diplomat, Elsworth Bunker, instigated dialogue between the two sides and initiated the New York Agreement.⁹³

Negating Legitimacy

For the Indonesian government, the battle over Papuan sovereignty was won in 1962 when the Netherlands Ambassador, J.H. van Roijen put pen to paper and signed The New York Agreement and finalised in 1963 when UNTEA transferred sovereignty to the Indonesian Government. Papuan independence was not an issue for the Indonesian Government as “the future of West New Guinea [lay] with the Government of Indonesia”.⁹⁴ According to Sukarno, independence was delivered to Papua when the province was (re)integrated into Indonesia:

administrators must be to prepare the Papuans to rule themselves.” See “Realism” and W. New Guinea,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday 11 November 1957, p 2.

⁹² See Appendix A for the votes in favour and against renewed dialogue between Holland and Indonesia regarding the sovereignty of West New Guinea.

⁹³ Osborne contends that the United States Government was motivated by Sukarno’s appeals to Moscow for military and financial support. See Osborne, 23.

⁹⁴ Ali Sastroamijoyo, quoted in “Indonesia Criticises N.G. Pledge,” *Sydney Morning Herald* , 8 November 1957, p. 3.

In Indonesia's opinion, West New Guinea was an integral part of Indonesia and the point at issue was not independence for it, or whether West New Guinea should be handed to Indonesia. It was simply a matter of *when* Holland could be induced to hand over to Indonesia.⁹⁵

That first victory paved the way for Indonesian occupation of Papua. Sukarno, having withdrawn from the UN the year before, announced in 1964 that the government would not conduct the Act of Free Choice because "the whole people of West Irian are in favour of the Indonesian Republic."⁹⁶ However, as Budiardjo contends, Suharto reversed the decision but made sure "the government would do everything to "mensusksekan" (make a success of) the event."⁹⁷ The Indonesian government did not see the takeover as temporary; by 1967 it had signed a contract with Freeport to extract mineral resources from Papua.⁹⁸ For both Sukarno and Suharto, the 1969 vote of self-determination was thus seen as a mere technicality.

The New York Agreement stipulated that the Indonesian government would conduct a plebiscite to determine the fate of West Papua before the end of 1969. Indonesian officials chose 1025⁹⁹ representatives to vote on behalf of the estimated 800,000 inhabitants of West Papua. On 2 August 1969, Indonesian military officers, officials and selected Papuans celebrated the conclusion of the self-determination vote, PEPERA. The Papuan representatives had voted unanimously in favour of integration with Indonesia. However, the negating discourse rejects the outcome of the vote and condemns the intimidation techniques used during the process of the campaign.

⁹⁵ "Indonesia Blows Harder Over Dutch New Guinea," *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 32: 5 (1961): 16.

⁹⁶ Budiardjo, 22.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 22.

⁹⁸ In 1961, Freeport Sulphur discovered copper resources on Mount Carstensz. The company commenced negotiations with the Dutch government and later renegotiated a deal with the Indonesian government after it was handed temporary administration of Papua in 1963. On 5 April 1967, the Freeport representatives signed a 30-year contract of work to develop the Ertsberg mine. The contract took on particular importance as it permitted the first foreign capital investment under the new Foreign Investment Law.

⁹⁹ Accounts vary as to the exact number of representatives. Between 1022 and 1026 people participated in the vote.

Breen describes the Indonesian government's activities in West Papua prior to the vote as constituting a fear campaign. He quotes Major Soewondo who said to village representatives in Lake Sentani district before the plebiscite:

I am drawing the line frankly and clearly. I say I will protect and guarantee the safety of everyone who is for Indonesia. I will shoot dead anyone who is against us – and all his followers.¹⁰⁰

Surprisingly, only sixteen UN staff members (inclusive of administrative personnel) were present in Papua during PEPERA to witness the election process.¹⁰¹ Bolivian diplomat Fernando Ortiz Sanz led the UN team responsible for supervising the election. He voiced privately his concerns regarding the plebiscite and even proposed the vote be delayed three to four months to allow for the establishment of more democratic conditions. Despite this, the vote went ahead according to plan, with UN officials witnessing the elections of only 195 of the 1025 Assembly Representatives who participated in PEPERA.¹⁰² Saltford contends that both Indonesia and the UN failed in adequately fulfilling the requirements of the New York Agreement.¹⁰³

Nevertheless, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution number 2504, recognizing the results of PEPERA by a vote of 84 in favour, none against, and 30 abstentions. In the words of former Vice-President, Adam Malik:

the result of the “Act of Free Choice” in West Irian is legally final and irrevocable and cannot be made void by anyone under any pretext whatsoever.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Breen, 11.

¹⁰¹ See Appendix A for a review of votes.

¹⁰² John Saltford, “United Nations involvement with the Act of Self-Determination in West Irian (West New Guinea) 1969 to 1969,” Available: [Http://www.koteka.net](http://www.koteka.net)

¹⁰³ For a discussion on the Act of Free Choice see Saltford.

¹⁰⁴ *The Nations Speak 1969: A Summary of Policy Statements on the World Situation During the General Debate at the Twenty-Fourth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations* (New York: United Nations, 1969), 96-97.

Although the Indonesian Government arguably breached the regulations established in the New York Agreement, the Act of Free Choice establishes Indonesia's claim to Papua as legal and internationally recognised.

Impasse

There are four points of impasse for the opposing discourses of history. The negating discourse views ethnic difference as a pretext for Papua's exclusion from the state, whilst the official Indonesian account Indonesia's claims that the great feat of the Indonesian nation is that it can incorporate ethnic groups. Indonesia's claim to Papua is inextricably linked to both the nationalist imaginings of past nations (Sriwijaya and Majapahit) and the boundaries as established by the former colonial state. The Indonesian nation is imagined not only as having existed since at least the seventh century but also as having always comprised Papua. The negating discourse talks of self-determination as a right of the people, however in Indonesia, self-determination is denigrated as a weapon of the Dutch to challenge the stability of the nation. Finally, the negating discourse questions some of the procedures used by the Indonesian Government in carrying out the Act of Free Choice. The Indonesian Government defends the results on the grounds that the UN recognised Papua's integration into Indonesia as lawful and permanent.

Reasons for Resistance

The negating discourse contends that the 1963 takeover of Papua was both unlawful and unjustified and that Papua does not belong with the Indonesian nation. The discourse also condemns Indonesian rule in Papua on the grounds that government policies are carried out with little consideration to the local people and that Papuans have only suffered as a result of Indonesian occupation.

Resource exploitation

Since the transfer of sovereignty in 1963, the Indonesian Government has sought to exploit the natural resources of Papua through various petroleum, mining and logging projects. The negating discourse has expressed concern over these projects on five grounds. The first cause for concern is that the Indonesian Government and development companies rarely consult with the local Papuans during either the preparation or the implementation phases of a project.¹⁰⁵ Secondly, exploitation has been carried out with little or no compensation offered to the inhabitants of the area and in some cases the government has appropriated land with trickery and deceit.¹⁰⁶ Thirdly, the number of Papuan employees is small and most positions allocated to them are low-skilled, low-salary jobs.¹⁰⁷ Fourthly, Indonesian officials have reportedly forced local populations to engage in log-felling projects with the result that “traditional village life no longer functions” as villagers are forced to live away from home for extended periods.¹⁰⁸ Finally, the government and companies pursue development programs with little regard to their environmental impact.¹⁰⁹

Transmigration

The negating discourse has been equally critical of the transmigration program. Osborne criticises the amount of money poured into the maw of transmigration at the

¹⁰⁵ The Berita Oikoumene journal reports, “the background to the conflict around Tembagapura...is that the local inhabitants feel disadvantaged by the presence of a foreign mining company whilst their complaints do not receive proper response either from the company or from government authorities supporting the company.” Quoted in Budiardjo, 35.

¹⁰⁶ “The local people have also become discontented with the way in which fishing grounds have been managed...Some analysts have called the gulf [Arafura Sea from Jayapura to Sorong] the richest prawning ground in the world. Yet the local Papuans have received slight compensation for the licensing of foreign companies to fish traditional waters.” See Osborne, 124. Osborne cites an example where a Javanese man was tricked into selling his land to an officer of KOPKAMTIB (Command for the Restoration of Security and Order). See Osborne, 130-132.

¹⁰⁷ Budiardjo, 32.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Budiardjo, 39.

¹⁰⁹ For example, the West Papua Information Kit claims that: “the dumping of waste rock and tailings into the headwaters of the Otomona-Ajkwa River system is one of the most critical environmental impacts of the mines operation. By Freeport’s own estimates, the Grasberg mine dumped more than 40 million tonnes of tailings into the Ajkwa River in 1996 alone.” *West Papua Information Kit: With Focus on Freeport* (Sydney: Australian West Papua Association, 1998), 13.

expense of welfare and local development programs.¹¹⁰ He also cites the exclusion of Papuans in administering the program as an example of the Indonesian Government's disregard for Papuan input.¹¹¹ Budiardjo claims that, as successive waves of migrants are relocated to Papua, the local populations are increasingly marginalised in their own cities.¹¹² Breen is critical of the government's appropriation of land for the purposes of transmigration. He claims that not only has the government claimed land without regard for traditional land rights, but it has also failed to adequately compensate people who were consequently dispossessed of their land.¹¹³ The discourse accuses the Indonesian Government of holding two ulterior motives in encouraging transmigration: to use migrant settlements as a buffer zone against Papuan resistance movements and to indoctrinate the Papuan people with Indonesian culture.¹¹⁴

Human Rights Abuses

The issues of resource exploitation and transmigration are part of the more general concern of human rights abuses. Budiardjo cites four ways in which the Indonesian Government and military (TNI) have violated human rights. She contends that the military has orchestrated mass killings in Papua since the 1960s, murdering an estimated 30,000 Papuans prior to the Act of Free Choice and countless numbers since. As one Papuan notes: "our struggle involves the fight for the most basic right of all – the right to life."¹¹⁵ Secondly, she condemns the acts of violence perpetrated against detainees during their incarceration. Thirdly, she cites examples of disappearances and executions of people detained by the military. Finally, she writes that Papuans have been denied justice by the Indonesian legal system and the media only rarely covers trials.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Osborne, 132.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 133.

¹¹² Budiardjo, 47.

¹¹³ Breen, 15.

¹¹⁴ Budiardjo, 45, 56.

¹¹⁵ US AID, *Resistance, Recovery, Re-empowerment: Adat Institutions in Contemporary Papua* (2000), 25.

¹¹⁶ Budiardjo, 77-92.

Resistance

As illustrated in Chapter One, the Papuans have a long history of resisting foreign rule. The official Indonesian account of history claims that the *Koreri* movement was an example of protest against Dutch sovereignty. The account contends that Papuans did not see Indonesians as foreigners and dismisses any resistance against the Indonesian Government as a colonial ploy to regain an influence in Indonesian politics. However, Budiardjo writes that:

at its peak, the Angganita movement called for the removal of all non-Papuans, including Indonesians, from Papuan soil and insisted that the whole of West Papua, from Sorong in the west to Hollandia and Merauke in the east, be liberated from the foreign yoke.¹¹⁷

Osborne cites a Dutch administrator who, in the 1940s, contended that *Koreri* was less of a religion than a self-conscious Papuan nationalism.

Since the takeover, several guerrilla movements have appeared in opposition to Indonesian rule. The OPM is a name given by the Indonesian Government to every organisation or faction of resistance to Indonesian rule. Dr Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin was one of the first Indonesian political scientists to study the OPM,¹¹⁸ however, Djopari offers a more comprehensive account of the origins and infrastructure of the OPM in his book, *Pemberontakan Organisasi Papua Merdeka*. Although some factions of the OPM herald a day of reckoning, the primary objective of the OPM is to establish an independent Papuan nation. Osborne claims that Indonesia's policies in Papua (concerning development, transmigration etc) have heightened Papuan antagonism and served to boost the popularity of the OPM.¹¹⁹ The OPM has voiced concern over the exploitation of Papua's resources, both publicly and in their international correspondence.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Budiardjo, 6.

¹¹⁸ Dr Nazaruddin Sjamsuddin, *Integrasi Politik di Indonesia* (Jakarta: P.T. Gramedia, 1989).

¹¹⁹ Osborne 116.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* 123.

A New Agenda

In 1996, Thom Beanal led a legal challenge, on behalf of nearly 2000 claimants, against Freeport McMoran Copper and Gold Corporation. The charges against Freeport included environmental devastation and human rights abuses. The case was tried at the New Orleans State Court and, although it was dismissed (November 1999), brought considerable international attention to Papua. The case is significant because it is an example of Papuan initiative in a context outside of nationalist resistance.

The end of the New Order brought opportunities for Papuans to engage in meaningful dialogue with the Indonesian Government. Papuan church leaders and intellectuals established the Forum for the Reconciliation of Irian Jaya Society (Foreri), marking a new era in Papuan resistance. Foreri emphasised the importance of dialogue and sought ways for Papuans to manage their own affairs. The forum initiated the meeting of one hundred Papuan community leaders (Tim 100) with Habibie on 26 February 1999. The following year, about 400 community leaders participated in a public meeting, the Papua Mass Consultation (Mubes, *Musyawahar Besar Papua 2000*), which focused on three dominant issues in Papuan society. The members discussed the process of straightening history,¹²¹ potential political agendas, and possible ways to consolidate the independence movement.¹²²

Mubes played an important role in the new phase of resistance: it established the political body, the Papuan Presidium Council (PDP, Presidium Dewan Papua), and organised the Papuan Congress, *Kongres Papua II*. The Congress opened 29 May and was attended by 25,000 people. The Congress rejected the results of Pepera on the premise that the vote did not involve the Papuan people. The Congress also proclaimed

¹²¹ As part of the process of straightening history, participants discussed the period of integration, raised the possibility of holding another vote to truly determine public opinion on integration, and emphasised the significance of 1 December to the movement (on this day in 1961, the Papuan flag was officially raised for the first time and the province declared independent). See Theo van den Broek et al., eds., *Memoria Passionis di Papua: Kondisi Sosial Politik dan Hak Asasi Manusia Gambaran 2000* (Jakarta: Lembaga Studi Pers dan Pembangunan, 2001), 154.

¹²² Theo van den Broek, 153-154.

Papua to be a free and sovereign nation since 1 December 1961. The PDP remains a vocal representative body for Papuans; however, it is increasingly trying to distance itself from the activities of the OPM.¹²³ Thus, new movements and political bodies that do not focus solely on independence are slowly replacing the forms of resistance cited in the negating discourse.

Conclusion

The negating discourse claims that Papua should be independent because the Indonesian Government has no legitimate claim to sovereignty and because the Papuans have resisted Indonesian rule since 1963. The discourse effectively establishes the reasons for a Papuan nation but provides no answer as to how a Papuan nation can break from the practices of the past. Manzo asserts that “nationalism [is] a political performance, a combination of practices that collectively constitute national identity in opposition to alien difference.”¹²⁴ The negating discourse presents a vision of Papua that is inextricably bound to the Indonesian nation: justifications for Papuan independence rely on negations of the legitimacy of Indonesian sovereignty. The discourse borrows the reasoning of the Indonesian nation-state and uses it as a means to attack Indonesian claims to sovereignty. Thus, nationalism becomes an articulation of resistance in much the same way that nationalism was used against the Dutch Government during the Indonesian struggle for independence.

The impasse of reasoning requires that historians look beyond the theories and practices that have sustained power relations in the past. Mignolo observes that:

rather than borrowing a European or a Third World model to understand Andean society, the movement [a group of Argentinian historians studying the economic history of Potosi in the 1970s] went in the opposite direction: to look at the problem first rather than at the model or, even better, to provide an understanding of colonial domination from its living experiences, so as to

¹²³ Theo van den Broek, 155.

¹²⁴ Manzo, 46.

counter the living experiences of the colonial metropolitan centers upon which experience theories of “feudalism” and “capitalism” have been generated.¹²⁵

It is from this perspective that a Papuan theologian and historian, Benny Giay, writes to address the flaws of past discourses and tease out a way to approach the future.

¹²⁵ Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 201.

CHAPTER THREE: Writing Papuans into History

Introduction

In Sorong, in the Bird's Head, the people there had prepared a feast for the celebration. A few days before the announcement they prepared the feast because they were happy they were going to lead their own lives. They prepared meat and vegetables and potatoes. But when they heard that Papua was to become part of Indonesia they threw all of the food into the sea. In my village, the people cried. I cried also, I was in my car. In Jayapura, students, theological college students, they were not happy with Western missionaries because they taught them God is going to take care of you. But the result was different and so they were not happy. They even stopped church related activities at their church at that time. In my community, two tribal leaders washed themselves in mud. No future! In Biak, the church, for a few weeks after the announcement, was empty. Why? Because there was no future. The Papuan struggle was a struggle way back against the Indonesians, against foreign domination. At the village level, Papuans think that the Act of Free Choice took away their future. It closed the door.¹²⁶

On 19 August 1969, the UN General Assembly passed resolution number 2504 ratifying the result of the 'Act of Free Choice' and establishing Papua as the twenty-sixth province of Indonesia. The official Indonesian version of Papuan history refers to the takeover as the reintegration of a province within its fatherland. The negating discourse speaks of the takeover as a travesty of justice and an international conspiracy. In this third account, Benny Giay speaks only of the people's loss of hope: "the Act of Free Choice took away their future". This moment constitutes the defining point for Giay's writings on Papua; he writes to restore a vision for the future. That vision encompasses a sovereign Papuan state because, according to Giay, Papuans can only begin to envision their future when they are independent from foreign control.

Giay's book, *Menuju Papua Baru*, takes tentative steps towards creating a framework for a future Papuan nation. That is, he consciously imagines a sovereign and limited community. Yet, the inception of a nation is peripheral to his primary motivation in establishing a narrative of Papuan history.¹²⁷ Giay writes not to compel Papuans to fight

¹²⁶ Taken from a speech made by Benny Giay at a conference on Papua at International House at the University of Sydney as part of the Peace and Reconciliation Studies Program on 2 September 2002.

¹²⁷ Theo van den Broek refers to the change in language around the time of the Papuan Congress in May 2000. He says that the phrase "Papua Baru" (New Papua) momentarily replaced "perjuangan menuju

for independence. He writes not to set in stone the future Papuan nation. Instead, he writes to address the inadequacies of historians and the church in addressing and responding to the needs of the Papuan people. By amending these two oversights, Giay hopes to inspire the people to re-engage themselves and thereby to become the subjects, rather than the objects (or victims) of Papuan history.

This third chapter traces the writings of Benny Giay from 1995 to the present day. This chapter argues that Giay's narrative of Papuan history developed in an effort to surmount two great challenges that confront Papuans today. The first is that historical documents alone cannot reconcile the issue of sovereignty. It is for this reason that Giay suggests an alternative to the (generally foreign) written documents that pervade accounts of Papuan history. His alternative is to see the people of Papua as documents by themselves. He subjectifies the people by legitimising their own accounts of history. He seeks to write a new history of Papua.

The second challenge relates to the church. Giay's discourse responds to people's claims that the church has ignored and betrayed them. The process of making people subjects of history, according to Giay, extends beyond an acknowledgement of collective suffering. Papuans must summon the courage to acknowledge Papuan collaboration with each of the foreign powers that have occupied Papua, a point that is unmentionable in the negating discourse. The involvement of the church in the unsavoury process of aiding and abetting the driving forces of colonisation is a point of introduction to the second theme. The church, according to Giay, is guilty of more than collaboration. Church officials, along with other community leaders in Papua, are guilty of neglecting the Papuan people at an individual and village level. The challenge for the church, he argues, is to distance itself somewhat from the politics of independence and return to its position as a source of solace, hope and guidance for the people at a grass-roots level.

Papua merdeka" (the struggle for Papuan independence) and contends that the Papuan movement had conceded that the struggle would take a long time. See Theo van den Broek, 169.

Giay's writings are more critical of Western scholars and the negating discourse than the official Indonesian account of Papuan history. There are three possible reasons that would account for the nature and focus of these criticisms. First, the atmosphere of self-censorship or, outwardly imposed censorship, during the New Order and to some degree today, has undeniably tainted the process of recounting history. Furthermore, any historian would be reluctant to openly criticise government-sanctioned accounts of the truth and may seek to resolve issues through other channels. Secondly, Giay's aversion to dealing directly with the Indonesian account may have developed because, arguably, few people in Papua accept that particular account, so any discussion of it is arbitrary to the people's understandings of their own history. Thirdly, the negating discourse deconstructs the notion of Papua as part of the Indonesian nation and rebuilds Papua as an ethnic unit. Yet, for Giay, ethnicity alone does not present a viable, nor a sustainable, framework for the Papuan nation. The lingering reminders of the Indonesian occupation, such as *memoria passionis*¹²⁸, serve to unite people in ways that go beyond ethnicity. Giay is perhaps wary of constructing a nation-state on such a precarious foundation. Papua cannot, and should not, break entirely from its (Indonesian) past.

Introducing Benny Giay

Benny Giay was born in the Tigi district of the Western Highlands in Papua and was ordained as a Minister in the sister churches of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Indonesia (KINGMI). In 1986, he founded the Walter Post Theological School in Abepura, Papua. The school campus was later relocated to the Harapan kampung in Sentani in 1990. The school teaches development studies, but its primary objective is to train future church leaders. He studied Cultural Anthropology at the Free University in Amsterdam and obtained his PhD in 1995. He is also the Chairman of Foreri.

¹²⁸ Giay cites Theo van den Broek who defined *memoria passionis* as a memory of suffering. "*Memoria passionis* is like magma that is hidden from view but holds a latent energy that is powerful and ready to turn around the status quo." Quoted in Giay (2000), 9

Overcoming the Impasse

The tenets of nationalism, anti-colonialism and legitimacy are essential to Giay's discourse. Giay actively responds to the impasse over these points; his writings are an attempt to guide the historical debate away from these irreconcilable perspectives and towards more pertinent and contemporary issues.

Giay confronts the dilemma of correcting Papuan history in his book, *Menuju Papua Baru*. His assertion is that the struggle between the Indonesian official accounts and the negating discourse is ultimately about the claim to truth. As neither side can conclusively and comprehensively claim a hold on the truth, it is essential that both parties investigate and discuss the arguments on both sides. In the case of Papua, the Indonesian government has acted as a guardian of the only truth at the expense of the "Papuan" perspective. Giay emphasises the need for dialogue as a means for the Papuans to present their version of the truth. He does not assert that the Papuan version is the true account. Instead, he argues that thus far the Indonesian government has held a monopoly on Papuan history.¹²⁹

If we are to acknowledge the truths of both sides, how then can we resolve the contradictory accounts of history? Giay proposes that the effort to straighten Papuan history begins not with the Sriwijaya or Majapahit empires, nor should it start from Tidorese claims to sovereignty. Rather, the history of the Papuan nation, paraphrasing Thom Beanal, begins at the time when people became aware they were being oppressed. The writing of Papuan history should begin from this point. Although important, written historical documents should become supplementary sources to the experiences and testaments of the people of Papua. Giay refers to this resource of history as "*memoria passionis*".

Memoria Passionis is a term coined by a theologian, J.B. Metz, and applied to the situation in Papua. The Catholic Church in conjunction with the Secretariat for Justice

¹²⁹ Ibid. 36.

and Peace in Jayapura (Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian) introduced the concept in March 1999. Articles were published in the weekly newspaper, Tifa Irian, under the title “Dialog Nasional Papua” (Papuan National Dialogue). The series has since become an annual publication, and the authors report on human rights violations and socio-political affairs. The books serve as a record of injustices and occurrences that might not otherwise be reported.

Diana Glazenbrook makes a linkage between the people’s social memory and the memories of violence and loss inscribed in the landscape. She explains that the memories of suffering are passed down through generations but are rarely disclosed in public. Theo van den Broek and Giay advocate dialogue as a means for Papuan people to articulate their suffering in public and thereby release themselves from the oppression of suffering in silence. Giay also advocates dialogue as a means for people to recognise fact from fiction. Glazenbrook elaborates on the dilemma of *memoria passionis* in Papua today:

Events occurring in present day Irian Jaya – disappearances, arbitrary arrests, torture in detention, shootings – reactivate a *memoria passionis*. An historical memory of collective suffering leaves people who are the repositories of that memory, vulnerable to feeling terrorised by rumours in the present. Their terror in the face of rumour is based on their actual experience of the past.¹³⁰

Giay acknowledges that panic can stem from real, and re-activated fear. In his article, “*Isu OPM dan Kepanikan Warga Kota Abepura*,”¹³¹ Giay attempts to explain how panic spreads in Papuan villages. He contends that people more willingly believe rumours because of their past experiences of suffering and of repressive military actions. By verbalising memories, people can develop a better sense of what actions and events serve to “trigger” these memories of suffering and create panic.

¹³⁰ Diana Glazenbrook, “Dwelling in Exile, Perceiving Return: West Papuan Refugees from Irian Jaya Living at East Awin in Western Province, Papua New Guinea” (Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, 2001). 261.

¹³¹ Benny Giay, “Isu OPM dan Kepanikan Warga Kota Abepura,” *Deiyai* 3 (1996 A): 11-14.

The notion of *memoria passionis* has important ramifications for post-modern studies. Tønnesson and Antløy criticise post-modern historians for their callous disregard for historical facts and sole emphasis on narrative.¹³² They argue that post-modernism reduces national histories to mere stories. The authors are particularly sceptical of post-modernist accounts because they fail to explain the forcefulness of national sentiments. Anderson attempts to reconcile these issues and argues that nationalism bears a likeness to religion because it can provide solace and, more importantly, answers in times of crisis. The people respond to, and are bound to, the national community in much the same way as to a religious community.¹³³ For Anderson, national memories are contrived narratives, but they carry weight because the people hold them as sacred.

Giay, however, is reluctant to invoke familial bonds with the nation-state. He makes a clear distinction between the church and the government, distancing the former from the latter by appointing it as the guardian, or watchdog, of the state.¹³⁴ His implication is the need to restrict the powers of the state. But what of the nation? Giay is as wary of unfettered nationalism as he is of the state. That is, where past nationalisms fed on selective memories, Giay strives for a balanced version of history, recounting the actions of both the victims and the collaborators. This point will be elaborated on later, but it is sufficient to say here that the process of making Papuans subjects of their own history demands an acknowledgement of all the roles Papuans have played in their country in the past. Giay counters Anderson's imagined community with a community of people linked by real experiences. The people's stories/narratives make a history of Papua, a mosaic, in which they can see themselves and through which they become subjects. This begs the question: who belongs in that mosaic and under what rationale?

¹³² Stein Tønnesson and Hans Antløy, "Asia in Theories of Nationalism and National Identity," in *Asian Forms of the Nation*, ed. Stein Tønnesson and Hans Antløy, *Asian Forms of the Nation* (Surrey: Curzon, 1996).

¹³³ Anderson, 9-12.

¹³⁴ Interview with Benny Giay, 4 September, Canberra.

Creating a Moral Nation

In Indonesia, the Javanese identified themselves as distinct from the Dutch and separate from other provinces of the Dutch East Indies. Budi Utomo was originally established for the purpose of inaugurating an independent Javanese nation. The organisation was forced to broaden its scope for independence as it acknowledged that the Javanese could not effectively fight off Dutch colonialism on their own. Budi Utomo was encouraged to identify Javanese as, and with other, Indonesians. The sense of foreignness encompassed the Dutch administration as alien to the much broader, and familial, concept of an Indonesian nation. The Indonesian nationalists realised that the most effective way to challenge the Dutch was to unite people on the basis of their common suffering as Dutch subjects.

The negating discourse presents a vision of Papuan identity based on ethnicity and formed in opposition to foreign control. However, this identity relies on an Indonesian presence to give it meaning. The Papuans are more similar to each other than they are to the Indonesians. They share a common bond because they resist Indonesian occupation.

Ethnic Identity

In defining ethnicity, Anthony Smith proposes that at its core lies a “quartet of myths, memories, values and symbols.”¹³⁵ In relation to myths, those that are most revolutionary hark back to a “primordial and archaic epoch that has been lost and must be recovered.”¹³⁶ On a superficial level, the millenarian movements that have emerged across Papua would appear to encompass all of Smith’s requirements for ethnicity. For example, Koreri can be seen as a myth. As such, it seeks to explain the heritage of the Biaks and their emphasis on the virtue and spiritual value of material goods. The morning star takes on a symbolic value as a sign of the Manarmakeri’s (the hero) return.

¹³⁵ Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 15.

¹³⁶ Smith, 213.

This is destined to coincide with the revival of Papuan sovereignty and mark the beginning of (and return to) an era of prosperity and happiness.

However, as Giay explains, the basic theme of millenarianism, a concept he refers to as *Hai*¹³⁷, is a universal phenomenon. The conflict that is presently occurring in places such as Timika is a result of a clash between two *Hai*'s: the local people's desire for prosperity versus that of the foreigners'. In Indonesia, *Hai* presents itself in the form of *Ratu Adil*¹³⁸ movements and, more recently, in the fifth pillar of Pancasila, the principle of social justice for all. The notion of *Hai*, continues Giay, is not limited to Asia. The West claims its own versions of *Hai*, of which capitalism and Marxism are but a few examples. Giay mentions the West to demonstrate the condescension of Western scholars in interpreting *Hai* movements as purely religious or political.¹³⁹ For Giay, *Hai* is more than a belief, it is essentially a way of life. The people defend the *Hai* that has served them the best.

To what extent then, do Papuan "ethnic" groups share values and myths with other ethnic groups and what are the determinants for distinguishing one ethnic entity from another? Giay argues that (Western) scholars have portrayed millenarianism as a predominantly Melanesian trait because they have overlooked the presence of *Hai* within their own community. That is, there are some values that have been misunderstood as belonging to Papua when they are actually universal phenomena. Giay's point is that it is futile to distinguish ethnic groups from one another on the basis of their values. This leaves Smith's three remaining determinants: myths, memories and symbols.

In Papua, the *Bintang Fajar*¹⁴⁰ is arguably the most potent and pervasive symbol of (ethnic) nationalism. Yet not all Papuans agree on the origins and meanings of the flag and people ascribe their own values and meanings to the symbols inherent in its design.

¹³⁷ Giay refers to *Hai* (an Amungme word) as "an expression of hope that the social order will be just, peaceful and prosperous". Benny Giay, *Hai: Motif Pengharapan "Jaman Bahagia" di balik protes orang Amungme di Timika, Irian Jaya dan Isu HAM,* *Deiyai* 1 (1995 B): 6.

¹³⁸ *Ratu Adil* is a term used to categorise millenarian movements that were carried out in Indonesia.

¹³⁹ See Benny Giay, "Dr Nawipa: Pendidikan Non-formal dapat Merubah Kebudayaan Amungme yang berporoskan *Hai*," *Deiyai* 1 (1995 A): 4.

¹⁴⁰ The Morning Star flag, the flag of Papua.

A church leader from Jayapura explains his interpretation of the true symbolic meaning behind the Papuan flag:

In the 1950s, the Dutch organised a competition to design a new national flag. The Dutch collected entries from every *kabupaten* (district). All the designs were gathered together into one room and one design was chosen. The person who designed that flag was my uncle. The seven stripes represent the seven provinces that support Papuan independence. The six white stripes represent the six *kabupatens* of Papua. The star is the Morning Star. The red represents courage.¹⁴¹

The authors of the 1971 Constitution offer their own interpretation:

Seen from the current situation, the colour red represents the reigning political fire that desires to rape the fate, land and nation of Papua. The White Star on the red background represents the nation of Papua that is emerging from the political fire to claim its place alongside the nations of the world. The seven blue stripes represent the expanse of Papua that is contained within the six Residencies. These Residencies are represented by the six blue stripes. If we look to the future, then the white star represents the Morning Star. It represents a Papuan nation brimming with purity and justice that seeks a place amongst the nations of the world. The white star on the red background represents a nation that is ready with courage and honesty to defend its place in the world. A place that has witnessed battles but is now ready to build a prosperous and happy nation. The seven blue stripes amongst the six white stripes represent all the ethnic groups with their various languages and cultures who live together in what will become a province.¹⁴²

From these two cases it appears that symbolic meanings are bound by neither time nor place. All Papuans, both indigenous and non-indigenous are linked together by the

¹⁴¹ Excerpt of Interview with Person A, 21 April 2001, Jayapura, Papua.

¹⁴² Dilihat dari keadaan sekarang ini maka: Merah: Melambangkan api Politik yang sedang merajalah dan hendak memperkosa nasib, tanah dan bangsa Papua; Bintang Putih di tengah warna merah: Melambangkan bangsa Papua yang sedang bangkit mendesak di tengah api politik untuk memperoleh tempatnya sendiri disamping bangsa-bangsa lain didunia; Tujuh baris membuni biru: Melambangkan terbesarnya bangsa Papua diantara 6 (enam) Keresidenan yang dilambangkan dengan enam warna putih bumi. Jika lihat di kemudian hari maka: Bintang Putih adalah Bintang Fajar: Melambangkan bangsa Papua yang penuh perasaan suci dan Hukum mengambil tempatnya diantara bangsa-bangsa di dunia; Bintang Putih diatas warna Merah adalah: Bangsa Papua yang bersedia dengan berani dan hati jujur mempertahankan tempatnya di dunia, yang penuh pertempuran dan berusaha dengan penuh tenaga membangun Negara yang makmur dan bahagia; Tujuan [sic] baris biru diantara enam baris putih melambangkan: Semua suku bangsa dengan berbagai bahasa dan kebiasaan hidupnya yang bersama-sama hidup di beberapa Kabupaten sekarang ini yang nantinya akan menjadi Propinsi. Quoted in *Konstitusi Sementara Republik West Papua*, 1971.

Papuan flag. Indigenous Papuans differ amongst themselves as to how it should be interpreted. To argue that the symbolic value of the flag is the same for all people of one ethnic group is to deny such people any sense of agency.

Smith also mentions myths as signifiers of ethnicity. However, in Papua, there is no one circulating myth that extends to all indigenous inhabitants. Rather, different myths pervade different cultures. Giay adds that *Hai* is just one perspective of the Amungme culture. He argues that historians are fascinated by the idea of *Hai* and have since portrayed it as the primary myth of the people.¹⁴³ However, in truth, some myths lay dormant for many years before being revived in certain circumstances. Giay cites the example of *Hai* and says that because the contemporary religious and cultural institutions did not adequately address the clash of Melanesian and Western cultures, the people sought solace from past traditions.¹⁴⁴

Of Smith's quartet, only memory remains unmentioned. Returning to Smith's second point about ethnicity, the calling back to a primordial and archaic epoch, Giay cites the "Papuan" concept of time. Where Western time is considered lineal, and Eastern time is regarded as cyclical, Papuan time is episodic. The path of history passes in and out of several "chapters" witnessing the constant flux of characters and occurrences. The Papuans believe that the path of history will unfold in various phases. Giay begins with the chapter where the Papuans were the sovereign owners of the land. The following chapter concerns the arrival of the missionaries. Then came the arrival of the Dutch, then the Japanese, followed by the Indonesians. The next chapter will begin when Papua gains independence. The final chapter of history coincides with the coming of Christ. Rather than simply recalling a glorious past, Papuan Christians believe that their present suffering is temporary and the unfolding of history will eventually turn in their favour.¹⁴⁵

This apocalyptic vision of Papua excludes some and includes others, apparently on the basis of ethnicity. The Papuans, a distinct and definite group, will reclaim

¹⁴³ Giay (1995 B), 5.

¹⁴⁴ Benny Giay, "Kebangkitan Spiritual Dewasa Ini: Kasus Irian Jaya," *Deiyai* 6 (1996 E): 7-9

¹⁴⁵ Giay (2000), 9-10.

sovereignty from the Indonesians. Yet, this ethnic grouping has more to do with selective (ethnic) discrimination carried out by foreign powers than with a perceived bond based on shared myths, values or symbols. In the words of one Papuan, “we thank Indonesia for two reasons. Firstly, for teaching us Indonesian so that we can speak to all our Papuan brothers. Secondly, for teaching us that we are not Indonesian.”¹⁴⁶

Shared Experience

Therefore, the basis for the Papuan state cannot be divorced from the experience of Indonesian occupation. Those people of the same ethnicity shared a collective experience, or *memoria passionis*. These two determinants, ethnicity and collective experience, are exclusionist identifiers of nationalism. They exclude people on the bases that they are not ethnically Papuan and that they have not experienced the same things as Papuans. But is this vision sustainable? The Indonesian occupation provides Papuans with a common enemy and therefore a common element from which people can distinguish themselves. As yet, there has been no mention of a positive way to identify Papuans. That is, exclusive of ethnicity and collective experience, what links the people of Papua together?

A Papuan Nation

Giay describes Papuan inhabitants in the following way. He contends that the community can be divided into three main groups: new arrivals from west Indonesia; ethnic groups from east Indonesia; and indigenous Papuans. He subdivides Papuans into

¹⁴⁶ Quoted from a Papuan speaker at a conference on Papua at International House at the University of Sydney 2 September 2002. For example, the Indonesian government carried out a program called Operation Koteka aimed at forcing the Papuan people to adopt the dress styles of other Indonesians. Giay quotes Reverend Herman Saud who relates: “At the time that Indonesia came to Papua, I was still quite young. With these two hands [raises his hands] I brought down the West Papuan flag: The Bintang Kejora. And with these two hands I raised the Merah Putih. Since then, I have been taught how to become an Indonesian. But maybe I am stupid because I failed to become an Indonesian. Since then, I have continuously heard Indonesians say: Papuans are stupid, Papuans are inept, Papuans are lazy, drunks and so on.” Giay reasons that such understandings function as a sort of lens. The Papuans see themselves and their history through these lenses and this in turn shapes the history of the people as a group. See Giay (2000), 5-6.

a further three categories: the coastal population; the interior; and the highlands. Giay distinguishes the first and second categories by their time of arrival in Papua and their willingness to assimilate with the Papuan culture.¹⁴⁷ In a subsequent work, he writes that the new Papua will consist of indigenous Papuans, non-Papuans who have lived in Papua for over twenty years, non-Papuans who have come to invest in Papua, and non-Papuans who were born and raised in Papua who can request citizenship at the age of eighteen.

These, then, are the Papuans, but how do they intend to establish a basis for a separate nation-state? Giay's vision is that Papua will become a moral unit, whereby the church will adopt a social control role.¹⁴⁸ He states that, although he is sceptical of developing a religious state, a function of religion, for example Christianity, is that it promises freedom.¹⁴⁹ If, as Giay stated, the people are effectively without a future because they are not yet free, the importance of Christianity is that it gives people a future through securing their freedom.

De-Colonising Papua, Re-Defining Independence

For Indonesian nationalists, *merdeka* (independence) meant independence from colonial rule. In Papua, *merdeka* is an articulation of hopes that extend beyond establishing a free and independent, Papuan nation.¹⁵⁰ For Giay, freedom does not end with Papuan sovereignty. The process of attaining freedom requires that the people seek out the forms of thought that have been imposed upon them that effectively curb their capacity to progress. The church's role, according to Giay, is to educate the parishioners

¹⁴⁷ Benny Giay, "Pembangunan Irian Jaya Dalam Perspektif Agama, Budaya dan Antropologi," *Deiyai* 5 (1996 C): 4.

¹⁴⁸ Interview with Benny Giay, 4 September, Canberra.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Benny Giay, 3 September, International House, University of Sydney.

¹⁵⁰ In an assessment of *adat* culture in Papua today, USAID claims that: "sentiment among rural Papuans visited by the assessment team was focused more on basic welfare and land rights than on strictly separatist demands. Moreover, the definition of "merdeka," or independence, varied widely in conversations with inhabitants across the province. Most defined it as their ability to manage resources according to *adat* communities' own wishes and to provide a healthy life for themselves and their families. When asked about *merdeka* as a claim to legal sovereignty, many rural people did not offer a strong opinion. After all, Papuan communities have grown accustomed to outsiders – Dutch, Indonesians and Papuans alike – dictating the broader political landscape with no concern for those living within it." See USAID, 13.

so that they can once again think of themselves as subjects and not passive recipients of change. In short, the church should become a transformative institution.¹⁵¹

Yet the role of religion in general and Christianity in particular does not end there. Giay's suggestion is that religion and *adat* could become the source of morality. More specifically, he proposes that religion and *adat* operate to regulate actions.¹⁵² Giay's intention is to distance the church from the state so that it can, in contrast to the past, speak on behalf of citizens when their rights have been breached.

An autonomous church, according to Giay, is crucial to the whole process of de-colonisation. The first step towards de-colonisation is to acknowledge the mistakes of the past. It is by acknowledging past sins and past mistakes that Papuans can begin to challenge the view given by the government in the past that the church should support the state. In an interview, Giay quoted a passage from Romans 13¹⁵³ that says the people must obey the government because it is instituted by God. He counters this argument with another quote, this time from Revelation 13. In this passage, the government is described as an instrument of the devil to destroy life. Giay reasons that people should obey the government if and when it is protecting them. If they are not being afforded

¹⁵¹ For a summary of Giay's intentions in establishing the Walter Post Theological School see Benny Giay, "10 Tahun STT Walter Jayapura dan Transformasi Kebudayaan Masyarakat Irian Jaya," *Deiyai* 5 (1996 D): 13-19.

¹⁵² Interview with Benny Giay, 3 September, International House, University of Sydney.

¹⁵³ Romans 13: 1-3. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that shall resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shall have praise of the same". Revelation 13: 1- "And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems upon its horns and a blasphemous name upon its heads. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth followed the beast with wonder. Men worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months; it opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain. If any one has an ear, let him hear: If any one is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if any one slays with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints."

those rights then they are justified in opposing it. In this instance, the church should be in a position to openly criticise the state. He adds that if the church wants to participate in this whole process of making a new Papua, then its members should first initiate a public confession. The cause for an apology is that the church answered to the state and not, as it should have, to the people.

The Role of the Church

The church in Papua has long played a role to prepare the people to accept development. Giay cites an example of a Gereja Kristen Injil (GKI)¹⁵⁴ Reverend Almarhum Rumanium, who encouraged the people to accept integration. He actively encouraged the people to accept the results of PEPERA and was also aligned with *Merah-Putih*.¹⁵⁵ He informed the people that God sanctioned integration and strived to curb political turmoil in the province.¹⁵⁶ Giay contends that, although one of the roles of the church is to keep a place safe to enable development, the primary role of the church is to speak on behalf of the people in the struggle for justice and peace. In this role, the church has failed the people of Papua. Giay is not overly critical of the church in this matter, explaining that the church was perhaps wary of advancing the people's protest because they were justifiably concerned of any consequent ramifications or suspicions.¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, the church must acknowledge these mistakes of the past if its members are ever to rectify them.

The acknowledgement of past wrongs is, for Giay, the start of the whole process of de-colonisation. This process requires that Papuans take their place in history. Giay's reasoning is that the only way that Papua can rebuild is if people look critically at those failures and work from there. The Indonesian official account refers to the Papuans as incapable or unready to prepare for the future. The negating discourse denies any wrongdoing by the Papuans themselves by condemning foreign intervention and

¹⁵⁴ The Protestant church.

¹⁵⁵ The pro-integration political body.

¹⁵⁶ Benny Giay, "Tokoh Gereja di Irian Jaya Dalam Konflik Antara OPM dan Pemerintah," *Deiyai* 4 (1996 B): 4.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 9.

exploitation. The discourse thereby denies that Papuans are in a position to redirect their lives. Giay acknowledges the suffering caused by the Indonesian occupation and proposes to articulate it through *memoria passionis*, however he also suggests that the people look critically at their own community.

Individual Interpretation

In a similar vein, Rafael mentions the way that Filipinos extracted subversive elements from the sermons of the Spanish priests. He calls this the act of “fishing out” meanings. The people, forced to submit to the priest’s authority, extracted their own meanings from the virtually incomprehensible sermons that were delivered to them in the Spanish language. The congregation neither internalised nor rejected outright the church’s messages.¹⁵⁸ Rafael demonstrates that these people chose not to accept the meanings that were imposed upon them. Rather, they placed themselves within the context of these stories.

The situation in Papua is different because many of the church leaders are indigenous Papuans who speak to their congregation in the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, or in a local language. However, the people continue to “fish out” their own meanings and recontextualise the words of the Bible to suit their own situation. Giay makes reference to the many Papuans who liken themselves to the people of Israel forced to live in exile outside their homeland.¹⁵⁹ The role of the church, argues Giay, is to be responsive to these localised adaptations and acknowledge them rather than ignore or deride them as has happened in the past.

This is not to say that Christianity, even if only inadvertently, has become an all-pervasive agent of subversion. Giay recounts an experience in the highlands where the people returned their Bibles because they felt the church had ignored them during their struggle.

¹⁵⁸ Vincente Rafael. *Contracting Colonialism*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 2-7.

¹⁵⁹ Giay (2000), 57-58.

When we went up to Ilaga to negotiate, you know what they did. They said “oh look, there is Theo van den Broek, Catholic leader, and here is Benny Giay, Christian leader – where have you been all these years? What have you taught us?” They symbolically collected all the Bibles and gave them back to us.¹⁶⁰

Giay explains that people have turned away from the church and towards cargo cults and other local movements because the church has been ineffective in responding to their needs.

Contextualising Resistance

The reasons for the resurgence of messianic movements are not, however, confined to the failings of the church. Giay contends that the church has indeed alienated parishioners by neglecting to contextualise or localise theologies, ignoring its spiritual role in favour of a focus on social and economic affairs, and remaining incapable of assisting people through what he terms an identity crisis. “We have accepted the Word but it has not improved our lives, so it’s better if we return to the way things used to be”, he states.¹⁶¹ These are the failings of the church but they do not adequately explain public support for messianic movements. Giay cites two important causes for the resurgence of localised religious movements. First, Giay writes that the people feel marginalised and seek other ways to restore a sense of power over their own fate.¹⁶² Secondly, he argues that such movements are not new to Papua but to understand them you have to contextualise them in the circumstances of the day. He contends that some movements are actually expansionist and seek to impose their ideas on weaker groups.

Commenting on the issue of marginalisation, Giay refers to the studies of a Papuan academic, Noakh Nawipa, who wrote *The Concept of Hai Among the Amungme in the South Central Highlands of Irian Jaya and its Implication for Non-formal Education*.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Benny Giay, 4 November, Canberra.

¹⁶¹ Giay (1996 A): 11-15.

¹⁶² Giay (1996 E), 4-10.

Nawipa contends that Hai should be studied in a holistic manner. Giay is critical of previous scholars who have interpreted OPM as an extension of millenarian movements.¹⁶³ He argues that the OPM and other rebel movements are not steeped in cargoism but are yet another expression of opposition to foreign control.¹⁶⁴

Giay's request to contextualise movements is controversial because he claims that such movements, initiated and led by Papuans, were not carried out for the benefit of Papuans as a whole, but rather represented, and contested, local interests. The first chapter briefly mentioned a messianic movement led by Zakheus Pakage that was understood by the Indonesians as being anti-foreign in sentiment. "Finally, the Ekari people, led by Zakheus Pakage initiated a movement called Wege from 1952 to 1954 in the region of Paniai". This statement, taken from *Sejarah Perjuangan Rakyat Irian Jaya* is significant because, as Giay illustrates, Zakheus's resistance was directed at an internal enemy who collaborated with the Dutch.

The background to the dispute between the community leaders reveals that the land of Jaba, in the Paniai region, was inhabited first by the Pakage clan and much later by the Mote clan. The later migrants to the area found themselves in daily conflict with the Pakage people. Eventually, the Mote successfully drove out the Pakage clan and claimed Jaba. By the 1930s, Mote leader, Weakebo was fast becoming a "Big Man" in the Jaba community. He collaborated with the Dutch¹⁶⁵ and thus greatly enhanced both his personal wealth and his position in the community. Following the war, Weakebo became one of the few¹⁶⁶ community figures to resume his relationship with the Dutch missionaries. In 1947 he converted to Protestantism (despite being baptised as Catholic)

¹⁶³ Giay mentions Kenelm Burridge, *Mambu: A Melanesian Millenium* (1960), Vittorio Lanternari, *Religions of the Oppressed* (1965), F.C. Kamma, *Koreri Messianic Movements in the Biak Numfor Culture Area* (1972), Strelan, *Search for Salvation* (1978), Peter Lawrence, *Road Belong Cargo* (1964) and Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound* (1968) as examples. Giay, Benny. "Dr Nawipa: Pendidikan Non-formal dapat Merubah Kebudayaan Amungme yang berporoskan Hai." *Deiyai* 1 (1995 A): 3

¹⁶⁴ Benny Giay, "The Rebels and Cargoistic Ideas in Irian Jaya," *Catalyst* 19: 2 (1989): 131.

¹⁶⁵ Weakebo acted as the Dutch government officer, Jean Victor de Bruijn's link to the Me people. He also carried out some intelligence work for de Bruijn during the war. Weakebo benefited substantially from the arrangement and his pragmatic business skills left him much the richer from the Dutch occupation.

¹⁶⁶ Many of the people were reluctant to welcome the Dutch back to the land for fear of reprisals by the Japanese.

and was enlisted by the Dutch to spread the word of Christianity. It is reported that Weakebo greatly abused this trust and raided the villages of those he sought to convert. When a battle ensued between the Mote and Pakage clans, Weakebo sought the assistance of the Dutch and defeated the Pakage clan.

Into this situation entered Zakheus Pakage who had recently returned from Bible School in Makassar, Sulawesi. From the time of his arrival in August 1950, Pakage garnered much support from the local people and subsequently attracted the wrath of the Dutch officials. Weakebo aligned with the Dutch in their opposition to Pakage. Giay offers some reasons for Weakebo's collaboration with the Dutch¹⁶⁷ but nowhere does he claim that Weakebo was merely an instrument, or puppet, of the Dutch.

In a critique of Pacific Islands history, Chappell presents the dilemma of representing Pacific Islanders as active agents in their own past. He contends that by writing about people as active agents in the process of colonisation, historians are prone to neglecting some of the oppressive and exploitative acts committed by the coloniser. He argues that, thus far, historians have dichotomised the notions of agency and victim so that people are represented only as active agents and passive victims.¹⁶⁸

Are academics so limited in skill they have to choose between only two archetypes: either "happy campers" who manipulate foreign guests until they moved on, or helpless prey for brutal aliens and germs? This artificial dichotomy has made it difficult to negotiate intellectual decolonisation – a dilemma that contributes to the ethnic polarization of academic and nationalistic history. Agents and victims are not exclusive categories but contextually signified roles.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Giay offers five suggestions for Weakebo's collaboration but does not rule out other interpretations. He suggests that Weakebo may have been motivated by his insecure social position following the arrival of Zakheus Pakage, he may have been striving to protect his vision of the world, he could simply have been jealous of Pakage's growing support base, he may have been attracted to Christianity because his own identity as a Me person was crumbling around him with the advent of foreign incursions on Papuan soil, or he may have felt that this was his calling to defend the Word of the Lord. See Benny Giay, "The Conversion of Waekebo: A Big Man of the Me Community of the 1930s," *The Journal of Pacific History*, 34: 2 (1999): 186-189.

¹⁶⁸ David A. Chappell, "Active Agents versus Passive Victims: Decolonized Historiography or Problematic Paradigm?" *The Contemporary Pacific* Fall (1995): 311-314.

¹⁶⁹ Chappell, 316.

Chappell's assertion is that an island-centred historiography requires that historians heed both past and present voices and acknowledge the contradictions of agency/victim discourses.¹⁷⁰

Although a slight digression, it is timely to make a brief mention of the Indonesian attitude towards internal dissent during the Old and New Orders. Krishna Sen speaks of an elusive sense of "national consciousness" that is not premised on class or ethnicity or proximity to the "centre" but pervades many Indonesian films. The clear distinctions of race are evident in the physical, racial and cultural differences between the Dutch and the Javanese. Sen's contention is that a film such as *November 1828* constitutes an ideal historical film because it defines the nation as a moral cause. She adds that the nation must be based on a moral cause, as opposed to ethnicity or class, so that it can incorporate ethnic difference but concurrently define the Indonesian in contrast to the foreigner. Sen reasons that recounting the war against the Dutch defines who and what constitute the Indonesian nation. Films that deal with internal disputes, such as *Operasi X* or *Penghiantan G30s*, inevitably call into question this assumed notion of national identity. Following the September 1965 coup, filmmakers tended to avoid or gloss over the role of the *rakyat* and the internal tensions present in Indonesia at the time. Sen asserts that subsequent films on the coup highlight the role of the *dalang* (puppeteers) in orchestrating this bloody movement. As an afterthought, she adds that no matter how much money goes in to making the film, it still has to be reinterpreted by the people in the context of their own lives.¹⁷¹

How is this relevant to the case of Papua? Giay knows the lessons of repressing tensions all too well. He finds interest in the causes of internal tensions and seeks to explain rather than deny them. In doing so, he envisions the people who participated in these disputes as subjects with their own objectives who defend their own interests. The films from the New Order deny that the people who participated in the September coup had their own objectives and blamed the event on elusive puppeteers. By acknowledging

¹⁷⁰ Chappell, 318.

¹⁷¹ Krishna Sen. 'Filming "History" Under the New Order,' in Krishna Sen (ed). *Histories and Stories: Cinema in New Order Indonesia*. (Clayton: Monash University, 1988), 55-59.

that the local people identified their interests and sought to protect them, Giay not only makes subjects of them but extends to them a sense of responsibility for their own fate.

Victims, Collaborators, Subjects

This sense of responsibility, argues Giay, is lacking in Papua because the people rely on the West or God to intervene when in actual fact, they can become the guardians of their own fate.

The church also, there are Papuans who are saying, the Australians, Americans, the Dutch, they will come and rescue us. There are Papuans who keep praying that they will come and help. But we have to struggle! We have to do it ourselves. I say let's de-colonise these ideas that have been implanted in our minds and which weaken our struggle.¹⁷²

By acknowledging Papuan collaboration with the Dutch and other foreigners, Giay is correcting the notion that the Dutch or the Indonesians are responsible for all the mistakes on Papuan soil. He is making active, responsible subjects of the Papuan people.

Rebuilding Papua

The greatest weakness of the negating discourse is that it does not present a sustainable vision for the future and could potentially hamper some of the progress that Papuans may make in developing their own country. This is especially true in the case of development. Giay refers to three interest groups that oppose development in Papua. The first constitutes environmental organisations that argue that development should be avoided for the sake of the environment. The second group consists of human rights organisations that defend the indigenous people's rights against exploitative practices that are in conflict with indigenous cultures.¹⁷³ Giay is most certainly not opposed to development projects in Papua. He aligns himself with the third perspective that cultural

¹⁷² Interview with Benny Giay, 4 September, Canberra.

¹⁷³ Giay identifies IWIGA (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs) and International Survival as belonging to this second group.

change cannot be avoided and that leaders should act as agents of change to assist cultural transformation.¹⁷⁴ He suggests that development need not be at odds with the interests of the people in Papua and proposes that religion facilitate the process of development.

Giay's reasoning is that Papuan religions are not necessarily obstacles to development. Rather, people have opposed development because it did not satisfy their material demands. Giay cites two dominant approaches in the past that have thus far been taken to development and culture in Papua. He says that the first approach is to examine Papua as if it were devoid of culture. The second approach is to say that Papuan culture is opposed to development and must therefore be eradicated or radically altered.¹⁷⁵ However, as Giay argues, the church should act both to facilitate development policies and as mediators between the community and the developers. Giay refers to this second demand as voicing the conscience of the nation. He argues that the church has long carried out the first task of facilitating the process of development but must remember its position as the conscience of the nation.¹⁷⁶

This is not to say that the church has failed in its role. Giay gives three examples where the church has defended the rights of the people. In his first example he cites several Christian leaders who opposed official measures to export Papuan artefacts and were subsequently arrested. The second example is the publication of a *buku putih* (white book) in 1992 that detailed instances of violence against the people. The book's commissioner, the GKI, faced criticism and suspicion from developers. The third instance where the church has acted to voice the conscience of the nation occurred in 1995 when the Catholic Church issued a report on violence in the Timika area.¹⁷⁷

These examples illustrate that the church is willing, and able, to defend the rights of the people. Giay outlines some further recommendations for the church to follow. He

¹⁷⁴ Giay (1996 C), 9-10. Giay refers to IWIGA (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs) and International Survival.

¹⁷⁵ Giay (1996 C), 6-7.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. 12.

¹⁷⁷ Giay (1996 B), 6-7.

suggests that the church get involved in facilitating research of institutions such that people can be adequately represented. In addition, the church could manage property so that land could become an investment for the entire community. Finally, he encourages that church members to educate themselves in the fields of law and education.¹⁷⁸

Writing for a nation

By reflecting on Giay's writings it becomes evident that his primary emphasis is on contextualisation. He compels historians to look at resistance movements in the context of Papua. He insists that the church be actively responsive to the demands of the people, to contextualise. Applying Giay's theories to his own writings, contextualising his works, gives an insight into what he perceives to be the failings of his society.

The first part of this chapter covered Giay's response to previous discourses. In terms of establishing a basis for the nation, he does not agree that Papua is necessarily part of the political unit of Indonesia. Nor does he contend that Papuans are bonded together because they are ethnically different from Indonesians. In fact, he admits "there [are] Papuans with black bodies and curly hair who have the souls of Indonesians".¹⁷⁹ What Giay tries to do is build a society from people whose interests lie within the boundaries of the country. Standing guard over that society will be the church whose primary role is to defend the rights of the people, curb the powers of the government, and maintain justice and peace.

In order for this to eventuate, Giay asks the church to reflect back on itself and its role in Papuan history and acknowledge the good along with the bad. He aims to restore the Papuan people as subjects of history. By subjectifying people, by including them in projects such as development, Giay reasons that they will regain responsibility for their own actions and will be less resistant to changes. His arguments are based on

¹⁷⁸ Benny Giay, "Mega Proyek Mamberamo dan Masyarakat Pribumi," *Deiyai* 4 (1997), 5-8.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Benny Giay, 3 September, International House, University of Sydney.

pragmatism: it is reasonable to expect that people will oppose development if they expect never to benefit from it.

Giay undoubtedly writes to restore the people's faith in Christianity. He believes in the principles of the religion and sees it as an emancipative institution. His criticisms are based not on the writings in the Bible but on the way that church officials have carried out their duties in Papua. His style is adaptive, he does not try to impose the principles of Christianity on the people. By opening the door of Christianity to new people and, more particularly, new interpretations, he is effectively "winning" back those who have sought solace in more localised beliefs such as messianic movements.

Giay clearly writes of an emerging nation, however he contains himself from prescribing a definite identity for the Papuans. He links people together by their collective experience of past sufferings. He acknowledges that foreigners established the boundaries encompassing the Papuan state. He avoids commenting on any sense of primordial nationalism: "the history of the Papuan nation begins at the time when people became aware they were being oppressed." In this sense, Giay is opening the door for Papuans to discover and articulate their identities.

CONCLUSION: Towards a New History

Towards a New Papua: a simple, yet potent phrase. When Giay speaks of *towards*, he infers that it is the journey he is focused on. It is the journey that Papuans should focus their attention on. Papuans should not expect that an apocalyptic break from the past, from Indonesia, will establish a new Papua. Rather, the people should reflect on the present and ask what is it they want to rid themselves of.

For Giay, a *new* Papua entails a lengthy process of decolonisation. It requires that people break free from the legacy of the past; from the legacies of past colonial practices that the Papuans have thus far resisted. Papuans should have no desire to take the place of the coloniser. They should have no need to take on the logic of Dutch, Indonesian or other nationalisms. Giay speaks also of a new style of history: a style that is personalised and has relevance to the people of Papua rather than to any Papuan cause.

And *Papua*: an identity but not an identity. Giay gives no answers as to what a Papuan identity might be. Perhaps he is wary of binding the individual identity so close to the political identity. Or perhaps he wants to restore to the Papuans the task of assuming and establishing their own identity. Giay puts nationalism in the hands of the individual: the individual determines when the nation began. The individual determines his/her own identity. Such an identity should have no reliance on any alien presence because it is internal, and internally imposed.

Towards a New Papua: a term consciously borrowed, adapted, and inherited from Papuans.

Yet for Anderson, the process of nation making is an interweaving of conscious borrowings and unselfconscious variations from the standard European, Creole, official and colonial forms of nations. He likens nationalism to religion and explains that its appeal lies in its universality. “However vast Christendom was, it manifested itself variously to particular communities”.¹⁸⁰ The spread of nationalism followed a similar pattern as nationalists drew upon the lessons and examples of their predecessors and

¹⁸⁰ Anderson, 29.

adapted the models of nationalisms to fit the circumstances of the time and place. This process of nationalism is based on resistance. It uses nationalism as a weapon to secure independence. Such a form of independence is a goal and not a process. It requires the physical removal of the colonisers but does not seek to break their legacy.

Not once does Giay ask, “what *is* a nation?” Instead, he asks what do Papuans want *for* their nation? What do Papuans mean when they speak of *merdeka*? He looks to the future where those before him turned to the past. This is a different form of imagining: an imagining for a future rather than of a community.

Chapter One explored how Papua was written into the Indonesian national imagination. Indonesian nationalists couched their resistance to the Dutch colonial administration in nationalist terms. They resisted Dutch rule and aspired to form their own, sovereign, nation. Their justifications for resistance became the justifications for the establishment of a nation. As the Dutch Government sought to retain sovereignty of Papua, the Indonesian Government attempted to refute that claim by immersing Papua into the national imagination.

Chapter Two presented an alternative account of Papuan history, an account that sought to negate Indonesian claims to sovereignty. The account justified Papuan independence from Indonesia on the grounds that the Indonesian claim to Papua was not legitimate and that Papuans rejected Indonesian rule. The discourse referred to resistance movements as evidence that Papuans wanted to establish an independent nation. However, the discourse only wrote about Papuans in the context of resistance and nationalism.

Chapter Three presented an emerging discourse of history that offers a new style of writing Papuan history and a new type of nationalism. Giay’s approach to writing history is to locate Papuans outside of the context of nationalism. He explores the relationships between Papuans rather than focusing solely on Papuan relations with foreign powers. The new form of nationalism derives from the attempt to establish the framework for a

nation before that nation is internationally recognised. It is a type of nationalism that does not rely on (resistance to) the alien to have meaning.

Giay's writings, however, cannot be divorced from the political situation in which he writes. *Menuju Papua Baru* was written in a context of renewed hope for independence. Former President Habibie opened the door for negotiations between Papuans and the Indonesian Government. His successor, Abdurrahman Wahid, gave encouragement to Papuan nationalists by granting his approval to the display of Papuan nationalist symbols. Since then, the current President, Megawati Soekarnoputri, has demonstrated that the Indonesian Government will not tolerate calls for independence. The vibrant optimism of the post New Order period seems likely to fade; the new government perceives Special Autonomy to be a solution rather than a step towards independence. The church therefore faces a tremendous challenge to balance its social role with its role as mediator. It remains to be seen if the church can, in the political sense, remain "invisible" whilst continuing to be responsive to the demands of the people.

It is remarkable that Papua, once referred to as the "land without history"¹⁸¹ now finds itself at the centre of a battle to "straighten history". However, the process of straightening history involves more than the clarification of facts; it requires writing a history of people. Such a history contradicts and confuses any grand theory of nationalism or resistance. The term straighten is therefore misleading as it is all the divergences from the path of proving sovereignty that make this new account of history so significant.

¹⁸¹ Robert C. Bone, "The International Status of West New Guinea Until 1884," *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 5: 2 (1964): 150.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Text of the Indonesian Draft Resolution: (A/C.1/L.109).

“The General Assembly,

“Having considered the “Question of West Irian (West New Guinea)”,

“Recalling that at the Round Table Conference held between the Netherlands and Indonesia at the Hague in 1949, in which the new relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia as two sovereign and independent states was established, a disagreement arose as to the political status of the Indonesian residency of New Guinea (West Irian), to the effect that the status of the territory remains in dispute,

“Recalling that with regard to the residency of (West) New Guinea it was decided by the parties, that “the status quo of the residency of New Guinea shall be maintained with the stipulation that within a year from the date of transfer of sovereignty to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (now the Republic of Indonesia) the question of the political status of New Guinea be determined through negotiations” between the Governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands,

“Recalling” the dedication of the parties to the principle of resolving by peaceful and reasonable means any differences that may hereafter exist or arise between them”,

“Noting that the parties have entered into negotiations to determine the final political status of West Irian in April 1950, December 1950 and December 1951, but that these negotiations have failed to produce a conclusive solution, “Regretting that efforts to continue negotiations have since failed,

“Viewing with deep concern the fact that the prolongation of this political dispute is likely to endanger the friendly relations between the two parties concerned, as well as the peaceful development of that important area,

“Realizing that co-operation between the peoples of Indonesia and the Netherlands on the basis of freedom and friendship is still the common objective of both parties,

“1. Calls upon the Governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands to resume negotiations, without delay, as provided for by the Round Table Conference agreement, with a view to achieving an early agreement on the political status of West Irian;

“2. Invites the Secretary-General to assist the parties in the implementation of this resolution, and to that end, if he deems it appropriate and in consultation with the parties concerned, to appoint a person to render his good offices to the parties in the said negotiations;

“3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on the negotiations to the tenth regular session of the General Assembly”.

The Indonesian Government presented this resolution to the UN General Assembly on four occasions, each time it was rejected. The Vote in Plenary General Assembly on the Draft Resolution on West Irian was as follows¹⁸²:

	1954 – 9 th session	1956-7 – 11 th session	1957 – 12 th session
*Afghanistan+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Albania		Yes	Yes
Algeria+			
Argentina+	Yes	Abstain	No
Australia+	No	No	No
Austria+		No	No
Barbados•			
Belgium+	No	No	No
Bolivia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Botswana•			
Brazil•	No	No	No
Bulgaria+		Yes	Yes
**Burma+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burundi•			
Byelorussian SSR+	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Cambodia+		Abstain	Abstain
Cameroon•			
Canada+	No	No	No
Central African Republic•			
**Ceylon+		Yes	Yes
Chad•			
Chile+	No	Abstain	No
*China+	No	No	No
Colombia	No	Absent	No
Congo (Brazzaville)•			
Congo (Democratic Republic of)•			
Costa Rica	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cuba+	Yes	No	No
Cyprus+			
Czechoslovakia+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dahomey•			
Denmark+	No	No	No

Dominican Republic+	No	No	No
Ecuador	Yes	Yes	Abstain
*Egypt	Yes	Yes	Yes
El Salvador	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equatorial Guinea•			
*Ethiopia+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland+		Abstain	Abstain
France+	No	No	No
Gabon•			
Ghana•			Yes
Greece+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guatemala+	Abstain	Yes	Yes
Guinea+			
Guyana•			
Haiti	Abstain	Yes	Yes
Honduras+	Yes	No	No
Hungary+			Yes
Iceland+	No	No	No
**India+	Yes	Yes	Yes
**Indonesia+	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Iran+	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Iraq+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ireland+		No	No
Israel•	No	No	No
Italy+		No	No
Ivory Coast•			
*Japan+		Yes	Yes
*Jordan+		Yes	Yes
Kenya•			
Kuwait+			
*Laos+		Abstain	Yes
*Lebanon+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lesotho•			
*Liberia+	Yes	Yes	Abstain
*Libya+		Yes	Yes
Luxembourg+	No	No	No
Madagascar+			
Malaysia+			Yes
Malawi•			
Maldives+			
Mali+			
Mauritania+			
Mexico+	Yes	Abstain	Abstain
Mongolia+			

Morocco+		Yes	Yes
*Nepal+		Yes	Yes
Netherlands+	No	No	No
New Zealand+	No	No	No
Nicaragua+	No	No	No
Niger•			
Nigeria+			
Norway+	No	No	No
**Pakistan+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panama+	No	Abstain	Abstain
Paraguay	Yes	Abstain	Abstain
Peru+	No	No	No
*Philippines+	Yes	Yes	Absent
Poland+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portugal+		No	No
Romania+		Yes	Yes
Rwanda+			
*Saudi Arabia+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal+			
Sierra Leone•			
Singapore+			
Somalia•			
Southern Yemen+			
Spain+		Abstain	No
*Sudan+		Yes	Yes
Swaziland•			
Sweden+	No	No	No
*Syria+	Yes	Yes	Yes
*Thailand+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Togo•			
Trinidad and Tobago•			
Tunisia+		Yes	Yes
*Turkey+	No	Abstain	Abstain
Uganda•			
Ukranian SSR+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Union of South Africa (South Africa in 1969)+	No	No	No
United Arab Republic+			
United Kingdom+	No	No	No
United Republic of Tanzania•			
USSR+	Yes	Yes	Yes
USA+	Abstain	Abstain	Abstain
Upper Volta•			

Uruguay+	Yes	Abstain	Abstain
Venezuela•	Yes	Abstain	Abstain
*Yemen+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Yugoslavia+	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zambia•			
Tally of votes on the Draft Resolution	34 Yes, 22 No, 3 Abstain	40 Yes, 24 No, 13 Abstain, 2 Absent	42 Yes, 28 No, 11 Abstain, 1 Absent

*Attended the Bandung Conference

** Sponsored the Bandung Conference

+ In favour of adoption of adopting resolution 2504 XXIV (84 countries were in favour of adopting the draft resolution)

• Abstained from voting in regards to resolution 2504 XXIV (30 countries abstained from voting)

No countries opposed the adoption of the resolution.