A PLACE FOR HARMONIOUS DIFFERENCE: CHRISTIANITY AND THE MEDIATION OF MINAHASAN IDENTITY IN THE NORTH SULAWESI PUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation unfolds as the story of how Christianity is a defining force in the mobilization and mediation of Minahasan identity in North Sulawesi. Focusing on how religions function as historically-bound systems of classification that provide a logic for the social construction of boundaries, I examine Christianity's role in defining local identity in Indonesia, and in relation to theories of selfhood that rely on concepts of place to define difference. In North Sulawesi, displays, performances and discourses circulate that address the historical alignment of Protestant Christianity with Minahasan identity and cultural practice, a convergence that cedes ownership of culture to only one portion of a diverse regional population. By documenting expressions, narrations, responses and explanations that constitute metacultural understandings about what defines the difference between religion and culture in Indonesia as nationally distinct categories, I investigate the project of promoting Minahasa as an ethno-local identity with attention to how the management of religious diversity structures the way that minority religious groups seek to maintain a tie between religion and regional identity without openly impugning the Muslim majority. I argue that the process of questioning the relationship between culture and religion has opened a space for consocial forms of identity to become characteristics of categorical belonging inclusive of non-Christian populations in the region, demonstrating how the public circulation of metacultural discourses drives cultural change as part of social differentiation and representation in Indonesia. As the newly-infused political viability of representations of tradition (adat) in a decentralizing Indonesia provide new alternatives for organizing under regional or “cultural” identity, Christian Minahasans debate the possibility of a culture without Christianity, potentially changing the parameters of belonging along with the definition of “local” culture’s relationship to religion.
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A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

All foreign terms included in this dissertation are in Indonesian unless otherwise indicated by the abbreviations (BT) Bahasa Tombulu or (BM) Bahasa Manado, with the exception of proper names. Any inaccuracies in translation are the sole responsibility of the author.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIANITY AS A DEFINING FORCE: RELIGION’S ROLE IN THE MOBILIZATION AND MEDIATION OF MINAHASAN IDENTITY IN THE INDONESIAN PUBLIC

In July of 2008, Dr. Benny Josua Mamoto, the founder and head of the North Sulawesi Cultural Art Institute (Institute Seni Budaya Sulawesi Utara, ISBSU) and a noted leader in the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (Gereja Masehi Injil di Minahasa, GMIM), addressed the crowd that had gathered for a “cultural ceremony” (upacara adat) performance organized to showcase a number of dances, practices, and rituals that were presented as emblematic of “tanah Minahasa,” the Minahasan homeland. The term Minahasa refers to a loosely-defined geographical region that lies within the borders of the Province of North Sulawesi, an ethnic identification, and a repertoire of cultural practices that are designated as adat, the customs that are said link a community with a place through the passage of time. Supported by the provincial government, and aimed at displaying this place and its people in objectified performances for both extra-regional and foreign audiences, the event nonetheless was a moment for the public negotiation of the competing, and at times conflicting, definitions of Minahasa as a framework for regional identity and local belonging.

In addition to serving as a metacommentary on the ambiguities encompassed by the term Minahasa, the performances and practices on display at the event were contextualized by their juxtaposition with a historically significant site in North Sulawesi, the Stone of Division (Watu Pinawetengan or Batu Pinabetengan). Located in a village in Kawangkoan, part of the area considered central to what is geographically identified as the land of Minahasa, the stone is symbolic of the multivalent associations that fall under the Minahasan label. The Stone of Division and its surrounding complex are simultaneously promoted as a tourist site.

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1 Mamoto holds the position of Brigadier Jeneral (Brigjen) in the Indonesian National Police force (POLRI), and has served as head of the National Narcotics Division (Badan Narkotika Nasional, BNN) since 2009. He is also the head of the Kurukunan Keluarga Kawanua, KKK), a international organization linking families from North Sulawesi who live outside the region, for the 2012-2016 period.
representing the regional culture of the North Sulawesi Province, a touchstone for
the historical narrative of the Minahasan community, and a place for rituals
designated as cultural because of their proximity to the stone, an object imbued with
spiritual power. Yet the use of the stone as an active ritual site both by Christian
practitioners, and by groups calling themselves followers of adat who seek to
instantiate a clear division between the categories of religion and culture,
encapsulates a growing debate over Minahasa’s historical association with
Protestant Christianity, and the degree to which Christianity can be recognized as
culturally particular to the region. The shifting and contested division between those
things approved to represent the cultural community from practices labeled as
religious speaks not only to tensions over who can authoritatively claim to belong in
the region, but to the very definition of culture itself, as Mamoto’s opening speech
demonstrates:

Welcome to the Stone of Division, the very place where several centuries ago
our ancestors convened to declare their unity as TOU Minahasa. They came
together to define who would live where, their adat rituals, and the use of
language for each existing sub-ethnic group or pakasa’an.

Since long ago the Minahasan people have lived and mixed with their kin
from Bolaang Mongondow,2 and Sangir-Talaud, living together in the North
Sulawesi Province, the Land of the Waving Coconut Fronds. We all know
that the people of this province come from a variety of ethnic groups, each
having its own culture and language....it is a fact that on the eve of the third
millennium that the inhabitants of this province are administratively and
politically divided into several districts and municipalities. Does this signify
the decrease of the unity and kin-relations among us?

Today, on the seventh day of the seventh month, we invite you all to revive
and transform our culture through the ritual of Maesa’an.3 In this ritual
we would talk together and proclaim our will for unity, declaring the words
Wata Esa Ene (BT) based on the spirit of “torang samua basudara” (BM),
we are all brothers.

Let us begin this ritual with a wish and the prayer pakatuan wo
pakalawiren (BT): let us have long life and live together in prosperity.4

2 Historically a kingdom to the South of the region of Minahasa, Bolaang Mongondow is now
a district of the North Sulawesi Province with a significant Muslim population.
3 A Minahasan ritual for unity.
4 The original Indonesian version of this speech, reprinted in the promotional booklet for the
event, is attached in Appendix B.
Mamoto’s narration of the event’s opening explicitly references the impact Indonesia’s program of political and fiscal decentralization is having on the local politics of identity in North Sulawesi. Framing the event as a Minahasan cultural ritual, not a tourist display, his speech addresses local concerns about regional disunity spurred by the proliferation of administrative districts in North Sulawesi since 2003 under decentralization policies. Implicitly, his inclusion of populations in the province that do not historically fall under the umbrella of Minahasan identity, like the predominantly Muslim population of the Bolaang Mongondow district, obliquely disputes the historical association between Minahasa and Protestant Christianity. Although mention of religion is conspicuously absent in Mamoto’s ritual invocation of the inclusiveness of Minahasan unity, the expansion of Minahasan culture to include all of those groups that fall within the political boundaries of the North Sulawesi Province echoes the discourse of other Christian Minahasan elites who endeavor to publicly embrace a multi-religious version of Minahasan culture, one that demonstrates their efforts not to impugn their non-Christian constituents.

In performances and displays like those held by the ISBSU across the North Sulawesi Province, the relationship between culture and religion, and the definition of Minahasa itself, is contested and transformed as people express their culturally bound ideas about what culture is. These anxieties over discerning the proper ontological divide between religion and culture are not only of concern in regions like Minahasa, where religion and aspects of tradition are historically and practically intertwined. Metacultural narrations about what properly belongs to the domain of culture are part of a national discourse about religious relations and the role of religion in defining and displaying difference:

Surakarta, Indonesia – Muslim leaders in Surakarta don’t agree on whether Muslims should be able to celebrate the Chinese New Year, locally known with the name Imlek, as reported by local media on February 6th.

The head of the Muslim Ulema Council (MUI) of Surakarta, Zainal Arifin Adnan, has already forbidden Muslims from participating in Sunday’s celebrations at any level, especially attending prayers.
According to the Jakarta Post, he stated that the best approach for Muslims of Chinese descent is to avoid the celebrations altogether.

“The celebration contains elements of the spiritual teachings of Buddhism, and due to this, it is forbidden for all Muslims to participate. The best attitude for a Muslim regarding this celebration is to ignore it” Zainal said Wednesday.

But other ulama see the celebration as an adat event, not a religious one.

“This celebration is part of the way that Chinese people welcome the spring season, often considered the best time of the year,” said Mohammad Dian Nafi from the Al-Muyyad Islamic School in Kartasura, in a quote from the Post. “So this celebration has no link with religion, and of course the Islamic community can join in, and strengthen our social ties with our ethnic Chinese brothers and sisters.”

Masrur, a Muslim leader in Cangkringan, Sleman, Yogyakarta, stated to Tempo on Monday that he accepts it if Muslims join the celebrations, because their actions don’t violate Syariah Islam. “The celebration of the Chinese New Year, or Imlek, has become tradition and part of culture. This is just like when Muslims celebrate the Islamic New Year (Tahun Baru Hijriah) or the Prophet’s Birthday (Hari Maulid Nabi)”

This dissertation considers how the public circulation of metacultural discourses that delineate culture from religion are part of the processes of differentiation and representation in Indonesia. Anthropologically, I focus on how religions function as historically-bound systems of classification (Durkheim 1912[1995]:33-39) that provide a logic for the social construction of boundaries. Minahasa provides an apt case study of how the historical denial of the ontological divide between culture and Christianity for Christian-identified ethnic groups in Indonesia is problematic, because the renewed viability of representations of tradition (adat) that correspond to categorical definitions of difference based in locality make the question of how religion relates to culture an issue of national political importance. Documenting how the public narration of the relationship between religion and culture is redefining identities in a decentralizing Indonesia engages anthropological debates over the nature of cultural change, demonstrating

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the potential that public and performed identities have to transform cultural categories in their circulation. It also documents how the philosophical implications of Protestant Christianity are utilized by adherents in engaging with the production of difference, providing technologies of experience and language ideologies that ironically facilitate connection with aspects of local culture that were disrupted by same forces of modernity that introduced the religion to the region. I examine these issues with attention to how the contemporary redefinition and deployment of the concept of *adat* in Indonesia doesn’t always articulate with religious perspectives on what constitutes culture, and what affect this has on Christian Indonesians who want Christianity to remain a mark of distinction for their cultural community. This dissertation asks if Minahasa can remain a Christian place, even if Christianity ceases to be a definitive factor in who the Minahasans are.

**Minahasa: Christianity in local context**

What role does religion play in the construction of particularistic identities? Can a world religion like Christianity ever be recognized as an aspect of the local? In his study of the Calvinist mission that established the Christian Church of Sumba, Webb Keane writes that “in some respects, Christianity has no locality, either sociologically (institutions and people circulate), culturally (ideas and people circulate), or ontologically (its truth claims are universal)” (Keane 2007:43). Christianity’s claim to an unbounded universality would seem anathema to kind of territorialized, particularistic identities found in modern nation states. In Indonesia, however, both localities and the people bound to them can be identified precisely due to particular historical associations that make religions like Christianity an aspect of what defines them as “local.” Exploring what it means to call a Christianity a part of local culture, or as the frame for particularistic identifications, exposes the kind of semiotic and political work that goes into constructing the local as a taken for granted category that inhabits a position both opposite and subordinate to the scale of the global.

The region and identity known as Minahasa, in the North Sulawesi Province of Indonesia, provides an exemplary case of the way that Christianity is caught up in the ongoing construction of the local through a particular history of contact. The
Minahasan locality, and its formulation as a place, are tied to the historical trajectory of the Calvinist missionary presence in the region and the mission’s relationship first to the Dutch East Indies Company, and later, to the colonial state. As Keane (2007:42) observes, colonialism was a vector for the globalization of Protestantism, carrying both the semiotic forms and moral ideologies of the mission to far-flung locations around the world under the guise of the secular ideals of modern progress and development. As part of the mission method to facilitate the introduction of the institution of Christianity among native populations in the Indies, these semiotic forms were applied to discern the cultural from the religious. The goal was to “foster local adaptations of Christianity...[that] would retain their inner essence and, so abstracted, remain immune to history” (Keane 2007:112). It’s history, however, that imbues Minahasan Christianity with the kind of specificity that localizes the religion’s universalizing tendencies, and makes Christianity a characteristic of particularistic belonging in North Sulawesi.

In order to link this interrogation of the modernist production of the global and the local to the Indonesian context, I’ll consider how the role of Christianity, and the particular Protestant form in which it was introduced, is used in the construction of the Minahasan identity in the changing national context of a post-Reformasi Indonesia (1998-2001). I also suggest that since religion and culture are nationally commonsense frames for identification, and furthermore avenues to political visibility and recognition, ethnicities or “local” identities are in fact composed of complex relations that cannot be restricted to either category. They can, however, be made visible by being couched through the terms of these categories, or in the unique expression of the relation between them. What I will demonstrate throughout this dissertation is that given their status as a political and religious minority, Christians are sometimes hesitant to risk claiming mutual exclusivity between Minahasan ethnicity and religion. This is especially true given the newly-infused political viability of representations of tradition glossed as adat that serve as an ethnopolitical vehicle that is defined regionally. However, the promotion of culturally-based expressions of regional belonging that are created in distinction against religious identities has the potential to dissociate the link between Christianity and Minahasa, and perhaps more importantly, the difference between local Muslims and Christians.
The changing political context of Indonesia after the fall of the New Order in 1998 has people rethinking previously defined structural roles, and the construction of the local, in public forums. Under the 1999 legislation used to implement “broad regional autonomy” (otonomi daerah), the offices of the rural district (kabupaten) and the municipalities (kota) have the ability to manage their own internal and external affairs, with reorganization being led by the rural district heads (bupati) and mayors (walikota). Government funding finances the new tasks implemented under autonomy legislation, so the district and the municipality are accountable to the central government, and new policies require the consent of the provincial governor and the president (Holtzappel 2009:1). Tipping the balance of power to the sub-regional level has led some politicians and residents to give the concept of the region (daerah) new political weight, increasing its availability, and visibility, as frame for identification. The processes of instituting economic decentralization and regional autonomy have also brought the stability of New Order era (1966 – 1998) regional borders into question by granting greater legal, economic, and political autonomy to government officials at the kabupaten and kota level, challenging provincial governments to find new methods of fusing diverse populations under the aegis of a regional political community. Promotion of frameworks of inclusion counteract the centripetal forces of fission or pemakaran, the “blossoming” of new rural districts, or provinces, along lines of identity – whether religious or ethnic.

In North Sulawesi, the mutually constitutive national categories of religion and tradition (adat) pose a particular challenge for the construction of local identity and the promotion of Minahasa as a cultural identity. As the peoples inhabiting the inner regions of the Dutch-colonized lands at the tip of Sulawesi island imagined themselves into a distinct group during the colonial period, contrasting themselves with hostile outsiders, they were also re-examining their history through the terms of a biblical narrative. It is not an overstatement to say that Minahasa was very much a “holy land” from its inception, and whether certain traditional practices

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6Christians in the North Sulawesi often refer to their region as the second Israel (Israel kedua). Minahasan Christians extend the link between the Holy Land and Minahasa as a way emphasizing their historical ties to Christianity. Building on the idea that there are “various Jerusalems function[ing] as signs in the diverse discourses on religion, power, and identity of visiting groups” (Bowman 1991:99), I consider the way Minahasans map their culturally specific understanding of biblical text onto the Holy Land’s landscape, and re-map
could be rooted in a time before or after the coming of Christianity was less important than the sense of cohesion that theological imperatives of Christian brotherhood produced.

Culture’s relationship with Christianity in North Sulawesi is called into question in relation to contemporary “deployments” of the concept of *adat* (Li 2007:337) that have proliferated in the post- Reformasi period. The revival of a cultural basis from which to agitate for rights and recognition “reflects a specifically Indonesian ideological tradition in which land, community and custom – rather than say, blood, language class or state law – provide normative reference points for political struggle” (Henley and Davidson 2008: 849). It has also increasingly become a mode of representation in the politics of difference that define insiders and outsiders (ibid., 840). As a set of “loosely related ideals” associated with the past (Davidson and Henley 2007:4), the nation-wide revival of *adat* has spurred efforts to rediscover, recreate or ‘unearth’ (*mengali-kembali*) a version of “authentic” culture in North Sulawesi, bringing the long-standing association between Christianity and Minahasan identity under new scrutiny. That the very concept of ‘Minahasa’ itself is tied to the colonial mission’s policies of imbuing cultural elements with religious meaning complicates contemporary references to the past in North Sulawesi. Pre-colonial practices have been neutralized of their potential conflict with Christian values by being reinterpreted through theological perspectives, or otherwise divested of their original meanings through

the connections between Israel, Indonesia and North Sulawesi as a way to politicize the ties between Minahasa and Christianity in terms of the religious rights of Indonesian citizens. Christians with the financial means engage in repeated travel to Israel, sometimes framing the meaning of their journey as an act of “pilgrimage” analogous to the Muslim Hajj tradition. The circulation of texts and discourses about travel to the Holy Land, which on the surface appear to be made in reference to an international Christian community, are used as a tool to seek recognition and equality on behalf of Indonesian Christian citizens, who unlike their Muslim counterparts do not receive financial support for their religious travel. Indonesian citizens cannot legally travel to Christian tourist sites in Israel because of Indonesia’s lack of diplomatic relations with the country. For an analysis of North Sulawesi’s support for Israel in the larger context of Indonesian national politics, see Sven Kosel’s article “Christianity, Minahasa Ethnicity, and Politics in North Sulawesi: ‘Jerusalem’s Veranda’ or Stronghold of Pancasila?” In *Christianity in Indonesia: Perspectives of Power*, edited by Susan Schroter, 291-322. Munster and Hamburg: LIT-Verlag 2010.
transformation into “mythological stories, curious animistic rituals, and colorful performances for use on official occasions” (Jacobsen 2002:46). By trying to employ the concept of Minahasa as a basis for the North Sulawesi Province’s political community, practitioners and politicians alike have to consider if it is possible to untie Minahasa from its past – and what the implications of separating culture from Christianity might mean.

Further complicating matters is that the term ‘Minahasa’ unites several regional sub-identities that exist in a pattern fission and fusion dependent on the context of interaction (Jacobsen 2002; Renwarin 2006; Schouten 1998). The name Minahasa itself refers to a colonial construction that fused several distinct groups under the umbrella of a unified identity, based in a shared territory that was cordoned off by the colonial government. The reinterpretation of related local cosmologies through Protestant theology was introduced by missionaries of the Netherlands Reformed Church (Nederlandsch Zendelinggenootschap, NZG). Individuals involved with cultural revival movements in North Sulawesi have been faced with the challenge of re-constructing an “authentic” pre-colonial culture within the framework of an identity that was unknown before the colonial period. The reconfiguration of the regional political structure in North Sulawesi post-2001 is also a factor in the impulse to ‘recover’ local culture. In his analysis of the politics of ethnicity in North Sulawesi, Michael Jacobsen “maintain[s] that a revival of cultural identity can just as well be interpreted as a local aspiration towards (re)-creating an ethnic group as a political community” (2002:38) Arguing that individuals identifying with Minahasen heritage became a political majority in the newly created Minahasa districts, and at the provincial level with the creation of the new majority Muslim Gorontalo Province in 2001 (Kimura 2007:2), he sees “a culturally

7 In the 2010 census, the North Sulawesi Province was divided into 15 kabupaten or districts and kota or provincial city districts: Bolaang Mongondow, Minahasa, Kepulauan Sangihe, Kepulauan Talaud, Minahasa Selatan, Minahasa Utara, Bolaang Mongondow Utara, Kepulauan Siau Tagulandang Biaro, Minahasa Tenggara, Bolong Mongondow Selatan, Bolaang Mongondow Timur, Kota Manado, Kota Tomohon, Kota Bitung and Kota Kotamabagu. The South Minahasan District (Minahasa Selatan) and North Minahasan District (Minahasa Utara) were created in 2003, and the Southeast Minahasa District was created in 2007 (Kosel 2010:300).
8 Prior to 2001, Gorontalo had been part of the North Sulawesi province. The creation of the Gorontalo Province returned North Sulawesi to a province with a slight Christian majority in terms of population. According to the 2010 Indonesian National Census by the Indonesian
reinforced Minahasan identity constituting a perfect platform for Minahasa politicians to utilize in an otherwise de-politicized post New Order population” (2002:35).

Jacobsen (2002:55) theorizes that the term “Minahasa” makes an uneasy basis for ethnic identity, since digging up the past exposes the problematic divisions between sub-groups that could splinter back into their constituent parts. Since political identities, in his estimation, are “generally constructed around a transcultural unifying goal for a region or a nation,” investigation into the past threatens to have the opposite effect, exposing the inconsistencies of history. It could be argued, however, that the widespread re-politicization of adat in a decentralizing Indonesia provides a new formula for regional political communities, one with built-in legal avenues for legal recognition. Regional autonomy laws grant “traditional” communities greater input in regional affairs and support the transformation of shared community morals into regional law. Contemporary deployments of adat, especially in public performances meant for the tourist’s gaze, also draw on standardized tropes for the performance and representation of regional cultures that are endorsed by the state (Acciaoli 1985:157; Hitchcock and King 2003:4; Hoskins 2002:186; Picard 2003:109, Picard and Wood 1997:iX; Spyer 1996a:25). These cultural productions for national and international audiences highlight the structural and ideological factors that contribute to a sense that Minahasa has no “culture” to market, given the region’s association with Christian and colonial domination. This association has stymied the efforts of both regional proponents of the cultural revival movement, and the local tourism board, in promoting Minahasa as a cultural destination.

As politicians and other regional elites try to promote the notion of a regional culture that is coterminous with provincial borders, one that separates religion from

National Statistics Center (BPSRI), the North Sulawesi province is inhabited by a Christian majority, or more accurately, a Protestant majority of 63.6%. Muslims are the next largest population in terms of religious demographics, at 30.9%, Catholics, who could be included under the heading of the Christian majority register as a presence, although not a large one, at 4.40%. Hindus, Buddhists, Khonghucu and “others” all make up less than one percent of the population. BPSRI Sensus Penduduk, 2010. “Penduduk Menurut Wilayah SulawesiUtara” http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=7100000000.
familiar concepts of tradition in order to encompass the province’s heterogeneous population, the assumption that religion can be cordoned off from the realm of adat ripples outward and produces unanticipated effects. Due to the Indonesian government’s involvement in the dissemination of symbols of ethnicity in an attempt to create an “indigenous” national culture, ethnic displays have historically developed as a category of public representation that legitimates ethnic pride as patriotism (Kipp 1993:186). For those who identify themselves as part of the dominant regional ethnic group, the Minahasa, the push to delineate between aspects of their identity which can be easily classified strictly “religious,” and those that are cultural, exposes the roots of an ontological problem which can be traced to Christianity’s arrival on the North shores of the island then known as the Celebes in the 1730s. But it is also part of the larger national context that structures the way categorical identities, like religion, are positioned in the production and management of Indonesian national subjects. This is a major theoretical theme of this dissertation, one that links the production of the “local” to questions of how universalistic systems like religion contribute the processes of imagining oneself through the terms of a national community.

The role of world religions in national belonging

This dissertation utilizes an ethnographic examination of the public processes of formulating identity in North Sulawesi, and more generally in Indonesia, to examine the role that religion plays in facilitating a group’s ability to imagine themselves as national subjects. In the literature regarding the spread of nationalism to points beyond the Western world, organized religion is often portrayed as a force for promoting the development of institutionalized political power (Asad 1993 and 1983; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997; Robbins 2004; Barker 2004). Furthermore, the introduction of Western religion is often viewed as inseparable from the structural and economic changes wrought by colonial powers (Comaroff 1985; Fabian 1990; Hefner 1998 and 1993; Kipp and Rodgers 1987; Kirch and Sahlins 1992; McVey 1995; Steenbrink 2004). This makes it difficult to ascertain the boundaries between the processes of cultural adaptation to the presence of new religious systems, and the inexorable transformation of traditional societies under
the pressures of colonial rule. Christianity, as a symbol of Western moral authority and colonial discipline, is often intimately associated with Western modes of being, especially positivist epistemology and the associated practices that fall under the heading of modernity (Sahlins 1996; Robbins 2007; Keane 2002). Despite the conflation of the spread of the Western ideology of modernity with the introduction of Christianity in colonial regions, very few analyses have considered the role of Christianity in facilitating groups’ participation in various nationalisms. This dissertation contends that organized religion, particularly Christianity, might serve as a mediating force between nationalism as a “universal form” and the particularistic identities that characterize, and thrive, in most nation-state systems.

One of the failures of the ethnographic literature on religion in Indonesia is a lack of attention to the complexity of articulations of local and state-based identities, and a paucity of works which consider how individual cases relate to the literature on the origins and nature of nationalism, and its relation to religion. Given that one of the foundational texts on nationalism, Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* ([1983]1991), is based in examples drawn in large part from Anderson’s ethnographic and historical research in Indonesia, it is surprising that few substantive critiques of Anderson’s work have been based in the relationship between organized religion and the nation-state in Indonesia. The Indonesian state uses religious identity as a fundamental basis of citizenship, and also as a category which is intimately tied to “culture” in its state-promoted definition. Both the literature on religion and nationalism, as well as anthropological investigations into how modernity, specifically through the agency of the state, characterizes and compartmentalizes culture are relevant to examining workings of nationalism across the diverse regions of Indonesia.

The region of North Sulawesi is especially germane to an analysis of the role Christianity might play in mediations of people’s relation to the national. The region provides a case study which elucidates the link between particularistic ethnic

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9 This conflation of the principles of modernity and Christianity presents specific concerns for the anthropological study of Christianity, both in terms of the assumed Christian identity of Western researchers, or Christians’ inability to objectively study religion and the “repugnance” of Christians as the cultural other (Howell 2007; Cannell 2006), and the influence of Christian asceticism on the way social science perceives various sects of Christianity (Cannell 2005).
identities and the homogenizing forms of religious and national identification. As the largest predominantly Christian administrative unit in Indonesia, North Sulawesi is home to the ethnic Minahasans, who define themselves against neighboring Muslim provinces to the South and contra to Muslim Javanese, the predominant ethnic group in Indonesian politics. Much of their ethnic identity centers on their willing adaptation to the Western cultural mores introduced by the Dutch during the colonial period, most importantly their early conversion to Christianity and role as subaltern colonial elites during the period of Dutch occupation. Dutch missionaries employed traditions such as life-cycle rituals like the *maengket* and selectively reinterpreted local origins myths to correspond with biblical imperatives of unity, encouraging the original tribes in the region to think of themselves as part of an overarching ethnic identity based in the principles of Christian brotherhood (Henley 1996; Renwarin 2006; Roeroe 2003; Van Klinken 2003; Watusske 1985; Wenas 2007). These efforts are resonant in the construction of the modern form of Minahasan ethnic identity, where informants often site the principle of “*torang samua basaudara*” (we are all brothers)\(^\text{10}\) as one of the defining features of their regional identity.

However, both the dominance of Islam in Indonesian national politics, as well as the existence of Muslim Minahasans (Babcock 1981) makes the historical and religious aspects of this ethnic identity precarious. As historian David Henley notes, Minahasan elites joined in the struggle of Indonesian National Revolution (1945-1950) in expectation of securing a federalist system in which Minahasa could continue to maintain regional autonomy and its close relationship with the Dutch (1993:3). When early nationalists rejected the federalist model, Minahasa was faced with the problem of aligning an identity strongly associated with the departing colonizers, and the perceived Western character of Christianity (Jacobsen 2002:44),

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\(^{10}\) The development of this slogan has roots in the politicization of regional identity, as well as the way Minahan identity is conflated with regional identity when used as a contrastive ethnic label in relation to other groups in the archipelago. The phrase, which translates as “we are all brothers” in Bahasa Manado, the regional dialect spoken in North Sulawesi, was first coined by Governor EE Mangindaan in 1995 (Damis 2011). The slogan was introduced to replace the term “BoHuSaMi” which referred to the participation of the various ethnic groups (Bo = Bolaang-Mongodow, Hu = Gorontalo, Sa = Sangir-Talaul, Mi = Minahasa) in the regional government of the Sulawesi Utara region before Sulawesi Utara and Gorontalo were reconfigured into separate regional provinces (Ulaen 2008).
with a new national identity. Although indigenized Christianity was promoted by the Indonesian state as a means for development during the New Order period (Aragon 2000:156), according to Henley, it was the unique history of North Sulawesi that produced a strong Minahasan “ethnic nationalism.” The subsequent disenfranchisement of Minahasan colonial-period elite from positions of power in post-independence era North Sulawesi contributed to the region’s movement for regional autonomy known as *Permesta* (1958-1961), which was violently suppressed by the central government (Harvey 1977). In post New Order Indonesia, minority groups use Christianity to indicate their modernity and inclusion in the nation, and yet have to do so carefully in order not to impugn the Muslim majority (Aragon 2000:24). Minahasans struggle to convince themselves, and the central government, that their Western-facing Christian province has an important role to play in Indonesia’s future.

David Henley argues that the development of the Minahasan identity was in reality an incipient nationalism, one that evolved parallel to the creation of an archipelagic “Indonesian” identity. He claims that the dismissive attitudes towards those regional nationalisms of the Netherlands Indies that were not embraced by the early nationalists, such as movements in Ambon, Sunda, and Minahasa, are “inspired by a teleological projection of post-war Indonesian realities back into the colonial period” (Henley 1993:92). Defining a nation as a “perceived community defined with respect to a home territory and imbued with a range of social and political ideals” (ibid., 92), Henley concludes that although these ideals may be imbued with religious meaning, it is the secular basis for collective autonomy in cultural and political spheres that identifies these formulations as nationalistic.

Furthermore, Henley (1993:92) outlines the importance of a “degree of conceptual equality between all members of the national community” as an inherent characteristic of nationalism that can foster the desire for sovereignty or independence. Several reconstructive ethnographic histories of the region use the egalitarian nature of pre-colonial culture as a framework for contextualizing the shifting set of arbitrary classifiers that people use to delineate Minahasan identity.\(^{11}\)

\(^{11}\) Michael Jacobsen (2002:40) notes that a wide range of general characteristics relating to land, genealogy, Christianity and education are more often invoked as markers of Minahasan identity than the traditional cultural objects such as burial sarcophagi (*waruga*
It is my contention that this basis of national identification – the sense of a need for a conceptual unity of all members of the nation – is intimately linked to ethnic Minahasans’ religious identity. As members of a religious group that has been politically disadvantaged since independence, Minahasan individuals rely on the ideological promise of equality for all religious citizens to agitate for conceptual equality as Indonesians. Not only does Protestant Christian ideology contain specific theological principles that identifies the reorganization of the world into nation-states as an appropriate form of ontological division (Hastings 1997; Robbins 2007; Taylor 2006) the ideological stipulation that citizens of Indonesia must be associated with one of the six constitutionally approved religions12 (Christianity, Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism) represents an interpretation of a ‘modular’ (Anderson [1983]1991) form of nationalism that is specific to the Indonesian nation-state.13

As an investigation of the role of Christianity in fostering identification with the Indonesian nation-state, this dissertation also addresses the theoretically

BT) thought to differentiate pre-colonial tribal groupings. The lack of traditional objects or characterizations associated with Minahasan identity is remarkable given the tendency for regional cultures to be highly objectified in terms of their representation at the state level, or through tourism promotion. As Gabrielle Weichart (2004:73) theorizes in her treatment of Minahasan identity as “a culinary practice,” food serves as one boundary marker in the exclusionary processes that identify who is not Minahasan in the absence of recognizable material markers of Minahasan identity. Although social eating and feasting are used to re-establishing distance between Minahasans and others. 12 The “sixth religion,” konghucu or Confucianism, was added to the roster of the officially recognized “religions of the book” in Presidential Decree No. 1 1965. However, subsequent rulings cast doubt on status of Confucianism as an official religion, an issue that would persist throughout the New Order regime. The problematic application of the legal status of Confucianism as an officially sanctioned religion was tied to the government’s treatment of Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent (see Abalahin, 2005). The status of Confucianism as an official religion was clarified in 2000 through Presidential Decision No. 6 which struck down the 1967 Presidential Instruction on Religion, Belief and Chinese Cultural Practice (Inpres 14/1967 Tentang Agama, Kepercayaan dan Adat·Istiadat Cina).

13 The non-secular basis of the Indonesian nation is anchored in the first principle of Pancasila, the national ideology and basis of the Indonesian constitution. The first principle Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa or Belief in one supreme God, implies that all citizens must belong to a monotheistic religion, codified in Chapter 11 Article 29 of the Indonesian Constitution (UUD Chapter XI Article 29 (1). The second section of Article 29 guarantees citizen’s freedom to worship according to their own beliefs. Critics point out that the first principle of monotheism codifies the inherent bias of the state against those who practice religions that are not considered monotheistic, and therefore the second section of the article does not extend protection all national citizens.
complex line of definition between ethnicity and nationalism. Although Henley’s theory conceptualizes Minahasan identity as a form of incipient nationalism, I would argue Minahasa represents an ethnic identity in that it draws its meaning and definition from interaction with state ideology, and through a contrastive relationship with other ethnic and regional identities from within the archipelago (Barth 1969:30). In line with theories that propose ethnic identities become visible, and viable, through the homogenizing processes of state management of identity (Anderson [1983] 1991; Beteille 1998; Brown 2000; Bruner 1974; Calhoun 1993; Gladney 1996; Harrison 2006), I argue that Minahasan identity has been maintained and strengthened as an ethno-regional identification through association with Protestant religion. Protestant Christianity not only represents an important defining feature that makes Minahasan culture visible at the national scale, but is also mediates Minahasan ethnics’ participation in national culture, playing a role in their expression of their version of the local, a construction that has become a globalized form of the expression of difference (Boellstorff 2005:6).

In his book Fracturing Resemblances: identity and mimetic conflict in Melanesia, Simon Harrison (2006) writes against the Durkheimian tradition, claiming that similarities, especially those produced through the homogenizing forces of the nation-state, do not promote social solidarity but instead precipitate the process of differentiation. Order is produced not from similarity but from the creation of social and cultural difference requiring social actors to “disaggregate themselves, reduce their commonalities” (2006:2). He claims that there is a conventional symbolic form to the nation-state, because people have to differ from each other intelligibly in order to gain the recognition they seek. Ethnicity and nationalism therefore offer “ready made ways of resembling each other so as to be able to begin the process of being different from them” (ibid., 42). In order for ethnic identity to be maintained, groups must be firmly entrenched in a “specific framework of similarities within which to cultivate and exhibit diversity, because to create diversity, one has to ensure the existence of a background of similarities through which difference can be made to appear” (ibid., 49). In the case of Minahasa, Christianity is one the available, standardized, “intelligible” differences that can be used to mark difference in the Indonesian nation-state. How a universalistic, world
religion can act as a productive force in the construction of particular identities requires an investigation of the production of the category of the “local” in Indonesia.

*Interrogating the local and recalling the nation in evaluations of place-based identities*

My analysis of the role Christianity plays in defining particularistic identities in Indonesia echoes a line of inquiry posed by Tom Boellstorff about the reification of the link between “localist spatial scales and conceptions of ethnicity” (Boellstorff 2002:24) in Indonesian studies particularly, and in anthropological categorizations of cultural groups more generally. In ethnographic studies of Indonesia, conceptions of primordial identities linked to place have their ultimate roots in the colonial endeavor to categorize populations. Yet they persist both in the anthropological tendency to uncritically associate localities in Indonesia with the ‘native’ (read: authentic) point of view. This is evident in the tendency to study groups in Indonesia who are identified with place (the Balinese, the Javanese, etc.) as though those categories were self-evident, not constructed social facts, as Keane (1999) notes. Boellstorff identifies this tendency as a reiteration of what he calls “ethnolocality: a spatial scale where ‘ethnicity’ and ‘locality’ presume each other to the extent that they are, in essence, a single concept” (Boellstorff 2002:25). His argument rests on resisting the tendency to reify this category to such a degree that studying an ethnic or regional group is perceived to be so radically particularistic that it cannot tell us anything more generally about Indonesia or Indonesians. This is theoretically significant in a decentralizing Indonesia, where the resurgence of adat demonstrates how “ethnolocality has become hegemonic in the sense that even those who reject it do so in terms of its own logic – that is, by reversing the polarity and asserting ethnolocality over the nation-state,” as in the cases of separatist movements in Aceh and East Timor (Boellstorff 2002:32). Boellstorff’s desire to bring “Indonesia” back in to ethnographic examinations of taken for granted constructions of the local questions the role of the state in the construction of these ethnolocal categories of identity that are presented as “ontologically prior” to the nation (ibid., 32). His argument is a nod to a continued need for ethnography of Indonesia that shows how “local communities are in fact constituted through interaction with
translocal forces like the the state, Islam, modernity, or globalising [sic] processes of various kinds” (ibid., 33). Analyzing world religions is one method of demonstrating this, as the division of native communities into ethnolocal units characterized by particularistic adat law was part of the colonial effort to neutralize the potential of Islam in creating translocal religious communities in the Indies (ibid., 26).

Reflecting the ideological framework of Indonesia’s plural or ‘archipelagic’ society, ethnographic studies of social units that are ontologically characterized as local (and not, by default, national or international) promote the assumption that authenticity – both of native perspective and ethnographic documentation – is bound to specific localities. By “not taking Indonesia seriously as a unit of ethnographic analysis,” as Boellstorff points out, we run the risk of “fall[ing] back on ethnolocality as the default mode of representation for culture, naturalizing a spatial scale that was not just the result of colonialism” but also part of the processes of colonial rule (Boellstorff 2002:37). Post-colonial critiques of the local versus global binary have taken up similar questions about the management of space, and the production of ‘place’ as part of a world reordered under the under the logic of capital. The persistence of territorially-based forms in the post-colonial era, and the acceptance of the nation as a spatial category that has been made natural (Gupta 1992:64) belie the increasing sense of a “deterritorialized” (Appadurai 1996) world of flux, movement and un-rootedness. Boellstorff (2002:27) points a focused critique at the field of Indonesian studies that produces research based on units isomorphic with ethnolocality, ‘a product of colonialism’ that negotiates between the scale where the racial division between the colonized and colonizer is visible, and the administrative concept of the village (desa) that inscribes difference by locating it territorially. Given the widespread awareness of postcolonial critiques in Indonesian studies, Boellstorff inquires why in studies focused on Indonesia “which commonly foregrounds ‘modernity’ and acknowledges locality’s porosity, does locality reassert itself as a foundational category of knowledge?” (ibid., 24).

What values (and limitations) does the reification of these ethnolocal identifications produce that account for their persistence, even in ethnographic study? As Boellstorff points out, “ethnolaricalities are becoming more real and the nation more poorly imagined” (ibid., 38). Where the anthropological focus on Indonesia’s localities converges with the transformation of the region (daerah),
cultural community (*masyarakat adat*) or ethnic group (*suku bangsa*) into politically expedient and socially relevant forms of displaying and recognizing difference within Indonesia is a juncture that has been criticized by other scholars as echoing the colonial hierarchy of spatialization, where natives are “confined” to the local and “cultures are spatially segmented” (Malkii 1992:61). Metaphors of rootedness and environmental adaptation are conceptually linked to ideas about cultural authenticity, principles that underwrite not only the ethnographic impulse to document the local, but also practices and institutional rationalization of Indonesian “cultural tourism.” Performable iterations of local culture for tourism are part of the governmentally promoted framework for exhibiting difference that is self-consciously employed by groups seeking national and international recognition (Schiller 2001; Adams 2006; Picard 1996; Picard 2003). The “asymmetrical valuing” of the contrastive relationships through which difference is constructed is itself “a product of modernity” (Spyer 2000:5), one that characterizes even those topographies that seem the most stable or rooted (ibid., 8). By not placing the local in some sort of hierarchical relation to the nation, we can avoid the convergence of anthropological perspectives with what “goes without saying” in common understandings of how identity is coupled with place in Indonesia.

Boellstorff (2002:26) notes that the work that goes into producing the naturalness of these ethnolocal formations involves a dialectical conversation between government institutions, regional inhabitants, and researchers. Just as regional inhabitants organize cultural traits that can correspond to the differences mapped out by political boundaries, researchers can find themselves defending aspects of these identities against national intrusion or in seeking recognition from national or international audiences that verify the ‘reality’ of particular identities. Even claims for legitimacy that find their ultimate basis in colonial constructions of race, or valuations of primitiveness, can be embraced if they indicate a difference recognizable by others that is revealed to have historical roots (Rutherford 2008:366). In Danilyn Rutherford’s 2008 analysis of public presentations of the Papuan nationalist movement, claims for sovereignty are framed in the voice of the Indonesian nation, stemming from constructs of “Papuanness” that both the Dutch and Indonesian ruling powers used to legitimate their control of the region. Seeing recognition of difference as the key to self-determination, Rutherford argues that the
impulse to speak in the voice of the Indonesian nation is a means of creating ‘transcendental extranational interlocuters’ (Rutherford 2008:346) even to the degree that “[Papuan] nationalist productions threaten to become unrecognizable as such” (ibid., 370). In her estimation, the work of creating an extranational interlocuter represents the unique character of Papuan nationalism, that while iterative of the national form is not simply a modular derivation in Andersonian terms. This analysis is reminiscent of Boellstorff’s argument that frames of identity such as “ethnicity and locality vary historically and geographically,” even as they share an iterable shape, and that persons can “understand themselves and their social worlds with reference to ethnonlocal and Indonesian spatial scales (as well as other spatial scales) at the same time” (2002:26).

By theorizing ethnicity in Indonesia in terms of its relation to place, the ‘local’ is seen not just as a spatial reference but as a social process. The construction of the local is not problematically pigeonholed as epiphenomenal of the global, or understood in terms of a binary opposition. In her critique of postcolonial analyses that characterize the emergence of local identities as responses to globalization, Jacqueline Brown (2005:133) argues that the local is “a discursive construct,” the “outcome of power laden processes through which the social gets defined differentially and spatially.” Instead of signifying specificity, we can investigate the way in which the local is normalized in specific ways (Brown 2005:8). Seen as an essentially cosmopolitan category in which a place’s identity is based in numerous entanglements with the outside world (Spyer 2002, Brown 2005) we can investigate the deployment of the term ‘local’ as a “profoundly political positioning,” one that “maps notions of cultural particularity” (Brown 2005:133) onto a particular geography. Theorizing the local as a cultural category that is used in the production of identity, and not just as an index of scale (or restricted to any particular scale) relates to a “globalized” view of human relations that makes the local into a productive force. As a way of defining social and cultural relations, the local makes places significant, and not vice-versa.

Theorizing the local as a productive category of identity shifts the analysis away from reifying spatial categories towards documenting how particular spatial organizations are made to seem natural. It also lends to the documentation of the processes by which the local is coupled with certain scales and social relations in the
production of place and the expression of difference. The taken for granted assumptions in Indonesia about the relation between spatial scales and social configurations require work to maintain. The presumption that ethnicity and locality inhabit the same scale (Boellstorff 2002:25) is constantly being challenged from within and without, from regions where the local is counter-intuitively based on cosmopolitan ties (such as those facilitated by world religions) or to situations where being local is an ethnic category not restricted to any particular place. People place themselves reference spatial scales in ways foundational to their understanding of self, finding a way to fit themselves into to the dominant understandings of the way that space is organized, even when the social reality of their ‘localness’ looks like anything but something restricted to, and evolving from, a particular locale.

The case of Minahasa will demonstrate how the continuing naturalization of ethnolocality might problematize the role of religion as an index of ethnic difference, and as a framework for identification with the territory which came to be recognized as Minahasa during the colonial period. As the concept of ‘place’ was developed and became part of the spatial management and delineation of difference in Indonesia, Christianity offered theological logic that could elevate particularistic identities through the terms of a universal narrative, articulating with the religious tenor of national citizenship, and the expression of difference through territorially bounded cultural units. The historical movement of Christianity through the archipelago into regions where inhabitants already existed in relations of opposition with other groups made adoption of the religious tradition a practical technology for marking and maintaining difference within the limits of national recognition. Christians’ status as religious minorities contributed to the tendency for Christianity to act as both a particularistic ‘ethnic’ characteristic as well as a hallmark of integration and participation in the Indonesian nation.

The nation is a scale that is self-consciously referenced in the continued production of ethnolocality in Minahasa, given that the locality’s construction was affected along with the development of a Christian identity. David Henley argues that “today’s stereotypes of Minahasans exaggerate both the primordial aspects of their identity and the extent to which it has been shaped by its external Indonesian environment” (1996:20). Denying Indonesia’s relevance as a referential frame, or a
category of belonging that shapes contemporary formulations of “Minahasanness” seems to imply that people misrecognize their true, “localized” roots – a claim that sounds suspiciously similar to the kind of ethnographic ontological collusion that Boellstorff (2002) criticizes. Minahasans are Indonesians, as they often point out, and their emphasis on the validity of both categories of identification should be taken as ethnographically significant. This does not in any way minimize or deny the transnational or extra-national character of connections that have been pivotal in shaping Minahasa into an recognizable entity. It simply recognizes that national discourses reflect the naturalization of certain forms of recognition in the historical development of the Indonesian nation-state, and the effect that naturalization has on people in Indonesia and their imagination of self and society. It is an imagination which is rarely restricted to the local, even if it is expressed that way. Similar to Boellstorff’s inquiry as to if Indonesians might “interpret ethnicity as contextualised [sic] by a prior sense of being Indonesian, rather than the converse,” (2002:24) I’m interested in exploring how people in North Sulawesi conceive of themselves, and the confluence of translocal influences that make up their construction of ethnolocality, from the perspective of being Christians in the nation of Indonesia.

The adoption of Christianity played a role in the development of Minahasa as both a territory and an ethnic identity, in that identifying as a practitioner of the Christian religion both defined inhabitants of a certain region of the colonial territory of Minahasa as a group, and served as a means of their classification (Eriksen 2002:4). During the colonial period, Minahasa developed as a culturally distinct region with inhabitants who were viewed in contrast to others in the archipelago, in part due to their link to a specific territory, and in part because of their religious identity. As Eriksen (2002:7) notes, the conflation between ethnicity and nationalism is easy to achieve when ethnicity is viewed in terms of relationships of contrast, as “nationalism, like ethnic ideologies, stresses the cultural similarity of its adherents, and by implication, draws boundaries vis-à-vis others, who thereby become outsiders.”

Evidence that identities based in a combination of regional and religious affiliation in a contrastive system were developing as a precursor to Indonesian independence can be found in records documenting the existence of a group of Javanese Muslims who settled around the Lake Tondano area in the colonial
territory of Minahasa. Known as the village of Jawa Tondano, or Jaton, the area was settled by followers of the Javanese Muslim leader Kyai Modjo, who was exiled by the Dutch with a small group of his followers in 1830 (Babcock 1981:77). Kyai Modjo’s group of around sixty male exiles are considered to have been followers of Islam, due to records of Arabic additions to their names, and titles of kyai (Islamic traditional teacher) recorded for more than half of the original group. Since only a few women were allowed to be relocated to Tondano with the second wave of exiles in 1839, many of the original group intermarried with Christian Minahasan women. Today, the descendents of this group of exiles are still considered to be ethnically distinct due to the combination of their origins in Java and their religious identification. This is despite the fact that after two-hundred plus years of social interaction with the Minahasan groups surrounding them, they no longer speak Javanese, and in fact share in many of the cultural attributes that are classified as indicating Minahasan identity.

Recently, some Muslim groups in North Sulawesi have begun to use their connection to the region to claim that they are “Muslim Minahasans.” Although Muslim groups have historically been marked as ethnically different on the basis of their religious identity, certain groups of Muslims in the region are using multi-religious frameworks, and the ideology of regional religious harmony (kerukunan beragama) to claim a Minahasan identity. Historically, having a profession other than farming would have been one marker of difference between these migrants and ‘indigenous’ populations of highland Minahasa, a distinction reminiscent of Oceanic conceptions of the link between land and identity (Jolly 1992; Linnekin 1990; Scott 2007). Today, these Muslims are identifying themselves as Minahasan by claiming to belong to the ethnolocale of North Sulawesi through consocial (Linnekin 1990) ties to the surrounding community that link them to public iterations of the national discourses on religious harmony that local leaders, both Christian and Muslim, use in the promotion of an inclusive regional identity.

As the religious demography of North Sulawesi was recast with the secession of the predominantly Muslim region of Gorontalo in 2001, the province again began to resemble the ethnic homeland of Minahasa that evolved under the influence of colonial powers, and through indigenous engagement with the cultural system of Christianity. Returning to their position as the dominant ethnic group historically
associated with Christianity, Minahasans now share regional borders with a number of non-Christian minority groups who may trace their ethnic affiliation to different locales. Yet as competition for resources and recognition, as well as the processes of local governance must now refer to regional divisions, new discourses have emerged that seek to make the boundaries of Minahasan cultural identity coterminous with regional borders. These political realities return people to the question of whether it’s appropriate that Christianity gives meaning to Minahasan culture, tradition, and history. It’s a question that speaks to the larger issues of theorizing about the encounter between Christianity as a vector of colonial power and the cultural systems of convert communities.

*Christianity in the mediation of national and ethnic identity*

Part of the difficulty in theorizing about Christianity as vehicle for smoothing over the discrepancies of history, or aiding in the construction of communal identities, is the legacy of Christian influence on social scientific inquiry itself. Some post-colonial perspectives pose Christian conversion in the colonial period as antithetical to the “real” religion of indigenous inhabitants. These perspectives are firmly rooted in anthropological, and sociological, definitions of religion that fail to recognize the influence of Christian ontology on the historical lineage of modern social science, and perspectives regarding both culture and religion (Cannell 2005; Robbins 2007; Keane 2002; Asad 1983). In his critique of one of the foundational texts on the link between religion and culture, “Religion as a Cultural System” (1966) by Clifford Geertz, Talal Asad notes that certain historically specific forms of religion have been erroneously given paradigmatic status (1983:238). In Asad’s estimation, Geertz has conflated an ahistoric, universal definition of religion with ideas about belief and symbolism with a theory that has deep roots in the epistemology of Christianity, one that presuppose an ahistorical and universal framework on the comparison of the human condition. The problem with this analysis, according to Asad, is that it nullifies the historical contingencies through which religious systems develop, and the ability of religious systems to have some systematic basis of religious truth. In his attempt to make religion a universal of the human condition, Geertz “shifts his ground from the claim that religion must affirm
something specific about the nature of reality...to the bland suggestion that religion is ultimately having a positive attitude to the problem of disorder” (Asad 1983:246).

In this instantiation, Asad claims that Geertz’s theory is not far from Marx’s conception of religion as an ideology, “a mode of consciousness which is other than the consciousness of reality, external to the relations of production, producing no knowledge, but expressing at once the anguish of the oppressed and the cynicism of the oppressor” (ibid., 247).

In addition to creating a definition of religion that lends itself to the postcolonial notion that conversion to Christianity represented the acceptance of a dominant ideology and simultaneous suppression of traditional cosmology, Asad also notes that Geertz’s conception of religion is rooted in concepts of “belief.” The modern definition of the concept of belief is reliant on Protestant language ideologies in which the internal feelings of the speaker must be made external through the condition of sincere speech (Robbins 2007 and 2004; Keane 2002 and 2003). The definition of religion provided by Geertz constructs religion as a reflection of a state of mind – one that is separate from the systematic workings of the scientific ‘knowledge’ of objects (Asad 1983:247). Again, this makes religion somehow an ahistorical perspective that can be compared with other ahistorical perspectives such as “common sense” and “scientific knowledge.” Asad argues that this becomes the sticking point for analyses of power and religion, because it makes it difficult to see how “power constructs religious ideology, establishes the preconditions for distinctive kinds of religious personalities, authorizes specifiable religious practices and utterances, and produces religiously defined knowledge” (Asad 1983:237). Just as we cannot predict a “distinctive” set of dispositions for a Christian in a modern society, or cannot say that someone with a “distinctive” set of dispositions is, or is not, a Christian (Asad 1983:241, Cannell 2006) religious “belief” cannot be substituted for “beliefs” as they are developed through historical context, because this conflates a very Christian conception of religion with varied adaptations of religious systems that developed in different historical contexts.

The treatment of Christianity as a universal form, despite its obvious historical contingencies, shares similarities with Benedict Anderson’s conception of nationalism. As Chatterjee (1999) explains in his critique of both Anderson’s classic treatise on the nation, Imagined Communities ([1983]1991), and the companion
volume, *The Spectre of Comparisons* (1998), Anderson sees ethnicity and nationalism as either/or propositions. One form of identification is located in the category of “unbound serialities” through which people imagine themselves to transcend traditional categories and share in a something like a national identity, allowing them freedom from the face-to-face or limited relationships of their immediate society. “Unbound serialities,” despite their ability to generate individual examples, are essentially derivations of the same form of participation in a conception of “empty, homogenous time” which Anderson views as fundamentally liberating. It is the bound serialities of governmentality – categories of classification that are codified in either/or formulations, where ethnic and religious identities find expression, according to Anderson. Anderson finds these categories inherently conflicting because they have no flexibility or contextuality (one is either a Christian or not, or Javanese, or not) – and qualitatively different than nationalism. (Chatterjee 1999:128).

Chatterjee’s main objection to Anderson’s categorization of these phenomena is his conflation of a utopian vision of “empty, homogenous time” as a universal form that has allowed the spread of nationalism worldwide. Although bound serialities like ethnicity can foster a sense of community as a result of the governmental processes of enumeration and quantification of individuals, identification with those identities is essentially ideological (ibid.,132). A conception of homogenous time in which nationalism finds its foundation therefore becomes a utopian concept in Chatterjee’s estimation, one in which people can “experience the simultaneity of the imagined collective life of the nation without imposing the rigid and arbitrary criteria of membership” (ibid.). As Chatterjee cogently argues, this conflates a utopian vision of shared conceptions with the reality of the heterotopia of modern life (ibid.,131). In Anderson’s estimation, nationalism as a form is somehow not contextually bound to the individual governments, political systems, economies and various conceptions of nationalism worldwide. As Chatterjee has argued at length, nationalism is also a contextually and historically bound form that is inhabited differently by people in different nations.

Chatterjee makes the case that religion can serve to foster a national community that has a foundationally different character than the nationalism found in the West. He argues for the heterogenous experience of time in the modern world
that is produced through religious perspectives. The industrial capitalists waiting to close a business deal until they hear from their astrologer, or the workers who wait for a machine to be religiously consecrated (Chatterjee 1999:132) are examples of the way that religion has interpolated the modern, capitalist world that is divided into nations. Much like the social scientific conception of Christianity (and religion in general) loses its specificity and historicity when viewed as a universal category of modern human life and becomes an either/or proposition, Anderson’s separation of nationalism from the particularistic identities like religion and ethnicity that are generated through it seems to drain the phenomena of all the possibilities of its various formulations, and perhaps of the very force which has made it such a common-sense mode of being in the modern world.14

What if nationalism in Indonesia is imagined precisely through the contextual, historical trajectories that provide the background for particularistic identities in the nation-state? What if religion provides the backdrop that allows groups with different experiences of time and history to participate in the national, and indeed fosters the maintenance of their difference? If, as Anderson claims, participation in nationalism as a modular form is conceived by identities imagined in “unbound seriality” through interaction with the ideology of print, does that seriality only occur in one homogenous form? Is it not affected by the particular forms of government, and historical contexts, which frame the combinations of those “bound” identities in particular ways?

14 Consider Charles Taylor’s view that modernity is secular not because the world has been purified of religion, but because religion occupies a different place in a social order that understands all human action as taking place in profane time (2004:194). Modern social imaginaries have their roots in the development of the 18th century public sphere, where people imagined that their face to face or “topical” assemblies (ibid., 86) were joined in larger and ever more impersonal “metatopical spaces” (ibid., 94) that were not conceived as part of a cosmological framework. The “unmediated, impersonal, egalitarian relations” (ibid., 156) that characterize the kind of simultaneous belonging that Anderson describes allows subjects a sense of democratic self mastery that must be mobilized into communal identities. Taylor therefore sees the prevalence of the link between national and religious identities not as the remnants of pre-modern association with religion, but part of the principle of modern societies that conceive of the nation as an expression of God’s design for the correct civilizational order. Indonesian nationalism seems a particularly apt example of this modern form, as the first founding principle of the national ideology Pancasila sets the non-denominational yet theistic tone of national belonging in terms of “Belief in one God” (Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa). The second principle then extends this religiously mobilized national identity into the maintenance of the civilizational order (Kemanusian yang adil dan beradab).
Minahasa again provides us with an example of the way in which religion might be central to participation in particular national frameworks, including the expression of particularistic identities structured through the national management of difference, like ethnicity. In fact, it was through religious identity that inhabitants of the colonial region of Minahasa came in contact with the kind of print media that would later allow them to imagine themselves as part of the Indonesian nation. Malay was the language of Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) and the government apparatus in the Dutch East Indies, and in the ethnolinguistically diverse region of colonial North Sulawesi, Malay was introduced as the language of instruction and worship in religious institutions. Some of the first printed materials in the archipelago were Malay translations of the Bible. Already a language that had an aura of prestige in the region as the lingua franca of trade (Maier 1993:45), it was preferred by indigenous peoples over regional dialects.

The Bible, and religiously-themed colonial era-newspapers, introduced those in the Minahasa region to the ‘unbound serialities’ of print ideology, and the epistemological assumptions that are conducive to imagining oneself as a national subject. That self was a religious one – and often entailed the imagination of others in the public sphere who participated in the reflexive circulation of discourse (Warner 2006:95) that referenced “the book” (Al-Kitab), and was addressed to Christians. Printed materials in Malay not only introduced inhabitants of North Sulawesi to the kind of print ideology that would later be commuted into the basis of Indonesian nationalism; it also evolved into the regional creole Bahasa Melayu Manado or Manado Melayu, eradicating linguistic boundaries between those inhabitants of North Sulawesi who had previously not conceived of themselves as a bounded unit. Malay language publications not only served to “create, construct and mobilize” (Taylor 2006:292) a Minahasan identity, it rooted Minahasan self-recognition, and the recognition of country-fellows, in Christianity.

The later development of the Indonesian national language from Malay reflected the premise that the appeal of the language rested in its neutrality; it was

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15 See Chapter Two for a description of the development and circulation of the Malay-language newspaper Tjahaya Siang.
not attached to any particular region or identity. The development of the idea of Indonesia was expressed in part through the development of the Indonesian language from this early Malay dialect, one that encapsulated the particular Indonesian archipelagic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious concept of the nation. For Minahasans, the link between the national character of the Indonesian language and their position as religious subjects is explicit – although a regional dialect is used throughout the North Sulawesi region today, Christian church services normally conducted in the national language. Just as Christianity cannot be viewed as separate from the development of a Minahasan identity, that identity cannot be extracted from the terms through which those in the North Sulawesi region see themselves as being part of Indonesia. For Minahasans, to be Indonesian is to be Christian – and Christianity still remains a distinct, if challenged, part of Minahasan identity.

Being a Christian in the Indonesian state also means being a minority, and here Anderson’s argument about nationalism’s relation to the technology of print media is lacking, neglecting to account for the inequalities masked through the assertion that the national public is a neutral space for representation. Although the public conceptually works as a neutral space for recognizing a shared commonality, in reality it also requires those speaking in the voice of the nation to reframe their aspirations in the terms of dominant discourse and forms of expression. A major point of inquiry that drives my analysis of current public frames of identity in North Sulawesi is how the relationship between the categories of religion and culture are publicly articulated and enacted as conceptually distinct in accordance with national categories, even when in practical and historical terms they are not, especially not for those who identify as Minahasan. This entails an analysis of the relationship between these two categories and how this relationship is publicly formulated.

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16 Webb Keane describes the Indonesian language as ideologically valuable due to its modern origins and perceived cosmopolitanism (2003:504), as well as the fact that it is a second language for most inhabitants of the archipelago, lending to the idea that it characterized the transparency and freedom that early modernists identified as the nature of the new Indonesia. Keane sees Indonesian as a “language that easily invites its speakers to take a view from afar” (ibid., 504) where in order to be sure that one is recognized, one “imagines the perspective of his most distant potential interlocuter” (ibid., 523).
expressed, exhibited and debated, and a theoretical orientation to how the recognition of identity in public is mediated and achieved.

*Representing difference in public: theories of recognition and identity in the public sphere*

Examining how Minahasa is constructed and represented in the national public requires us to analyze the particular historical development of nationalism in the Indonesian context, and the place of religion within it. It also requires an inquiry into the assumption that the state provides a transparent background (the public space) through which recognition is unproblematically achieved or transcended (Markell 2003:26). Crucial for this analysis is the critical examination of the way that nation-state systems promote understandings of identity as authoritative, static categories that belie identity’s processual nature, and how in setting the limits for the possible horizons of identification (ibid., 6) they make it easier for some to “frame their address in the universal discussion of the people” than others (Warner 2002:117). What I’m interested in exploring, through the documentation of the public performance and expression of identity in North Sulawesi, is the unintended consequences of borrowing the terms of the dominant address, and the effect they may have on who the Minahasans will be in the future.

Much of the politics of identity in modern nation-states are based in assumptions we make about how the public sphere functions, most famously outlined by Jurgen Habermas in his 1962 work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. For critical scholars, the problem with contemporary Habermasian theories about the public sphere (and the idea of the public, more generally) is located in the mistaken belief that rational-critical debate has the potential for emancipatory democratic participation and the representation of diverse interests and needs. As Michael Warner (1990) points out, the historical development of print subjectivity that allows people to “imagine” themselves as part of the nation,¹⁷ and the Republican-qua-liberal discourse, indicates another reality. For Warner, the public was never a liberalizing discourse because the constitutive

distinctions of the political community remained covert. The abstraction of print remained incapable of materially affecting lines of race and gender except in masked form (Warner 1990:40). Nancy Fraser similarly sees the continual erasure of unequal access as characterizing the liberal subjectivity, and in her estimation Habermas recognizes, but doesn’t fully follow, the implications of how a “discourse of publicity touting accessibility, rationality and the suspension of status hierarchies is employed as a strategy of distinction” (1997:74). Both Warner and Fraser make similar arguments about how specific, class-based theories of distinction were inextricably wound into the development of the “universal” discourses of representation in the public sphere. Warner sees these characteristics at odds in the late 18th century, when the literary form of the novel emerged, which was simultaneously a publication subject to diffusion through the terms of the print public, but also was a site of private imaginaries that could not be converged with the ideals of universality and publication (Warner 1990:149). The novel therefore heralded the possibility for some kinds of printed discourse to be definitively separated from the arena of public decision making, making it a private commodity of distinction (ibid.,151).

If the public sphere was actually a vehicle for distinction and a mode of subjectivity that controlled difference by erasing it, making it unrecognizable through claims of universal access and universalizing public discourse, what then did Habermas overlook in his history of the public sphere’s development? Fraser and Warner both point to the Habermasian conception of the public sphere as singular as singular and leading in large part to his misunderstanding of liberal ideology. In failing to recognize the existence of other public spheres, such as those including women, those structured around the “publicly private” space in black churches, etc., he both gives primacy to one public sphere as the only one in existence, and also overlooks the way these alternative public spheres existed in conflictual relationship with the dominant one (Fraser 1997:75). The recognition of multiple public spheres is central to both Fraser’s critique of Habermas, and her recommendations for how critical examination of liberal ideology can be useful in reconceptualizing the stakes of contemporary democratic systems.

Fraser underlines a number of assumptions that Habermas seems to accept at face value in his theorization of the public sphere, those that still have political
and social relevance in their application through liberal principles in the social welfare state. The first assumption Fraser finds issue with is that it is possible for those participating in public discourse to bracket status difference, so that social equality is not a necessary precondition of political democracy. This is perhaps the most egregious error in the view of Habermas critics, because according to Fraser, differences are not bracketed and inflect participation even when there are legal sanctions that prevent formal exclusions. Bourdieu’s ubiquitously applied theory of social capital (1984) might be particularly useful here to highlight the way in which Fraser points to social registers of distinction and difference that are embodied and entrenched in relations of public interaction. To this end, Fraser argues that the bourgeois public sphere was never a realm of “zero degree culture,” but a sphere with an unequally valued cultural style, one that subordinated social groups lacking in the material and cultural means of participation (Fraser 1997:79).

This is why Fraser also takes issue with the idea that a proliferation of publics is a step away from greater representation and democracy. The existence of one public sphere restricts disadvantaged interlocutors from having the means to articulate their needs through the functions of public discourse. Furthermore, this idea has historical precedent in that it has been historically advantageous for subordinated groups to create alternative or subaltern counterpublics (Fraser 1997:81). Warner also points to the primacy of understanding what he calls counterpublics, which he defines as “publics in tension with the larger public” (Warner 2002:50). The counterpublic is not a space made up of subalterns, but one that maintains an idea at some level of its subordination to the dominant public (ibid., 120). Habermas accepts the ideal of a unified public sphere, which Warner and Fraser both identify as an aspect of the ideology of the liberal sphere.

Fraser (1997:2) sees the development of counterpublics as essential to a better functioning democracy, because a plurality of competing publics better promotes participatory parity than a single, overarching public, in allowing subordinated groups a realm of deliberation beyond that of the dominant. Warner, however, sees an inherent danger in counterpublics being viewed as vehicles of emancipatory potential, because they are in some sense “damaged”. Counterpublics, in his opinion, cannot make their lifeworlds substitute for “the public” and frame their address in the universal discussion of people (Warner 2002:117). This limits
counterpublics in their ability to be socially and politically transformative, in that their discursive worlds are prevented from becoming part of a normative framework. Furthermore, when counterpublics are absorbed into “the public” being granted agency by the state through recognition as social movements, much of their politically transformative potential is neutralized (ibid., 124).

Although Habermas may have uncritically accepted the assumptions of a liberal subjectivity in his recommendations for renewing the democratic potential of the public sphere, Fraser’s conception of how publics should function in “actually existing democracy” may also fall short of radical departure from the core of liberal theories of difference and representation. In contradiction with Warner’s sense that alternative publics are limited in their ability to change the terms of the dominant social imaginary, Fraser believes that the inclusion of multiple publics in a sovereign parliamentary system with no preordained conception of the “social good” has the potential to create a strong, functioning public in which the needs of diverse groups can be represented. However, Warner and others seem suspicious of the public, or even diverse publics’, ability to deal with difference through democratic practice.

The problem with recognition and representation, whether in the social welfare state or a multicultural society, is that it posits universality and functional equality in much the same way that early Republican theories did – in claiming the possibility to participate in universality in such a way that the unequal access is rendered invisible. Multiple publics also do not address the problem by which one dominant public can more easily represent itself as the normative and the universal, which implies that other publics are “tolerated” and therefore continually marked as different in such a way that the difference has no potential to inflect the dominant ethos. Perhaps some of the strongest criticism of these functions come from scholars like Elizabeth Povinelli, who in her article “The State of Shame: Australian Multiculturalism and the Crisis of Indigenous Citizenship” (1998) attempts to show that contemporary nation-state models of multicultural difference have not displaced classic liberal models of citizenship, but have expanded them. Using an example of the social justice rulings in Australia that claim to redress aboriginal complaints of inequality, she points out that these rulings are another way for the state to manage difference in relation to, and alignment with, the dominant group’s normative ideology. This is achieved in a way that appears to represent the desires
and alternative identities of aboriginal people, but in reality allows the state to “expand its discriminatory powers to prohibit and (de)certify cultural difference as a rights- and resource-bearing identity” (1998: 582). Her point is that the state’s manner of “recognizing” different publics is a strategy to neutralize them, because “state apparatuses and public discourses continue to ground citizenship in abstract juridical identities, identifications and practices” and “once the state decertifies an individual or community, once it no longer recognizes the form of cultural difference they possess, these persons are “liberated” back into the community of abstract citizenship” (ibid.).

Similarly, the management of Indonesia’s diverse population relies on allowing the expression of difference only through approved and acceptable homogenized forms. While in theory this allows for difference to exist and be recognized, it also sets the definition for what difference is in the terms of the dominant ideology. This creates a centrifugal force, so that even when groups seek to establish their difference from the state to agitate for rights, they often return to the very forms for exhibiting difference that the state provides, limiting their potential for radical change. By characterizing difference on a non-hierarchical scale of interchangeable ethnicities, religions and regions that are reiterated in displays of the nation’s diverse character, the inequalities encoded in those differences are made irrelevant. It is an echo of liberalism’s claim that the public sphere is neutral because it brackets difference, only this time the argument is that all differences are equal, and equally recognizable, in the eyes of the nation. Muslims are not better than Christians, just different incarnations of the appropriate religious orientation of citizens. The Javanese are not better than the Papuans, just different facets of Indonesia’s dazzlingly diverse population.

The work that goes into fitting into these frames of difference is telling, in that it implies the importance of the organization of diversity for national participation, and how these categories set the terms for the construction of difference. Furthermore, the awareness that extra-local organization under certain categorical identities (like religion) can threaten the supposed neutrality of particularistic identifications within Indonesia, indicates that some publics are well aware of their position outside of the mainstream. How alternative publics filter their imagination of self through the circumscribed horizons available in the public
sphere, and seek to change those horizons via their co-optation of the dominant
discourse, has been the subject of a number of anthropological inquiries on identity
in Indonesia (Spyer 2000; Tsing 1993; Monnig-Atkinson 1983; Keane 1997).
Throughout this dissertation, I investigate the project of promoting Minahasa as an
ethnolocal identity with attention to how the management of religious diversity
structures the way minority religious groups seek to maintain a tie between religion
and regional identity without openly impugning the majority, through the voice of
the dominant public.

**Conclusion: Christianity and the making of Minahasa in the Indonesian public**

For groups who use a historical association with Christianity to mark the
border between themselves and other ethnic groups in the Indonesian nation-state,
national recognition of religious subjecthood is necessary for the continued ability of
Christians to constitute a particular and personal relationship to their faith,
through the alignment of an ethnic history with universal biblical narratives. For
Christian practitioners in North Sulawesi, the public that “gives form to the tension
between the general and particular” (Warner 2002:11) is the ethnolocal one. In that
public, a particularistic identity called Minahasa is mediated through the national
discourses on the proper relation and expression of the division between the domains
of religion and culture.

Christianity’s role in defining local identity in Indonesia, and theories of
selfhood that rely on concepts of place to define difference, are vulnerable to the
vicissitudes of political and ideological change at the national level, and more
concretely, to changes in state policy that reformulate the management of regional
populations and political structure. As Brubaker (2002:166) notes, ethnicity may be
not so much the question of the actual existence of groups but instead the invocation
of them through performance. Focusing on ethnicity as *practice* allows the analysis
of how Christianity as a set of living rituals, and as an evolving cultural system, is
employed through local categories, cultural idioms, and discourses surrounding the
public performance and enactment of the continuing processes of ethnicization,
nationalization, and the definition of the ethnolocal.
This is reflected in my methodological approach, one that views identity as a public phenomenon. Documentation of these kinds of performances and responses to them capture the processual nature of identity-making in public, where the stakes of recognition sets the boundaries for the definition, and redefinition, of who people are. As Michael Warner (2002:113) observes, publics are “inherently unstable…engines for social mutation” that “rely on performative pragmatics to vie for response which is never certain” (ibid., 115). This uncertainty stems from concepts of identity that rely on recognition as a “precondition for effective agency,” even when the promise of “equality in a world of mutual transparency” may be an impossible ideal for democratic societies (Markell 2003:3). The difficulty of locating agency in the politics of recognition is twofold: one, “it asks us to recognize who we already are despite our basic intersubjective vulnerability,” (ibid.,14) or in other words by insisting that we can control and solidify who we are, despite the fact that our identities are dynamic, dependent on context, and reliant on how others respond to us (ibid.,13).

Both the risk and the potential of asserting who one is in public through forms like nationalism and ethnicity, those “ready made-ways of resembling others so as to begin the process of becoming different from them” (Harrison 2006:51), is found in the potential for those modes of resemblance to function as proprietary. This means that their “outward symbols and markers are treated like property, and may be disputed as property” (ibid., 4). The symbols of Minahasan social identity circulated in public have the potential to retain the alignment between Christianity and local identity; however, they also run the risk of being co-opted or appropriated by other social actors (ibid., 148). In this case, Christian attempts to expand a Minahasan culture that is historically intertwined with Christian practices and narratives to fit the newly reconfigured province of North Sulawesi also opens the door for non-Christians to claim Minahasan identity through the ideal of “regional culture.” That ideal is anchored in the lived realities played out in physical proximity and cohabitation in one place in Indonesia. By using recordings of public events, circulating religious texts, publications regarding culture and religion, and documentation of political campaigns from a year of fieldwork in North Sulawesi’s capital city from 2009-2010, and subsequent analysis of media coverage of these events in newspapers, websites, and social networking sites from 2010 – 2011, I
have tried to demonstrate how these pragmatic actions that define, display and exhibit Minahasan identity in public “aim to specify the life world of their circulation” (Warner 2002:113-115) by addressing not just local, but national and international audiences.

This methodological approach also seeks to document narrations, responses and explanations that constitute metacultural (Urban 2001) understandings about what defines the difference between religion and culture as nationally distinct categories, influencing particularistic interpretations of identity at the regional level. Metaculture consists of judgements about whether new phenomena can be counted as a repetition of a previous cultural form or a deviation that can no longer fit within previously defined categories (ibid.,3). Interviews with religious leaders from regional organizations concerned with religious relations, religious practitioners from the largest Protestant denomination in the region, the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, GMIM), politicians and proponents of cultural revival were interpolated with and informed my analysis of public expressions and events. The reconfigured political structure in a decentralizing Indonesia has allowed culture and religion to move into new forums, and to be used in novel ways by actors. People now have new modes to politicize particular identities which are defined in reference to a national construction of how religion should relate to culture, and how national subject positions should relate to regional identity. During my field period, I had access to “official” instantiations of regional culture through my sponsoring host family, whose head now holds the position of mayor in Manado, the capital city of the North Sulawesi Province. This family’s continued support of my project as regional politicians, and active members of the GMIM constituency, speaks to the importance the project of defining and promoting Minahasan identity holds for local elites.

18 There are two versions of the denominational name for GMIM. The first, “Gereja Masehi Injili Minahasa” is translated by Aritonang and Steenbrink (2008) as “The Minahasan Evangelical Christian Church.” The second, “Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa” is commonly translated as “The Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa.” I have seen both versions used to identify GMIM-affiliated churches in Minahasa. According to a synopsis of a 2006 report published on the website of the Tim Puslitbang Kehidupan Beragama, the church officially changed its status in 1990 from a “local” church to a “plural” church to reflect growing membership outside of the Minahasa region. It was at this time that the preposition “in” was added to the church’s official name. Throughout this dissertation, when I use the second version, I am referring the contemporary incarnation of the church.
As the categories of religion and *adat* change through new pragmatic applications, or as changes in the relationships between nationally defined concepts of identity call into question how the concepts themselves are defined, structural roles tied to the national context of identity politics may be reproduced, and yet take on new meanings, out of a recently transformed pragmatic context (Sahlins 1985:125). Documenting the circulation of discourse about how religion relates to culture in the definition of regional identity displays how cultural change is mediated by metacultural narration. Urban’s concept of metaculture (2001:1–4), and Sahlins’ theory of cultural change, are related in their attempt to theorize how culture moves forward into the future. Sahlins focuses more on how pragmatic context, or the unexpected “structure of the conjuncture,” can shift the structural framework through which new phenomena are received and organized, thereby changing the structure as it moves forward temporally. Urban’s concept focuses more on the processes by which discursive circulation about culture – a sort of metanarrative of how certain concepts and relations should be categorized – accelerates the process of something becoming cultural by intensifying its circulation. Essentially, Sahlins’ theory outlines how historical accident can change the structure of a cultural system, and Urban’s concept of metaculture examines the reasoning and discursive methods through which novel occurrences can be connected with the past. Both theories describe some aspect of how ‘cultural continuity’ is achieved. Urban’s concept is more in line with other theories of publics that I employ throughout this dissertation, considering publics as spaces where people are united in a relationship of simultaneous attention.

Recognizing the importance of how national categories act as a framework through which Christian practitioners draw meaning allows for documentation of how references to the national scale contribute to the genesis of new forms of ethnolocality in a decentralizing Indonesia, where the very concept of Indonesia itself is perceived to be threatened by the centripetal forces of regionalism. This approach avoids analytically re-instantiating social scientific concepts of religion as universal, or simply as a form of internalized colonial domination. It is also analytically distinct from current Indonesian political configurations of the relationship between place, culture, and ethnicity that would appear to renaturalize anthropology’s own methodological and ontological emphases (Boellstorff 2002:18).
As religion is central to the public debate about what it means to be from North Sulawesi, and about regional expressions of culture and identity, it should be central to an analysis of ethnicity and nationalism in Indonesia, and to an analysis of nationalism as a modern form.

This dissertation unfolds as the story of how Minahasan identity, as a particular expression of Indonesianness, is facilitated and mediated in relation to religious subjecthood. In doing so, it rejects the notion that Minahasan identity is an embryonic nationalism. Instead, I propose that the story of Minahasa is one that cannot be removed from the context of Indonesian Christianity, or national politics and the definition of identity (whether regional, ethnic or religious) as a reactive process to the homogenizing forces of the modern nation-state system. In perceiving of Christianity as a dynamic “cultural system” that is not restricted to its association with the colonial era or colonial discipline, I borrow heavily from the literature on Christianity in Oceania (Armstrong 1990; Engelke and Tomlinson 2006; Gordon 1990; Kaplan 1990; Kirch and Sahlins 1992; Robbins 2004; Rutherford 2003; Scott 2005; White 1990). Instead of conceiving of Christianity as limiting, repressive, or a corrosive force that eats away at some perceived “core” of cultural differences, I see interpretations of Christian theology as modes that can elevate and elucidate expressions of difference through powerful universalizing frameworks. Therefore, I approach theorizing about “Minahasa” in all its incarnations by examining how, in contemporary Indonesia, Minahasans realize who they are by using religion to mobilize their identity, and to make themselves recognizable in the modern world.

The process of mobilizing Minahasan identity began in the construction of a place called Minahasa, in mapping both a history of the coming of Christianity and the effects of colonial intervention into land, livelihood and language onto a geographical location. “Place-making” refers both to the process of infusing a specific geography with shared meaning, and the way in which places can evolve into taken for granted realities through forms of political definition within the nation-state. The second chapter of this dissertation therefore considers the historical development of the concept of Minahasa both as a colonial possession and as an ethnolocality, through the management of people and territory. In particular, I’ll examine how the theological perspectives of the Dutch Protestant missionaries who engineered their version of the culture of Minahasa contributed to contemporary
concerns over where the line between culture and Christianity can be drawn. Considering the effects that these colonial-era relations had on the definition of Minahasan identity as the region took part in the Indonesian national revolution and found its place in the Indonesian nation, I'll describe how the implications of that history are significant in the contemporary politics of the region. The current redefinition of the North Sulawesi province under legislation for decentralization and regional autonomy will be linked to the historical role that religion played in the development of Minahasa as an ethnolocale.

To contextualize the connection between the regional public in which ideas about Minahasan identity circulate, and the national public, where regional difference is exhibited in homogenized, state-supported forms, Chapter Three will focus on how religious identity is portrayed in public performances and displays of Minahasan culture. In performances and discourses that address provincial, national and even international audiences, multi-religious frameworks exhibit religious identity in reference to national ideals about harmonious religious relations. Discourses of a shared regional culture that supports harmonious Muslim-Christian relations (*kerukunan beragama*) circulate in both Muslim and Christian communities in North Sulawesi, and are institutionally supported by regional and central governmental organizations that work towards the maintenance of religious harmony. Promoting the harmonious relationship between Muslims and Christians as a defining characteristic of the North Sulawesi province appeals to local Christian elites, as it maintains the visibility of Christian political aspirations in displays of contrastive difference with other provinces in the nation, and provides a political platform inclusive of a multi-religious constituency. Yet performances, touristic representations, and events that decontextualize traditional practices from their social and religious meaning to allow symbols of Minahasa to stand in for a diverse regional population also threaten to detach these practices from the Christian system of meaning through which they have historically been preserved and understood.

In Chapter Four, I'll examine the consequences of these performative and pragmatic separations of religion and culture through a public debate over a particularly potent, and ambiguous, symbol of Minahasan identity – the *manguni* bird. This debate explores how the nationwide revitalization of the concept of *adat*
contributes to the use of cultural identity as a vehicle for political and legal claims, one that relies on hegemonic configurations of the relationship between territory, tradition and heritage to define belonging. The discourse of the adat revival that echoes the primordialist claims of indigenous rights movements also exposes the tensions over locating authenticity in a past that has been irrevocably changed by colonial contact and the influence of Christianity. Looking at how the discourses of the adat revival can polarize parties over the division between religion and culture, I’ll also consider how these positions are related to regional politics under decentralization policies. I’ll also describe the political advantages of “siding” with culture through considering the role of the newly reformulated Brigade Manguni from a Christian organization into an officially registered civil organization representing regional adat.

Chapter Five will move into public spaces marked as “Christian” to examine how some Christian practitioners are finding methods to keep the link between Minahasan traditional practice and Christian meaning intact. This chapter will document the how the practice of contextual or “cultural” liturgy – using regional languages, pre-colonial cultural practices and performances as part of Christian liturgical practice – presents an alternative route to claiming cultural authority and authenticity through performance in the church environment. By denying that cultural practice can be objectified and cordoned off from religious meaning, Christian practitioners reframe religious practices as an aspect of local culture that is inseparable from religious meaning. However, issues of authenticity and cultural competency remain problematic for younger generations of Christians who have limited knowledge of the local languages emblematic of Minahasan culture and key to authoritative claims of cultural representation. By documenting the work of a group of GMIM Protestants who organize performances of cultural liturgy in the GMIM Lolah Church in Tombariri, I’ll demonstrate how cultural competency is achieved by employing a particularly Protestant language ideology, one that construes sincerity as the basis for an intimate relationship with local tradition. This chapter also considers the desires of practitioners in Lolah to see traditional practices that are recontextualized through Christian theology gain recognition for their village as a site on par with other cultural tourism attractions in Indonesia, and how including cultural elements in church ritual also becomes a platform for
exemplifying aspects of Minahasan Christianity that are worthy of recognition. The chapter also investigates how efforts to make an explicit link between Christianity and Minahasan cultural identity has resulted in ecumenical collaboration between the previously rivalrous relationship between Protestants and Catholics, but also how those collaborations expose theologically different understandings of culture’s relation to religious practice, a point of divergence that can mark other Christian denominations in the region as cultural outsiders.

The final ethnographic chapter will explore how the public reconsideration of the relationship between Minahasan identity and Christianity has created an opportunity for belonging, and identification, for non-Christian regional inhabitants. The circulation of discourses and the performances of Minahasan culture as an essentially multi-religious one are used by some Muslims as grounds for their inclusion. This is despite the fact that Muslim groups have historically been marked as ethnically different on the basis of their religious identity. This chapter will examine public displays of Minahasan-Muslim identity in the village of Remboken, an area in Central Minahasa renowned for its history of harmonious Muslim-Christian relations. Using life-history interviews with the family of a Muslim leader who trace their descent to the Gorontalo region (which separated from North Sulawesi province in the wake of decentralization processes in 2001), I’ll demonstrate some of the consocial frameworks of belonging that this Muslim community has used to secure their social position in the region for over a hundred years, and how those socially contextual modes of belonging are being linked to the officially-promoted discourses on religious harmony as a defining characteristic of Minahasan ethnolocality. Claims about Muslim Minahasan identity will be related to the context through which ethnoregional or ethnolocal identity has become a more common form of imagining participation in Indonesian nationalism.
CHAPTER 2

CHRISTIAN HISTORIES AND THE CREATION OF PLACE: THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE HISTORICAL DEFINITION OF MINAHASA

“A place belongs forever to whoever claims it hardest, remembers it most obsessively, wrenches it from itself, shapes it, renders it, loves it so radically that he remakes it in his own image.”

- Joan Didion

In 1999, the Indonesian government passed legislation decentralizing fiscal and political power from the central to regional governments, in a program that was aimed at supporting limited regional autonomy (otonomi daerah) across the country to maintain the integrity of the nation by granting a degree of autonomy to its diverse regions. This change granted more control to local-level governments across Indonesia, and opened the door to a proliferation of new political provinces and districts, spurring fears that Indonesian national unity would disintegrate into the ‘primordially’ based divisions that existed before the unification of the archipelago under Dutch rule. In reality, even regional communities that are seemingly organized under an overarching, shared ethnic identification are often the product of a long history of interaction between the various populations inhabiting a particular politically-defined territory, and the available frames through which difference can be constructed and exhibited. Political boundaries in Indonesia are not always isomorphic with either ethnic identifications or particular religious groups, although both of those categories can serve as a basis of identification for ethno-local identities which combine ethnicity and locality into a single concept (Boellstorff 2002:25).

Contained within the North Sulawesi province, Minahasa is a region commonly identified with Protestant Christianity and the colonial forces that carried it to the region in the early 1800s. This marks Christianity as both a unifying force for those identifying as Minahasan, and a symbol of their distinction against others. However, the resurgence of constructions of the local corresponding to self-governing, territorially-based communities united under the concept of traditional law, or adat, is beginning to challenge Christianity’s privileged tie with the Minahasan locality. Other nationalist frameworks for identity, including the
ideology of inter-religious harmony that structures social interaction in Indonesia’s post-1998 promotions of plural democracy, threaten to destabilize exclusivist constructions of religion and ‘local’ culture. The challenge to Christianity as an organizing principle for Minahasan identity is reflected in the emergence of some Muslim groups in North Sulawesi that have begun to use their connection to the region to claim that they are “Muslim Minahasans” (Chapter Six). Although Muslim groups have historically been marked as ethnically different on the basis of their religious identity, some Muslims in the region are utilizing the multi-religious nature of public performances of a multi-cultural North Sulawesi, and the ideology of regional religious harmony (*kerukunan* *beragama*), to claim a Minahasan identity (Chapter Three). It is a claim that challenges the historical narrative positioning Minahasa as inseparable from Christianity, and calls for a correspondent reinterpretation of how the region was shaped, and became recognizable, through colonial intervention and the influence of the Protestant mission in defining what should be understood to belong to the domain of local culture. This chapter will analyze the role that the adoption of Christianity played in evolution of Minahasa into a colonial territory and a territorially-based identity, and the implications of that interaction for the contemporary politics of identity in the region.

The development of Minahasa as a “place” was realized in the colonial encounter, an interaction that necessitated inhabitants in the northern territory of Sulawesi not just to recognize who they were, but who they were in relation to the moral and ontological concerns of Christianity.¹⁹ Those questions would guide the region’s transformation into an Indonesian ethnolocality, as Minahasans found themselves a place in the newly emerging nation. The narrative of a Christian history that continues to be of political and cultural import in contemporary North Sulawesi is instructive for its elisions and occlusions, and the way it structures a certain kind of belonging that is exclusive to those who identify as Christian. Giving Christianity an autochthonous aura automatically identifies non-Christians as others, reducing their role in the historical record to that of outsiders or migrants.

¹⁹ Aronintang and Steenbrink (2008:419) view the inseparability of Minahasa with Christianity as similar to the association of Muslim identity with Aceh and Minangkabau. Even this observation demonstrates that religion is a common characteristic in the conflation of place (like Aceh) and ethnicity (Minangkabau) as markers of identity.
This kind of historical memory nullifies the cosmopolitan and self-consciously constructed qualities that has allowed the idea of “Minahasa” to persist from its earliest colonial incarnation. As challenges to the association between Christianity and Minahasan ethnolocality seek to destabilize the idea of the local as something inherently Christian, history is unlocked to be reread for narratives of inclusion, and new collective imaginings that authenticate a multi-religious Minahasan community by recognizing its presence in the past.

In contemporary Indonesia, religion is always coupled with national belonging, as it is one of the requirements for citizenship. Even participation in global, transnational movements (like global Christianity) reifies the national form to some degree, as Gupta (1992:66) notes. Christian theology and the ideas behind Protestant conversion practices were part of the process that brought Minahasan ethnolocality into focus, even as it later served as a guarantor of national recognition that was shared with other co-religionists. This chapter will review the historical development of the Minahasan ethnolocality in relation to colonial and post-colonial concepts of the relation between place, identity, and the ontological division between religion and culture. The production of that division was based in interpretations of Protestant theology promoted by the Dutch Missionary Society employees who introduced Christianity to inhabitants of the region. By focusing on the historical processes of creating a category of identification attached to a particular locality, I do not intend to demonstrate its inauthenticity, or conversely that it is somehow more real than national identity. My goal is to understand, as Boellstorff’s theorization of the concept of ethnolocality encourages, why it has persisted as a foundational category through history.

Localities, regionality and religious identities: Minahasa in a decentralizing Indonesia

If the local can be theorized as a concept that has “no a priori spatial or social form, [it] can be any size and articulate with any other spatial and social categories” (Brown 2005:133), then a history of how Minahasa became a locality starts from where spatio-social relations begin to imbue a particular territory with meaning. Place-making begins by identifying a landscape as something (ibid., 9) through
grafting social relations onto geographical spaces, and in seeing that something as
emblematic of the self. Minahasan ethnolocality has evolved and shifted across time
to expand and align with the changing political and social realities that reshaped the
territory on the northern part of Sulawesi island with its meaning as a place.

In its current bureaucratic incarnation, Minahasa refers to an area located in
the northern part of Sulawesi island, which in geographic terms covers
approximately 90,000 km² (Henley 2005:13), with the main land mass comprised of
the northernmost peninsular arm stretching up through the Moluccas and Celebes
seas, and the shorter peninsular section to the southeast that forms the southern
border of the Gulf of Tomini.²⁰ Political divisions in 1964 reformulated the area from
an island-wide province into the provinces of North Sulawesi (Sulawesi Utara) and
Central Sulawesi (Sulawesi Tengah), with the southern terminal border of the North
Sulawesi province established east of Tolitoli. The four provincial districts and two
municipalities formed in 1964 represented post-colonial ethnic designations to some
degree, or at least reified toponyms that linked loose, overarching concepts of
identity based on language and kinship to particular territories. Religious identity
was of some significance to these divisions as well. The two municipalities that
formed the major administrative units also served as poles marking the spatial
organization of religious populations, with Manado representing the predominantly
Christian population to the north, and Gorontalo city centered to the south in an
historically Muslim-majority area (Jacobsen 2002a:9).

The spatial division of religious populations in North Sulawesi province was
part of the claims of difference made by Gorontalese politicians and elites to support
the creation of a separate province in 2001. Religion was not an isolated factor in
this decision, but served as one differentiating aspect of intra-regional ethnic
relations that were implicated in the political and economic functions of provincial
government. In 1998, the Minahasa district and surrounding areas (including the
municipality of Bitung created in 1990 and the provincial capital Manado) was the
dominant center of the province both in terms of population size, and in a political
sense as it served as the seat of the provincial government. The majority of

²⁰ I am using David Henley’s (2005:13) spatial qualifications to identify “northern Sulawesi”
although the areas south of Gorontalo are politically associated with the province of Central
Sulawesi according to Indonesian territorial divisions.
provincial politicians identified as ethnically Minahasan. Central government policies aimed at ‘leveling’ eastern Indonesia’s growth with the more developed western side of the archipelago earmarked the zone between Manado and Bitung as one of the 13 Integrated Economic Development Zones (IEDZ) identified for accelerated development (Jacobsen 2002a:7), further substantiating concerns about Minahasan political dominance in the province. The sense of political and economic disadvantage for inhabitants of the Gorontalo district was exacerbated by the re-structuralization of regional politics under decentralization policies, as was the case in a number of other regions throughout the country. This intensified the deployment of religion as one marker of ethnic difference between populations in the province.

Gorontalo’s split from the North Sulawesi province changed the religious demographics of the region, and reformulated the provincial borders along lines reminiscent of the colonial territory from which the name Minahasa took its original political-geographical import. In his extrapolation of the 2000 census from the Indonesian Demographic Statistics Center (Badan Pusat Statistik) data, Michael Jacobsen estimates that Gorontalo’s separation from the province tipped the relative parity between Muslim and Christian residents of pre-2001 North Sulawesi towards a predominantly Christian population. After 2001, the combined total of Catholics and Protestants was estimated to be at 69% across the sub-districts of Minahasa, Bolaang Mongondow, Sangir-Talaud and the cities of Manado and Bitung. (Jacobsen 2002a:13-14). This left Muslims in the minority in North Sulawesi, and transformed Gorontalo into an almost religiously homogenous province with 95% of the population identifying themselves as followers of Islam (Kosel 2010:299). Along with restoring an alignment between religion and ethnicity within the new provincial structures, Minahasa was returned to its status as the predominant ethnic identification in the territory north of the Wulur Mahatus mountains (Jacobsen 2002a:15). In 2006, five years after the Gorontalo province’s creation, ethnic tensions flared in reference to reconfigured provincial boundaries and concomitant economic

\[^{21}\text{Henley, Schouten and Ulaen (2007:320) identify the post-2001 North Sulawesi province as ‘solidly dominated’ by Sangirese and Minahasan Christians in relation to the southern sub-district of Bolaang-Mongondow that has a predominantly Muslim population. However, those identifying as Minahasan remain the majority in terms of regional politicians.}\]
transformations that highlighted Gorontalese Muslim itinerant merchants’ status as “outsiders” in the provincial capital of Manado (Swazey 2007:50). Families who trace their descent to Gorontalo traders who settled in Minahasa in the 1800s continue to be ascribed the status of immigrants, despite their identification as Minahasans by the qualifications of intermarriage and territorial association, as discussed in Chapter Six.

From the period of 2003 to 2007, three new sub-provincial incarnations of Minahasa were declared under the decentralization program (Kosel 2010:300). Politicizing Minahasan ethnicity challenges historical narratives that claim Christianity and Minahasanness cannot be dissociated. The truncation of the North Sulawesi province may have restored ethnic Minahasans to political and religious centrality in region, but the concept of Minahasa as a political unit fell victim to the centripetal forces of decentralization under which the districts (kabupaten) have direct access to resources from the central government, and the ability to bypass provincial control in the development of regionally-specific law. Coalescing around the newly empowered political unit of the kabupaten had the potential to concretize Minahasa as a political community based in a shared ethnic identification. Yet the process of agreeing on the conditions of membership in that community exposed how the concept of Minahasa acts as a shifting signifier, one that is most visible in contrastive relationships with other ethnolocalities that posit a certain relationship between territory and identity in Indonesian nation. As the public deployments of various concepts that seek to define Minahasa take on a greater degree of political import, certain taken for granted associations are opened to the risks of interaction in the public sphere. As actors seek authority by promoting specific relations between the past and the present that will determine the future parameters of recognition (Markell 2003:10), those who authoritatively claim to know what Minahasa is are caught up in the sudden visibility of the ongoing activities and processes that form an identity (ibid., 27).

The challenge of politically defining Minahasa has brought the processes of identity formation to the forefront, opening the door to competing and at times conflictual claims to authority within the region, as well as competition over the grounds of political validation. Since 2003, the District of Minahasa has split into several newly created districts (kabupaten) through a political phenomena known in Indonesian parlance as pemakaran, or the proliferation of districts under decentralization legislation. On February 25th, 2003, two new districts were formed from the district of Minahasa under Law 10 2003, making the highland city of Tomohon into a provincial city district, as well as differentiating the thirteen subdistricts (kecamatan) bordering the district of Bolang-Mongodow to the south as the South Minahasa district. This was followed later in 2003 by the creation of the district of North Minahasa (Minahasa Utara) and finally the creation of the Southeast Minahasan District (Minahasa Tenggara) in 2007. Anthropologist Paul Richard Renwarin notes that the post-2003 divisions reflected the main social groupings generally identified as the historical core of the territory called Minahasa, although the contemporary districts don’t correspond to original habitation patterns recorded during the colonial period (Renwarin 2006:12). Societal pressure is mounting to further carve the original Minahasa district into separate political entities which do not necessarily share any correspondence with pre-colonial spatial organizations. In some cases, these political aspirations are promoted in terms of contemporary constructions of ethnic relations predicated on kinship, regional language groups, and in many cases based on the ascription of administrative boundaries that differentiate those groups.

23 Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 10 Tahun 2003 Tentang Pembentukan Kabupaten Minahasa Selatan dan Kota Tomohon di Provinsi Sulawesi Utara.
24 Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 33 Tahun 2003 Tentang Pembentukan Kabupaten Minahasa Selatan di Provinsi Sulawesi Utara.
25 Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 9 Tahun 2007 Tentang Pembentukan Kabupaten Minahasa Tenggara di Propinsi Sulawesi Utara.
26 A push for the subdistricts of Tombariri, Pineleng and Tombulu to be officially recognized as a new district called West Minahasa (Minahasa Barat) has been undertaken by the Badan Musyawarah Pembentukan Kabupaten Minahasa (BMPKMB). As cited in an article in Harian Komentar on Monday November 9 2009, the group is composed of local adat and cultural figures, and is operating under a cultural organization called the Paheluman ‘Ne Tombulu, a phrase in Tombulu language referring to the three subdistricts of Tombariri, Pineleng and Tombulu. This is somewhat different than what Paul Richard Renwarin takes to be the subject of his study on the Tombulu, which he describes as originally referring to...
If social relations, including the boundaries of identity, have been differentially mapped onto the territory of North Sulawesi through time, the concept of Minahasa functioned as a link between society and territory, a “territorial frame” that organized shifting alliances and relationships. It allowed the original inhabitants of the region a form of agency, providing a political base from which to claim autochthonous rights under the ontological divisions that separated the world into natives and non-natives. It provided a framework for recognition that could persist even as the political and economic penetration of colonial powers sought to dismantle indigenous claims to authority through the physical and ideological disruption of existing social structures. The development of Minahasa exhibits the productive nature of the local as a flexible category that responds to the vagaries of history, even as it is relentlessly defended as a natural, unchanging relationship of origin to place that is affirmed through a temporal narrative. Contemporary challenges to the dominant narrative used to establish the parameters of recognition in Minahasa illuminate the possibility of other pasts, pasts that have been elided, repressed or ‘forgotten’ in the coupling of Minahasa with the development of Christian institutions and praxis in the region. The impulse to recast history is indicative of the ascendance of new frames for representation and recognition in the Indonesian public.

Society in place: early social formations and the roots of contemporary Minahasa

Originally governed from afar under the control of the Ternate Residency, Minahasa was first politically delineated when it was elevated to the status of a Residency in 1870 under Resident F.J.H van Denise (Renwarin 2006:11). The concept of Minahasa, however, had its roots in an earlier evolution of socio-cultural relations of interaction. Some of the earliest recordings of the spatio-social organization of original inhabitants in the region were taken by the Spanish, who had an intermittent presence in the region from the early to middle 17th century Tombulu speakers living around Mt. Lokon, and in contemporary estimation refers a group of around 150,000 people living in the town of Tomohon and its surrounding districts. Although a shared geography remains a touchstone for identity, Tombulu speakers living outside this area continue to identify as Tombulu through ties of language and kinship (Renwarin 2006:13).
Franciscan and Jesuit priests residing in the port settlement of Manado were relatively unsuccessful in gaining Catholic converts, but left behind a legacy of letters describing the lives of the highland peoples they sought to convert. In his analysis of colonial demographic data, David Henley (2005:121) describes the section of the current North Sulawesi province that came to be referred to as Minahasa to be a relatively densely inhabited highland region with a population of approximately 55,000 people in the year 1700. He notes that pre-colonial North Sulawesi exhibited the common Southeast Asian characteristic of having a populated hinterland and sparsely-settled coastlines (ibid., 103). Coastal trade facilitated political relationships that linked lowland communities with upland settlers, and the raja who controlled the coastal ports of Manado and Amurang possessed a limited authority over upland chiefs (ibid., 15). Henley theorizes that the twenty or so walaks or “spatial village units superimposed over kinship relations” (ibid., 14) under the suzerainty of the raja of Manado served as the principal social organization that also formulated relations of identity, at times stretching across upland and lowland settlements (ibid., 18). Minahasan anthropologist Paul Richard Renwarin (2006:97), however, points out the difficulty of equating the term walak with the concept of ethnicity, especially given its use in early colonial documents as an ascriptive political category. He sees the term pakasa’an (BT) as corresponding more closely to the modern concept of ethnicity, denoting a social group living within the same recognized territory, with a sense of common ancestry, speaking the same language and sharing common rituals (ibid., 61,95).

The concept of pakasa’an has roots in a cosmological system that ontologically organizes the world into four spatial quadrants, referencing a number of binary oppositions. It is a pattern that was repeated in pre-colonial classifications of spatial and social order (Renwarin 2006:46). Significantly, a group of three

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27 HB Palar cites the letters of Portuguese Missionaries Diego Magelhaens from Manado in 1563, and Pero Mascarenhas from Ternate in 1568, as some of the earliest missionary recordings of the highland population of region. Reports from a number of Italian Jesuit priests who lived in the area from 1617-1620 also provide early source material (Palar 2009a:21). Palar also sites two letters from Spanish missionaries Blas Palomino (1619) and Juan Yrano (1645) as providing data on settlement patterns, population, and the cultural and farming practices of the highland people (ibid., 22). See Hueken, Adolf S.J. "Catholic Converts in the Moluccas, Minahasa and Sangihe-Talaud." In A History of Christianity in Indonesia edited by Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink. Leiden and Boston Brill, 2008,pp 23-73 for a more complete documentation of the Catholic mission in North Sulawesi.
elements contained within each of the quadrant structures is reflected in the patternning of social relations between groups (ibid., 48-51). In this tripartite system, two elements in opposition are mediated and transformed by a third, often “outside” element (ibid., 59). This pattern is reflected in the ritual cosmology that united the Tombulu, Tonsea and Tontemboan\textsuperscript{28} pakasa’an as the tripartite ethnic core that would later be referred to as Minahasa. More importantly, it functioned as a cultural mechanism for interpolation and assimilation of outsider or immigrant groups,\textsuperscript{29} an indigenous justification for social change that colonial missionaries would theologize in their efforts to instill a sense of common identity between groups inhabiting the territory.

In Renwarin’s description, the pakasa’an represents a categorical mode of identification where membership is based on shared categorical attributes (Brubaker and Cooper 2000:15) and patterns that structure interaction and the persistence of difference (Barth 1969:16). Based on shared value orientations and an overarching system of classifications (ibid., 30), walak or the related term tou (BT, person) are intermediary terms that link categorical belonging with a relational mode of identification, structuring interaction through kinship and patterns of residence. The walak/tou distinction formulates relations in terms of a shared territory, and these spatial relations facilitate who is recognized as kin. Renwarin (2006:274) argues that the bilateral or cognatic kinship system in Minahasa makes genealogical ties relatively unimportant, and that cognatic descent groups are pragmatically restricted to those who share a locality. The terms katuari (BT) and

\textsuperscript{28} Although many contemporary historians list Tondano (or its earlier version, Tolour) as part of the ethnic core of Minahasa (for instance Wenas 2007:17), Henley recounts Nicolas Graafland’s description of the Tondano speakers as “the slaves of Tonsea” (1993:96) and his subsequent efforts to include the group in the mythological history of the region by portraying them as equals in the religious educational material he authored (ibid., 7) as proof that the Tondano group was excluded from the original tripartite that shared a related cosmological system and ritual practitioners.

\textsuperscript{29} Renwarin gives the example of the well-known myth of the Minahasan apical ancestors To’ar and Lumimu’ut, whose relationship is mediated by the priestess Karema. At various points in the myth Karema/Lumimu’ut are opposed as the autochtone and immigrant. Later Lumimu’ut and her son/husband occupy the same positions in the relation of binary opposition. Lumimu’ut loses her status as an immigrant through marriage, to Renwarin representing a larger regional theme of the domestication of outsiders through marriage (2006:49). The continued use of relations of marriage for reckoning belonging is discussed in Chapter Six.
basudara (BM) indicate descent from a common ancestor (ibid., 267) but since these can stretch to include distant relations and encompass more than one descent group, kin relationships are dependent on the unit of the household and on relationships of reciprocity (ibid., 268) within the co-residential village.

Renwarin (2006:99) characterizes the walak/tou distinction as reflecting Levi-Strauss’s theorization of “house societies,” where kinship is ultimately reducible to small domestic groupings and the structure of social relationships can be dependent on a number of shifting factors. Walak could refer to one village or related villages, but were distinguished by economic self-sufficiency and a sense of shared descent developed in co-residence (ibid., 97). In essence, kin-categories coalesced around reciprocal relations between people living within the same territory. Given the flexibility of this system, pre-colonial social life was characterized by patterns of fission and fusion, as smaller groups broke off from larger, more established constellations of residences to establish a new collectivity called a tou.31 Repeated incidents of warfare and competition between groups over borders and resources as recorded in colonial records also exemplified the dynamic nature of social life in the region at the advent of the colonial period.

Keane (2007:260) also highlights the importance of the “house” in contemporary Sumba as a “paradigmatic referent for cultural discourse.” He argues that although talk about the structure of traditional houses is presented as a description of an object that is separated from the metalinguistic signs that would identify it as a ritual performance, even the description of the house represents an entextualized form of ritual speech that objectifies the house by describing its physical dimensions as part of the cosmological order of the world. Renwarin (2006:103-106) demonstrates descriptions of the Minahasan traditional house that serve a similar function. The ability to use ritual speech without invoking ritual

30 The term katuari in Tombulu language refers to people who live in the same bounded territory and recognize themselves as kin. Similarly, the term basudara (siblings) is used to imply kinship based on proximity as well, such as in the regional slogan torang samua basudara (we are all brothers).
31 Renwarin (2006:55) points out that not all new ‘village’ settlements were referred to as tou despite their co-residence. Tou was a cooperative coalition of inhabitants of one area, a subgroup or sub-ethnic association that is usually coupled with reference to a particular territory (such as Tou Kakaskasen) (ibid., 97). He sees it as referring to a social grouping in comparison to spatial connotation of the term walak (ibid., 100). However, the terms were conflated in colonial usage and the term tou is rarely used in similar fashion today.
contexts stems, in Keane’s (2007:266) estimation, from the changes wrought by Christianity and the state’s ontological distinction between culture and religion. It is in the context of display or as a exegesis of cultural texts (ibid., 267) that the already extant abilities of ritual speech to displace objects from the intention of the speaker corresponds with the kind of portable, decontextualized symbol of culture that is promoted by the state (ibid., 257), particularly the way houses are used to exemplify ethnic and regional difference in Indonesian national representations. In Minahasa, the conceptual distance between houses as cultural objects decontextualized from everyday practice was intensified by the discontinuation of their use during the colonial period. Today, few live in traditional houses, and the majority of those built are created for the export economy, such as the rows of empty traditional “show houses” found in the Minahasan village of Woloan that can be disassembled and shipped anywhere in the world.\(^3^2\)

\textit{Walak, tou and pakasa’an} are terms that chart the fluctuating possibilities of identification for those who populated the inner, mountainous regions of North Sulawesi. Categories of identity based in spatial proximity also demonstrated the flexible range of relational frameworks. Kin categories could be restricted to the scale of the nuclear family, or stretch to encompass those who interacted within the same territory. Boundaries could shrink and expand as people traversed territory. In Renwarin’s (2006:4-5) estimation, this organizational system exemplified the core principles that united regional inhabitants culturally through cycles of social fission and fusion. Territorial frameworks could telescope kin relations to a wider scale without damaging the integrity of the more discrete, individualistic family units. It is a strategy that worked to contain the foundational, and contradictory social principles of \textit{matuari}, a publicly announced ideal of collectivity which posits equality through kinship or by fictive kinship based on habitation in the same spatial domain, and \textit{tona’as}, the concept of individuality maintained by way of competitions that can display personal prominence (ibid., 5-6).

As the criteria for inclusion in societal groups was dependent on contextual intra-group relations that could transform relational identifications into categorical ones, complex temporal anchors of identity such as genealogical networks, or even

\(^3^2\) Examples of these modular Minahasan houses can be viewed at http://rumahadatminahasa.blogspot.com/
discrete territorial boundaries, were not as significant as social interaction in solidifying group identity. The cosmological framework that united groups across the territory characterized the fractious relations between the groups as reflective of the natural workings of the universe. Competition characterized social and religious life, and was the engine that drove centripetal social tendencies. Schouten (1998:24) describes early society in the region as egalitarian and competitive, a system in which lack of inherited status elevated expression of certain virtues through achievements such as headhunting, ability to sponsor large-scale feasts called foso, and collection of material wealth through clothing and ornamentation. Hierarchical systems\(^3\) were fluid and bravery in warfare or the ability to demonstrate wealth through feasting or ritual accuracy could elevate an individual, regardless of gender, to the position of a leader. Personal attributes like courageousness, bravery and eloquence were the most valued, and were evidence of keter, the manifestation of supernatural powers in a living being (ibid., 25). The concept of keter fit within the religious ritual system as an expression of the personal achievements needed to obtain ritual perfection, locking ritual specialists of both sexes called walian (Burghoorn-Lunstrom 1981:69) and ritual technicians called tonaas in a system of competition that nonetheless involved them in shared aspects of cosmology. The ability to display characteristics that were evidence of keter through ritual feasting, warfare and headhunting were public expressions of the cultural complex that allowed groups to unite and divide according to context and practical need.

Despite having the potential to evolve into relational, temporally continuous identities based on the fictive kinship of co-residents, this fluid system of identification and belonging relied on the creation of conscious alliances for practical purposes related to land scarcity and defense. Fusion into a larger, cooperative unit was a strategy for achieving pragmatic goals even as they were interpreted within the cultural patterning of social relationships. The name Minahasa itself is attributed to a number of sources, but Renwarin sees it as originating from a term that is descriptive of social action. Used throughout Dutch colonial official J.F.G Reidel’s late 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century manuscript written from his post in Manado (Reidel 1870*

\(^3\) Although opportunity to ascend to power was not determined by birth, some historical sources note that hierarchical systems still existed and individuals whose descent was traced from slaves had less social mobility (Henley 1996:25).
cited in Renwarin 2006:52), Renwarin (2006:59) takes the phrase *se mahasa* as an active verb meaning “those who unify”, indicating an active process of group formation as well as the establishment of harmonious relations between inhabitants breaking off from a more established settlement. Unlike the oldest recorded name for the region, Malesung, that referenced topographical features such as the Wulur Mahatus range and the peaks of Lokon, Mahawu and Soputan mountains (ibid., 40), *se mahasa* was a social term that overlaid geographical markers. Conditional unity or migration from a central village was the active process of *se mahasa* through which new subgroups were formed. Warfare between the *walak* was resolved according to cultural proscriptions by the mediation of a third party that would transform the relation of the fighting parties and create a state of conditional unity known as *maesa*. It was this cultural solution for the cessation of warfare that was codified, and monumentalized, at the Stone of Division (Watu Pinawetengan) where the ontological categorization of upland inhabitants into two cosmologically distinct units was recorded as three groups who inscribed their shared borders in stone (Renwarin 2006:58, Palar 2009a:117). The less transitory nature of these *pakasa’an* identifications which organized various *tou* under inclusive territorial divisions is also attributed to unification against an outside force – the neighboring kingdom of Bolaang Mongondow. The Stone of Division was more aptly described as the inscription of the social organization of difference, and it persists as a sacred site.

34 Locating the foundations of group identity in a concept of social unity aligns with the Christian theological principle of brotherhood that missionaries would use to encourage the contrastive social groups in Minahasa to identify as one people sharing a territory. It’s difficult to say if these terms were historically understood to indicate a shared frame of identification, or if these attributions of a pre-Christian unity were developed as part of the contemporary readings of the past that are conversant with Christian perspectives on how Christian converts should conceive of their relationship with the past.

35 Renwarin cites two sources that use this name, J.G.F. Reidel’s 1870 Tombulu-language manuscript and Jasper (1916), as well as mention of the term from Wavoruntu’s 1892. Historian Jesse Wenas introduces his book on Minahasan history and culture with the phrase “Minahasa yang dulunya disebut Malesung” (2007:1). The term has resurfaced in contemporary parlance, especially within the *adat* or re-traditionalization movement in North Sulawesi (see Chapter Four).

36 Again, there is some debate over whether the fourth group, Tondano (sometimes also referred to as *Toumuara* Graafland 1898 I: 202,212 cited in Renwarin 2006:81) was recognized in a similar manner when the division was inscribed at the Stone of Division. In line with Henley, who considers the addition of the Tondano group to the mythology of Minahasan origins as a late addition, Renwarin (2006) and Palar (2009:59) claim that only three *pakasa’an* were present at the ritual, but Wenas (2007) lists the Tondano group as part
invested with the historical significance for contemporary Minahasan identity – an identity that contains far more diversity than the three ‘core’ Minahasan groups represented by fading scratches in stone.

That the term Minahasa, (or mineasa) makes its first appearance not in colonial ethnographic literature but in colonial government records in 1789 suggests the degree to which colonial bureaucratic intervention took part in transforming concepts of social organization and belonging into more static forms of identification. Referring to a council of local leaders called the landraad that convened to address internal disputes that concerned Netherlands East Indies bureaucracy in the region, the shift in linguistic form from se mahasa to mineasa is interpreted to indicate a coalition constructed in response to an outside force (Renwarin 2006:60). The attribution of the name Minahasa to the landraad council reflects how frames of identification remained social and not geographical. Minahasa was historicized in relation to a certain territory, but had yet to become a place. In fact, Henley (1996:36) points out that it was not until nearly forty years after the first record of the term that it was seen to be used as a geographic reference.

To locate the roots of Minahasa in the codification of the three pakasa’an – Tombulu, Tonsea and Tontemboan – at the event memorialized in stone leaves the evolution of other divisions unexplained. This idealized event also relies on the social memory of the region that has been reconstructed through colonial reports, oral histories, and under the influence of contemporary desires to prove Minahasa’s validity and authenticity with a temporal narrative that anchors the term to the past. The “ongoing production of cultural difference” (Li 2001a:41) between those associated with the southern region of Bolaang Mongondow and the region stretching upland from Manado today hinges in part on the unification of the walak against their southern enemies as a pivotal historical moment. The event is recognized in retrospect as a moment of inception where Minahasans recognized themselves by identifying who they were not. Unification against Bolaang Mongondow is discursively linked to the self-ascribed ethnic traits of bravery and an independent nature, bolstering the claim that Minahasans, unlike their neighbors,
were never conquered.\footnote{This claim also structures difference between Manadonese/Minahasans and those communities from the islands of Sangir-Talaud that were vassals of the sultanate of Ternate.} The contemporary impulse to historically encapsulate the processes of inclusion and exclusion elide the role of the Dutch East Indies company, and later the colonial state, in defining difference and confining it to a particular place, one method of distancing Minahasa from its association with Christianity.

*Rice and relationships – assimilation, immigration and trade*

The political relations that impacted the development of regional identities in peninsular North Sulawesi coalesced around the flow of goods between the various islands and regions of pre-colonial North Sulawesi, and the neighboring sultanate of Ternate. Relationships between upland and coastal societies in Sulawesi developed as lowland political leaders sought to control populations in efforts to monopolize trade, although interior groups often had their own complex motivations for engaging in relations with coastal powers (Li 2001:43). It was through trade that political leaders emerged (Henley 2005:40), and those who held the title of *raja* in pre-colonial Sulawesi sought control over hinterland populations through tribute or taxation, even as these efforts to consolidate power were often characterized by some degree of reciprocal relationships or through a system of ‘privileged exchange’ (ibid., 41).

Upland inhabitants in North Sulawesi benefited from the fertile soil in the region, and grew rice, a socially prestigious good, for export to the Moluccas as early as the beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century (ibid., 33). Those trade patterns were facilitated by a network of Chinese merchants who would settle more permanently in the coastal entrepot of Manado by the 1770s (ibid., 94). Rice tributes were also paid to the *raja* Loloda Mokoagoaw who claimed control over the ports of Manado and Amurang, which attracted both Spanish and Dutch interests. A Dutch vessel first loaded rice from the port in Manado in 1608, and the Spanish attempted to install a stronghold there in 1627 (ibid., 31). The displacement of the Spanish and the establishment of the Dutch fort in Manado in 1656 would mark the inception of colonial-era interventions that would transform the social relationships.
memorialized in stone at the Watu Pinawetengan into part of a territorially bound unit. Colonial powers engaged in diplomatic relations with Mokoagoaw in the early 1700s, but soon interrupted political and trade relations between the Alfurs, as they were referred to in colonial discourse, bypassing his authority to trade directly with the upland inhabitants (Ibid., 32). By 1679, the territory associated with the port of Manado was delineated through a treaty signed with upland leaders under the auspices of the Netherlands East Indies Company (henceforth referred to as the VOC) Governor of Moluccas Robert Padtbrugger. Renouncing their allegiance to the raja, upland leaders entered into a commitment to become vassals to the Company (Henley 1993:22, 2005:94). The raja’s territory was duly defined by this division, which restricted the reach of his rule to the area south of the natural river border which would henceforth mark the kingdom of Bolaang-Mongondow. The economic and political roles previously filled by the raja were coopted by the VOC, including the interruption of rice tributes by purchasing rice from the upland inhabitants (Watuseke and Henley 1994 359-61 cited in Henley 1996:21), and a rice tax that was instituted from 1792-1824 based on household units (Goldee Molsbergen 1928:155 cited in Henley 2005:100). This likely would have contributed to the shift in residence patterns from extended kin-based groups living in one house to individualized and mobile nuclear family units, as Renwarin (2006:127) describes.

The act of maesa memorialized at the Watu Pinawetengan site is retrospectively portrayed as the inception of Minahasan unity, defined in opposition to a recognizable outside force. This attributes an antecedent, primordial quality to the contemporary ethnic division between Minahasans and those from Bolaang Mongondow. The colonial territorial division that both separated and geographically defined the Landstreek Van Manado from the kingdom of Bolaang Mongondow is portrayed more as a recognition of pre-defined social divisions than the complex

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38 What is actually carved into the Stone of Division is a source of historical debate, even if it is locally accepted that the faded carvings visible on the stone’s surface represent the division of the tribes. Minahasan scholar Bert Supit has attempted to analyze the visible markings on the stone archaeologically and through reconstruction of historical mission sources on the subject in his 1986 book Minahasa dari Amanat Watu Pinawetengan sampai gelora Minawanua. Jakarta, Sinar Harapan. For an analysis of the contemporary uses of Watu Pinawetengan as a non-Christian ritual site, see Alexandra Kraatz, 2008 “From Human Sacrifice to Cigarettes and Coke,” Transformations in Sacrificial Practices, from Antiquity to Modern Times. Stavrianopoulou, E., A. Michaels and C. Ambos, eds. Berlin, Munster: LIT-Verlag, pp. 171-190.
convergence of interests that drew highland leaders into economic and political relations with the VOC. Those relations would define them as territorially rooted and culturally distinct from surrounding groups with which they had a shared a long, relational history. The imputed cultural distinction between upland and lowland communities was inscribed not just in history, but in the colonial treatment of Minahasans as distinct from other indigenous inhabitants of the archipelago and remains a pivotal point of reference in national memory about the region’s role in struggle for independence. For Minahasans, their special distinction in the colonial period remains a poignant counterpoint to their lack of centrality in contemporary Indonesian politics.

What the highland/coastal, governed/ungoverned dichotomy that distinguishes Minahasa from Bolaang Mongodow exemplifies is disconnection and difference, a political classificatory pattern utilized by states throughout Southeast Asia (Andaya 1993; Bronson 1977; Reid 1988; Scott 2009) and particularly in the scheme of Indonesian development and population management, as well as the management of diversity (Murray Li 2001a and 2001b; Tsing 1993; Hefner 1993; Atkinson 1983). What it renders invisible is interconnectedness, and the kind of shifting relational alliances that belie coastal/highland divisions. The ‘moral economy’ of kinship that limited the scope of trade (Henley 2005:36) would likely have expanded and shifted to encompass long-term patterns of contact, and the movement of people across a landscape that had no discrete borders. Regional historians have picked up the thread of these connections through oral histories that recount mythical stories of descent, linking the southern regions of Amurang and today’s Bolaang Mongondow with Minahasan sub-ethnic groups through ties of marriage or the immigration of an early ancestor. Early colonial documents also describe the movement of populations across porous borders, the very mobility that the VOC tried to counteract in their treaty with highland leaders. As Henley notes, the development of a unified highland identity is “thought to be attributed to an ancient alliance against Bolaang Mongondow, but historical evidence shows that Minahasan unity may not be older than the [colonial] institution of the Landstreek Van Manado” (1996:35).

If the establishment of colonial borders superimposed a grid over the landscape that became significant to the processes of social differentiation, and gave
identities a recognizable location, they added another layer to the palimpsest of already extant connections. It is not so much an erasure as a manner of marking certain kinds of identifications and relations as more recognizable than others. The inhabitants that fell within those borders were just as active in the elevation of certain categorizations over others as the outsiders who appear to have imposed them. The distinction between Bolaang Mongondow and the Dutch territory to the north marked a convergence of governmental processes that mark categorical identities over relational ones with a moment when those same types of self-recognition were pertinent for the inhabitants of the highland regions. As Tanya Murray Li notes, these historical confluences have a tendency to seem coordinated and predetermined in retrospect, obscuring their processual and temporal nature:

... power works in and through the production of differences inscribed in space and built up through time, as new layers form upon the old...when governing regimes and other powerful systems classify populations, impute boundaries, and in the case of the uplands, emphasize cultural difference and isolation, they are building on social classifications and moral cartographies that have deep histories and diverse roots. The occlusion of connections is not a mere oversight, but neither is it as simple as a coordinated plot (2001a:63).

The creation of borders neither prevented movement between the two regions, nor successfully interrupted connections of contact and the movement of goods. Although the sovereignty of the VOC from the northern tip of Amurang was not challenged by the Bolaang ruling complex in the years after 1661 (Henley 1996:41), Alfur chiefs continued trade rice with groups other than the company, and continuing warfare between walaks slowed production. The increased penetration of foreign powers seemed, in fact, to contribute to an escalation of violent warfare as walak leaders found new opportunities to exhibit their claims to leadership. In a reaffirmation of the treaty of 1679, the VOC sought to establish better control over the dynamics of the region in 1699 by prohibiting armed conflict and human sacrifice, and adding provisions allowing company officials to regulate individual communities (Henley 1996:42, Schouten 1998:41).

They did, however, provide a new frame of reference for the kinds of spatio-social units of identity that already organized the ebb and flow of human relationships among the inhabitants of peninsular North Sulawesi. Highlighting the
“publicly pronounced principle of unification” behind the act of establishing social unity or *maesa*, Renwarin (2006:9) theorizes that Minahasa – a shifting category of identity that continues to encompass a number of sub-ethnic groups in the region – was a concept that predated colonial intervention despite the name’s ascription to a specified territory resulting from colonial governance. The processes of colonial rule did not invent ‘Minahasa,’ but did introduce certain categorical identities that provided a standardized framework against which difference could be exhibited and fixed (Harrison 2006:49).
Figure 2.1: Map of the Minahasa territory emanating from the Manado Residency in 1853. P. Baron Melvil Van Carnbee, reprinted with permission of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT).
Figure 2.2. Map of Minahasa in 1921 showing Dutch administrative units. From Berwerkt Door Het Encyclopaedisch Bureau, reprinted with permission from the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT).
Situated against the productive border of colonial territory that terminated at the realm of Bolaang Mongondow, the social principle of *maesa* would culminate in a colonial incarnation called Minahasa. The name referred both to a socially enacted identification that posited cultural continuity amongst inhabitants, and their integration into the VOC's institutional framework, making Minahasa a place on the map. As pre-colonial social and political institutions were embedded within the company's network of economic interests in the region, the conditions for belonging would be transformed along with the sphere of interaction. Unlike earlier patterns of social consolidation, Minahasa would draw its primary definition not from interaction within a shared cosmological system, but through a structuring of interaction that highlighted cultural difference (Barth 1969) along the lines of the territorial borders that colonial powers used to designate categorical outsiders.

The territoriality of colonial governance made proximity a qualification for belonging that could outweigh the significance of ritual and relational interaction. Minahasa would no longer be restricted to the highlands, but become part of a wider and more diverse populace that fell within colonial borders. This would include the more southern areas of Tonsawang, Ratahan, Pasan and Ponosokan that were codified through a colonial bureaucratic scheme that divided the territory into 27 districts after 1809 (Henley 2005:94). Previously classified as immigrants, the intensification of colonial intervention in the region heralded by the Netherlands East Indies Company's transfer to the colonial state39 drew these 'outsiders' into the reformulation of pre-colonial society and economy in Minahasa.

It was the disruptive and widespread introduction of compulsory cultivation or *Cultuurstelsel* in 1822 that brought *walak* leaders and previous patterns of socio-political organization under a new regime of colonial economic and social control (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:420, Henley 1993:94). The policy was aimed at forcing cultivation of commercial crops like coffee, sugar, and indigo by integrating indigenous leadership into the bureaucratic system, providing *walak* leaders with a fixed percentage of total output for their districts in return for their enforcement of

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39 At the close of the British interregnum, what had been VOC land became the Dutch East Indies, territory of the Batavian Republic with a capital residing in Java. The British period ushered in new policies under the guidance of Sir Stanford Raffles, who pushed for the instantiation of village leaders into the colonial bureaucracy and the implementation of programs of *corvee* labor.
the agricultural policy (Henley 1996:39). It was not only patterns of leadership that were transformed by the ramifications of *Cultuurstelsel* policies. The intervention and surveillance necessary to institute such an overhaul required a reconfiguration of the landscape, one that worked in tandem with changes in the political and social system to replace indigenous spatial understandings with concepts that were aligned with the colonial state's. The attempt to “influence or control people, phenomena and relationships by asserting control over geographic area” (Winichakul 1994:16) was partially accomplished through the disturbance of indigenous spatial-temporal organization.\(^{40}\) Forced cultivation claimed the shared plots that signified communal relationships within individual *walaks* (Lundstrom-Burghoorn 1981:30), and *corvee* labor was used to install road systems that created new forms of access and control across the region. An earthquake in 1845 accelerated this process, creating an opportunity for the colonial governments to rebuild habitations modeled on the spatial uniformity of cities in the West, displacing the natural organization of the *walaks* around the “mother village” at the center (Schouten 1998:19) and replacing the houses raised on bamboo piles containing intergenerational households (Schouten 1998:20) with Dutch style-residences divided into individual plots (Henley 1996:40).

In colonial estimation, the coastal *entrepot* of Manado, where a Dutch fort had been established in 1656, was the territorial center from which official power emanated. It was the colonial focus on establishing control over trade that “first lifted Manado and it's surrounding regions from its aterritoriality” (Henley 1996:310). When used as a toponym, the term Minahasa replaced the colonial territorial moniker *Landraad Van Manado*.\(^{41}\) This shift did not distinguish relations between people and place, reflecting a governmentality that restricted peoples and their accompanying cultural features to particular territories. It was

\(^{40}\) By 1825 Dutch ordinance rendered the *walak* closed by forbidding movement between different *walak*, and by 1858 *walak* chiefs were given titles as native officials managing colonially-identified geographic territories. At the turn of the century, the 26 *walaks* originally identified by colonial authorities had been reformulate into 6 districts (Henley 1996: 38-40).

\(^{41}\) The Manado Residency created in 1824 contained some of the regions currently identified as administratively as part of Minahasa including Manado, Likupang, Tonsea, Tanawangko, Amurang and Belang. In 1870, Minahasa (including Manado and the surrounds) was reconfigured as a directly governed territory flanked by the territories of Sangir-Talaud to the North and Bolaang Mongondow to the South (Renwarin 2006:11).
also demonstrative of how pre-colonial social patterns associated with land and location were being absorbed and transformed according to colonial categorizations, recasting the multi-cultural Manado as part of Minahasa. This conflation of a social-cultural complex highland groups used to identify themselves, and the colonial territorial frame that found its foci in the lowland trading port continues to complicate contemporary identifications. Manado people (orang Manado) or Manadonese is a ethnonym often used interchangeably with the term orang Minahasa in discussions of comparative identity. The term Manado kaart or “Manado Card” refers to someone thought to be descended from people of the wider region but having grown up outside North Sulawesi, does not exhibit the linguistic or cultural qualities which function as markers of local belonging.

As a territorial identity, Minahasa contained the kind of diverse population associated with a center of trade. Chinese merchants, burgers or descendents of Indonesian/Dutch unions, and slaves from other parts of the archipelago were

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42 In North Sulawesi, the difference between Manado and Minahasa is usually equated to the difference between urban and rural dwellers, hearkening back to upland/lowland divisions. This is not to say that those who live in Manado aren’t able to identify as orang Minahasa, but this tends to be highlighted either to assert rural/urban associations or to indicate cultural affiliations. Renwarin (2006:11) points out that although Manado was bureaucratically separated from the Minahasa territory in 1911 becoming an onderafdeling (subdivision) that Minahasans continue to see Manado as part of their region. The term orang Manado or Manado is often used interchangeably with the term Minahasa when differentiating between the national and regional scale (ibid.,16).

43 I will not go into detail here about the ethno-racial divide between the Chinese and the Minahasans, which is tied to a much wider historical narrative about the role of Chinese immigrants during the colonial period and their subsequent integration into the Indonesian national community. See Suryadinata (2000 and 2004) for a description of Chinese ethnicity in the Indonesian state and Abalahin (2005) for a discussion of Chinese belonging and the nationalism of Confucianism. Michael Jacobsen (2006) provides a portrait of patterns of ethnic differentiation in his paper “Doing Business the Chinese Way? On Manadonese Chinese Entrepreneurship in North Sulawesi.” The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies (24). He highlights the role that religion plays in creating a basis for unity despite more complex inter-ethnic relations, and tensions, between the two groups (2006:80). Although I agree that Chineseness provides a frame of identification that is easily dissociated from regional identity, the long history of Chinese integration has led to less clearly demarcated boundaries between being Chinese and being Minahasan. The heads of my host family, for instance, both carry family names associated with Minahasan ethnic affiliation, but both celebrate and demonstrate their Chinese heritage, although not in a religious sense. I encountered several versions of a folk theory claiming that the mythical apical ancestor Lumimu’ut was really Mongolian princess who ran off course and landed on the shores of Manado. Most of these stories were told in private, however, as the institutionalized racism towards those with Chinese identity still exerts a powerful influence in public, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Four.
administratively part of the same place. The contemporary regional creole, Bahasa Manado (also called Melayu Manado or Manado Malay) that evolved in the cosmopolitan port environment today is one of the most visible markers of regional identity. A trading lingua franca containing vocabulary drawn from Dutch, Portuguese, Japanese, and Malay, it displays the kind of transnational connections that belie territorially rooted, regionally bound conceptions of culture that fit within the national rubric of compartmentalized cultural difference. Manado Malay is widely recognized as an indicator of localness, one based in the melding of diverse histories and trajectories of trade and movement that cannot be bound geographically. It is in this language that the tension between constructions of particularistic, pre-colonial characteristics that are used to bolster Minahasa’s claim to localized cultural authenticity are particularly problematized, as Minahasa developed as a place because of its global connections, not despite them (Brown 2005:241). The trouble with cosmopolitanism is that it is used to deny the kind of particularity that is central to compartmentalizing culture:

It is perhaps significant that the most obvious cultural marker of the Orang Manado as a group, the peculiar form of the Malay language known as Manado Malay, has no special connection with Minahasa. Derived from a Moluccan trade dialect still rich in Ternate vocabulary, Manado Malay has borrowed remarkably little from the Minahasan languages which it is still in the processes of displacing. Except in church, Manado Malay has also completely supplanted the more standard Malay once taught by the missionaries. In this respect, Minahasa seems to have been absorbed by its cultural environment rather than vice versa (Henley 1996:86).

The use of Bahasa Manado as a marker of ‘local identity’ exemplifies the tensions between the “local [as] a discourse that is used to map cultural particularity” (Brown 2005:133) onto place, and place as “particular articulations of social relations, including local relations ‘within’ the place and those that stretch beyond it...where specificity derives not from isolation or history but from precisely the absolute particularity of the mixture of influences found together” (Massey 1999:18 cited in Escobar 2001:164). Minahasa was, and continues to be, defined by relations that are extra-local, even as its locality is constantly being reasserted. The insistence that Minahasa takes its materiality and meaning only from the local scale can be seen as a strategy to articulate a place’s identity in political terms that presume a
particular organization of the “interplay between position, place and region” (Escobar 2001:152) and the hierarchy of scale. The concept of Minahasa would not be “absorbed,” but would endure these tensions by powerfully articulating with Christianity, allowing particularities to find expression in the radical, borderless universalism of Christian theology.

*Christianity as a relational difference*

I would argue that religion is a categorical identity that can both expand across spatial scales and mobilize people into new identities they voluntarily undertake (Taylor 2006:292). In North Sulawesi, this fostered the kind of relational associations that had previously evolved out of socially contingent alliances, that would function to set the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion in accordance with religious identity. The pivotal structural changes that began to transform indigenous society in North Sulawesi from a system of autonomous, competitive *walaks* united in evanescent social alliances into a more temporally contiguous and territorially rooted regional identity was facilitated by the introduction of a new ideological system rooted in the principles of Christianity. Far more than a foreign religion passively accepted under the imposition of colonial missionaries, Christianity provided new logics through which indigenous inhabitants could conceptualize their history, their emerging unified identity, and their place in the modern world amongst their European counterparts. Religion also acted as a force for cultural differentiation in a world where the most significant ontological division was the racial one between whites and non-whites (Boellstorff 2002:4), a division that Christianity was useful in contesting. Christian natives perceived of themselves as more closely aligned with their European counterparts, while simultaneously crystallizing the conditions of their difference from other indigenous groups. Christian institutions would provide opportunities for the exercise of status and leadership in new forms, but the equality imputed by inclusion in colonial government, religious educational opportunities, or access to languages that facilitated a connection to the foreign would also be minimized by religion’s link to cultural particularity, vivisecting colonial-controlled territory according to regionally-correspondent cultural difference.
The separation of the Landraad van Manado from the southern regions controlled by Raja Lokogoaw created a productive border against which the socio-spatial walak alliances could expand, and established at least the bureaucratic standardization of a delineated, shared territory. Internal differentiation and competition between the walak would continue to plague both missionaries and representatives of the Netherlands East Indies Company, who had their own diverse motivations for promoting cultural continuity as a basis for shared identification amongst the internally divisive groups. Although the famed alliance brokered at the Watu Pinawetengan may overemphasize the import of an ephemeral alliance against a common enemy, the distinction between the populations that remained under the power of Lola Mokoagow and those removed from his suzerainty by association with the Dutch was significant. The Bolaang Mongondow region, like areas to the north, had already been exposed to extensive foreign contact through trade, and was undergoing the first phases of modernization, along with the adoption of Christianity, beginning in the late 17th century. The successors of Lokogoaw identified themselves as Christian, although the influence of Muslim Bugis traders and adherents of Islam from the region of Gorontalo meant that Islam was also highly visible in the region (Kosel 2010:52).

In the early 1800s, excluded from the intensive colonial intervention to the north of the border that distinguished the colonial territory handed over to the Netherlands East Indies company by the landraad council in 1789, the missionary presence in the Bolaang Mongondow continued to diminish, and the Christian-identified raja Jacobus Manuel Manoppo was granted permission by the Dutch resident in Manado to convert to Islam (Kosel 2010:51). As Kosel (2010:54) notes in his historical reconstruction of the adoption of Islam in Bolaang Mongondow, the change from Christianity to Islam took place in a ‘rationalizing’ system where textual, world religions were already considered to be of a different order than local religions, and an awareness of the doctrinal and institutional qualifications that distinguished “real” religious adherents from “nominal” converts. The adoption of Islam rooted the raja’s attempt to maintain a sphere of authority in the colonial logic of restricting world religions’ translocal qualities by codifying religion as part of the

44The family name Manoppo is usually identified as a Minahasan family name in contemporary North Sulawesi.
‘customary law’ or adat that corresponded to locally-bounded regimes of cultural difference (Kipp and Rodgers 1987:4). Although the adoption of Islam was still ‘superficial,’ according to missionary reports (Kosel 2010:54) before the advent of more direct colonial rule (Henley 2005:104) in the early 1900s it was already deployed by local elites to establish the difference between their population and those under Dutch control to the north.45

Scholars of religion in Indonesia have theorized how the entanglement of colonial policies and the introduction of world religions along with other technologies of modernity often framed the adoption of world religions as an act of differentiation, identification and the establishment of authority (Aragon 2000; Bigalke 2005; Hefner 1993; Keane 2007; Monnig-Atkinson 1983; McVey 1995; Sidel 2006). Western and Minahasan scholars alike locate the roots of widespread Christian conversion across Minahasa in the arrival of missionaries J.G. Schwarz and J.F. Reidel from the Dutch Missionary Society (Nederlansche Zendelingen Genootschap) in 1831 (Watuseke 1985:3, Henley 1996:52, Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:419). Initial Protestant mission presence in the coastal villages around Manado under GJ Hellendoorn resulted in the establishment of twenty religious schools (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:421) serving an estimated 4,000 Christians who were primarily descendents of slaves brought into the area by the Dutch East Indies Company (Henley 1996:50). Mission penetration of the inner areas of the region did not occur until Joseph Kam sent German missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church Johann Freidrich Reidel and Johann Gottlob Schwarz to the highland regions of Tondano and Langowan (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:422). Up until that point, proselytizing efforts had found little success in the interior of the North Sulawesi. The visits of indigenous missionaries from Ambon and Maluku had intrigued some in the highlands with the possibility of ascendance to a higher status within the colonial system. Early missionaries, however, did not encourage nominal conversion and enforced strict parameters for the adoption of Christianity.46 Theological

45 It could also be used as an aspect of the identity in terms of intra-group competition. Although there are not many mass conversions recorded in the region, people in the Tonsea region converted to Christianity wholesale in order not to be outdone by the neighboring indigenous group (Henley 1996:53).

46 Steenbrink and Arintonang (2008:423) for example note the discrepancy between the number of baptisms recorded by Reidel and Schwarz and the much lower number who were
concerns about the sincerity of converts, and the concomitant implications about human agency that concept contained, would shape mission intervention and attitudes towards the existing ritual system in the region, as both Keane (2007) and Schrauwers (2000) have described in their studies of the impact of the Dutch Protestant Mission on convert populations in Eastern Indonesia.

The destruction of ritual objects and less theologically subtle methods of attracting people to join the ranks of those faithful to Christ were part of the mission repertoire, especially in the early days. Various techniques were employed to entice the communities to consider the gospel and the possibility of baptism. Although Reidel arrived to a population of two hundred converts in central highlands, he struggled to fill the church on Sundays and made little headway within the first year. Local historian Watuseke (1985:7) reports that Reidel and his wife enticed guests to stay and listen to the gospel by feeding them *kue*, Dutch pastries still served to guests in Minahasa today. Another missionary would station himself at sacred ritual sites and add his story to the nightly exchange of news between village heads that would arrive for their shift to protect the area (ibid., 8). Apocryphal tales like these demonstrate the inter-related nature of the colonial “civilizing” project with Christian imperatives to convert (Asad 1993; Comaroff 1997).

Christianity, as an aspect of colonial discipline, and a system that introduced ontological changes germane to the promotion of capitalist economic systems in colonial territories, finds expression not only in analysis of the activities of colonial Christian missions, but in the processes by which modernity, as a set of beliefs and practices, was promoted among the populations of colonized regions. The secular aspects of colonization were expressed through the logic of a civilizing mission that was intimately tied to Western Christian principles. As Jean and John Comaroff (1997:8) point out in the second of their three volume treatment of the British colonial-era lives of the Tswana people in Africa, mission and secular colonialism, or “conversion and civilization” were part of the same ideological system. Christian

allowed to participate in the Holy Suppers which had much stricter parameters for participation reflecting the theological concerns which at times put missionaries at odds with the civilizing mission of the Protestant Church of East Indies (Indische Kerk) after the transfer of mission to state control beginning in 1876.
beliefs and principles, as well as ritual practice, served as “vectors of the mundane” aspects of colonialism (Peel 2001:145).

Nonetheless, the “civilizing mission” of the colonial state, and the theological imperatives of the Dutch Protestant Mission strove to “preserve” culture⁴⁷, albeit through a radically transformed perspective that required traditional practices and cosmological categories to be evaluated in relation to Christian theology. As will be demonstrated in Chapter Five, denominationally-particular perspectives on the proper place of culture in Christian converts’ lives would have far-reaching consequences on what aspects, and in what way, cultural knowledge would be transmitted to future generations. In the case of Sulawesi, missionaries from the Netherlands transmitted the politico-theological division of society in the metropole between Protestants and Catholics to the mission field (Schrauwers 1998:211). In his ethnographic investigation of mission’s effect on the development of the To Pomona ethnic identity in Central Sulawesi, Albert Schrauwers (1998:210) claims the contemporary modes of state and church-promoted forms of ethnic representation that began in the colonial period. He uses the case of Alfred Kruyt’s mission in Central Sulawesi to demonstrate how the theological concept of a volkskerk structured mission methodology that sought to institute “indigenous” Christianities, which on some level converged with the Netherlands East Indies policies of governance under the Ethical Policy⁴⁸ introduced in 1901 (Schrauwers 2000:10). However, he points out that the Protestant mission’s interest in studying culture sociologically to “inculturate” non-Christians in such a way that cultural communities did not lose their distinctive ethos (ibid., 217) also reflected the

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⁴⁷Keane notes that both Kruyt, as well as his colleague Niclaus Adriani, and G.A. Wilken (who worked in Minahasa) were strongly influenced by Tylor’s writings on primitive religion and animism in Primitive Culture (1864). Kruyt’s approach to conversion was that it should be a gradual process, maintaining the spirit of a given community, and therefore required ethnographic knowledge of their pre-Christian belief system. Kruyt and Adriani produced ethnographies of different peoples of Sulawesi, as well as language materials that became part of the NZG mission field training (Keane 2007:98).

⁴⁸A backlash against the colonial legacy in the Indies spurred the introduction of the Ethical Policy, officially endorsed by Queen Wilhelmina in 1901 with its policies of education, irrigation and emigration subsidized by the Netherlands government (Rickleffs 2001:194). The Indies was reconceptualized as a potential market, and economic investments shifted to islands outside of the colonial center in Java with the development of oil and rubber industry (ibid., 197). Educational programs instituted at the village level under the auspices of the Ethical Policy also exposed the greater population to incipient nationalist ideals (Andaya 2005).
emancipatory politics of churches in the Netherlands (ibid., 212). Keane’s (2007:25) work on the Sumbanese Christian Church also shows the role that Protestant theology played in modernity’s spread through the work of “purification” that defines proper subjects and the limits of human agency. In this sense missionaries and their intended converts may be seen as co-evals who are involved in a process of trying to sort out the same kinds of semiotic issues, a convergence that at times allied them against forms of authority like the colonial state (ibid., 33).

Like Kruyt, missionaries from the Dutch Missionary Society in Minahasa were not just concerned with gaining converts, but with establishing the roots of an indigenous Christianity. Collecting descriptive ethnographic accounts and developing fluency in local languages were part of the mission methodology. Nicolaas Graafland, an assistant minister who established a mission school in Tanawangko in 1854, meticulously recorded his observations of Minahasan culture and society in his ethnographic work Minahasa Now and Then published in 1869,49 and both Reidel and Schwarz collected ethnographic material and labored to attain fluency in regional languages as part of their mission duties. Although used to secure conversion, the application of certain Protestant principles that promoted the interpolation of traditional histories with biblical history, and the promotion of aspects of indigenous religious beliefs through Christian teachings, was motivated by particularly Protestant concerns with the moral implications tied to their concept of human agency. The cultivation of “traditional” practices in theological perspective, such as life-cycle rituals that could be performed as long as they were sacralized through the use of Protestant liturgy (Schouten 1998:110), reflected these pastoral concerns even as they overlapped with the imperatives of the colonial state.50 In tandem with the absorption of indigenous elements into theological pedagogy, missionaries endeavored to offer a new vision of unity to indigenous inhabitants that utilized the concept of Christian brotherhood as the principle of a social unity that would overcome tribal factions. Nicolaas Graafland is credited with reconfiguring

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49 The original Dutch title is “De Minahassa: har verleden en haar tegenwoordige toestand” published in Batavia in 1898. Two subsequent Indonesian version have been published, and the translation I use here is drawn from the first Indonesian version published in 1987 “Minahasa Masa Lalu dan Masa Kini” translated by Yoost Kullit.

50 For instance, the prohibitions against slavery and headhunting were areas where pastoral moral concerns and practical overlapped and in some cases.
the origin myth of Tu’ur in Tana’ where Lumimuut divided her people into four quadrants. He inserted the Tondano-speaking group into the story as the inhabitants of the fourth quadrant, refuting their external status in the original “ethnic” tripartite of Tonsea, Tombulu and Tontemboan speakers (Henley 1996:55).

This is not to imply that the colonizers, or missionaries, shared the same motivations in their efforts to promote new ways of understanding human life. The convergence of momentous structural and political changes with the introduction of Western ideological systems like Christianity made the adoption of new systems of belief a function of colonial power. Yet the world of the colonizers was also heterogeneous, and missionaries especially were influenced by contact with the metropole and the theological centers of their homeland, which were tied to the wax and wane of the economic success of colonial endeavors. When the Dutch Mission Society began to relinquish control of the mission field to the state-controlled Protestant Church of the East Indies (Indische Kerk) in the 1870s, individual missionaries and pastorates were increasingly institutionalized within the colonial state. Theological divergences between former NZG employees and the state church’s liberal mandate would lead some to seek an abeyance from the integration process (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:427). These dialectal relations between religious organizations and the state influence the relationship of missionaries with their intended converts as has been noted by scholars who focus on the metropole’s influence on relations between colonizer and colonized (Stoler 2002; Merry 2003; Kipp 2004). It also placed all matters of institutional authority over the mission field in the hands of officials of the Residency of Manado, who were not necessarily oriented to religious concerns (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:424). Changes in authority highlighted important points of philosophical divergence between those formerly in the employ of the Dutch Mission Society and the policies of the Protestant Church of the East Indies.

The more secular aims of the Manado Residency’s management would signal a major shift in the tenor of the role of religious institutions in the region, especially in relation to education. Pastoral concerns about the establishment of a Christianity that embodied Protestant understandings about the role of human agency in models of religious belief were linked to the ‘ethnographic’ approach of missionaries like Reidel and Graafland. Efforts to develop religious pedagogical material and biblical
translations in local languages reflected a semiotic ideology that makes certain assumptions about the importance of intentions in communicating interior states through the medium of language (Keane 2002:73). Although Malay was the language of instruction for mission schools, NZG missionaries were in the process of developing a Minahasan standard language that would differ from the Malay creole of the coastal areas, and used local languages in the translation of hymns and the revisions of local myths to align with Christian narratives. Indische Kerk policy, however, would hinder this aspect of ‘indigenization’ by requiring a standardized application of Malay, not only in schools, but in church activities as well (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:424).

Malay would serve not only as the language of official culture, but of also of the formal aspects of Christianity. Some of the first printed materials in the archipelago were Malay translations of the Bible. Already a language that had an aura of prestige in the region as the lingua franca of trade (Maier 1993:45), local inhabitants saw it as having higher status than regional dialects. It was Malay, and not local languages, that would serve as the vehicle through which an explicit connection was made between Christian values and the print ideology. As described by Ahmat Adam in his book The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1995), Christian periodicals predominated the Indies vernacular press in the first half of the 19th century. Missionaries in several parts of the Indies utilized the emerging print industry as a tool for circulating stories concerned with Christian morality and codes of behavior, as well as for proselytization. In 1867, clergyman John Muhleisen Arnold created a four-page missionary weekly called Biang-Lala from the English Chapel and Seminary at Depok, for which he served as the editor (Adam 1995:29). Several other Malay-language publications were soon established, including a second missionary paper printed by Graafland in Tondano on a printing press shipped from Governor of the Mission Society (ibid., 28). Tjehaya Siang (The Light of Day) began monthly publication in 1868, headed by Graafland and staffed by indigenous pastors and graduates of the mission school system (Rochelle 2009:82). The only publication in Minahasa for several generations, the periodical covered international news and contained a supplementary pullout featuring religious articles. The readership for this periodical was centered in urban areas among the literate elite, but also
circulated in highland villages where there were mission posts (Adam 1995:29) through public recitations that would have addressed both urban and rural Minahasan communities (Schouten 1998:113).

The intimate relationship between Christianity and education in the North Sulawesi region that began with the establishment of schools for the Christian population of the coastal region under GJ Hellendorn around 1830 would also be affected by changes in colonial management. The NZG mission in Minahasa had established 56 schools by 1839. Complementing the religious instruction of these institutions was the sistim murid (student system), originally practiced by missionaries like Riedel as a means of converting reticent parents via their offspring. Children of the developing indigenous elite were taken into missionary households for the purpose of “familiarizing them with discipline and rules,” given Western-style clothes, and groomed to become either supportive wives for indigenous Christian men or for missionaries (Watuseke 1985:7-8). This process succeeded in familiarizing the next generation with Christianity and the ideals espoused by missionaries. It also advanced the idea that education was an avenue to material gain and increased status in the realm of colonial power and indigenous social hierarchy alike.

Furthermore, the mission classroom was an incubator for imagining Minahasa as it was taking shape, molded by the missionary impetus to impart a version of history that stressed a latent regional unity and a primordial monotheism. At these institutions there was little differentiation between education and religion. Churches and schools shared space (Henley 1996:57) and materials were pointedly Christian: bibles were used as reading material and classrooms adorned with maps of the Holy Land (Schouten 1998:112). Other pedagogical materials were tailored to advancing the goal of a unified indigenous identity. The only geography lesson explicitly taught in NZG primary level schools was the geography of Minahasa, and Graafland provided students with lists enumerating every village in the region (Henley 1996:59). In this way the school was an instrument of the quantification and enumeration of incipient citizens. It also contributed to the infusion of Minahasan identity with religious import. Reading material was sought for mission schools that would educate natives morally as well as position Minahasan history along with information on other biblically significant regions like Phoenicia and Babylon (Adam
The interpolation of Minahasan history within the narration of a larger biblical history would support the development of a special association Minahasan Christians posit with the nation of Israel.

An increase in government schools that were religiously neutral, however, would open up other avenues for prestige and create a distinction between religious and secular education, which combined with a top-down model for ministries, would complicate the intentions of establishing the sort of independent, indigenous Christian church in the region that NZG missionaries imagined. The status of the mission schools were undermined by the introduction of government schools around the time of the transfer of the mission to the Indische Kerk. Eligible for government subsidies, the schools provided a better salary for teachers, and began to replace the mission educational system as the doorway to obtaining government titles (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:426). Educational opportunities provided by the newly erected state schools in 1882 were seen as a way to avoid an agrarian lifestyle and ascend to a white-collar position. School was also a means to learn Dutch, which was quickly becoming the new preferred language of the elite (Schouten 1998:190). Missionary schools fell out of favor and government positions became a coveted means for advancement and social status. Entrance into the government system certainly provided more upward mobility than work under the auspices of the church, that was headed by an ordained European minister who served in Manado and 10 assistant ministers, also predominantly of European origin. Only positions below that level were available for native Christians, who could serve as assistant teachers of religion (Pendeta Pribumi, BI) or village teachers (Guru Jemaat, BI) (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:426). Assistant teachers were the only ones eligible for government salaries. This division between

51 The association between education, and the goals of the civilizing mission of colonial management of the Indies, were commuted into the ideology of “development” (pembangunan) after the advent of Indonesian Independence. Religion and education continued to be closely linked (Hefner 2000; Jones 1976) in the new Indonesian nation. The religious education of Indonesian citizens was integrated into the compulsory public education system as part of the expression of the first principle of the national ideology of Pancasila, and Sam Ratulangi, a Minahasan intellectual involved the early years of the Indonesian national revolution, was enshrined as a national hero because of his promotion of equal access to education.

52 Although initially a position restricted to Europeans, Aritonang and Steenbrink record that by 1934 there were three native assistant pastors who had received theological education in the Netherlands (2008:426).
native and European Christians contributed to the development of local identity, that as Boellstorff (2002:27) points out, is an expression not just of scale of but of the racial divide, and categorical opposition, between colonizer and colonized.

By 1880, almost 90% of the population of the colonial territory of Minahasa had converted to Protestant Christianity. Motives for conversion were complex, and reflected indigenous concerns with status and power, mission goals and interpretations of the function of conversion, as well as structural changes that impacted how indigenous society structured their social relations and the qualifications for belonging. Colonial penetration had irrevocably changed the social and political structures of society and literally re-mapped the lay of the land. Embracing Christianity and other colonial practices became a strategy to maintain cultural traditions and indigenous claims to power in a radically changed, and newly re-imagined, territory. It also promoted a social unity tied to a particular geography, making Minahasa not just a colonial possession but a place where bureaucratic borders converged with the stretch of a Protestant religious identity. It was the very denial of the kinds of universal claims of equality made by Christianity, and the cosmopolitan forces that created Minahasa via influences that were not contained by territorial bounds, that would push native Christians to question colonial authority through the terms it had established.

*Place, religion and racial divides: Minahasa moves towards a place in the nation of Indonesia*

With the cultivation of an indigenously-based Christianity interrupted by internal divisions in church policy with the shift to the Indische Kerk, the advent of the 20th century would see both new denominations make inroads into the region, and a growing basis of commonality between the incipient nationalist movement and native Christians. Both groups were touched by an awareness of the limitations of their position as colonial sub-altern elites. The emergence of a Minahasan elite was supported from 1850 onwards both by missionary institutions and the apparatus of the colonial state, but these two avenues of status would also come into conflict in ways that exposed the ceiling of advancement for natives of the archipelago, and even the Minahasans who were promoted above their Javanese counterparts in the
colonial bureaucracy. As the Netherlands government increased its institutional presence in the region and recruited the chiefly elite and their descendents into bureaucratic positions, two categories were delineated: those of chiefly or aristocratic descent (hereafter bangsa), and those consisting of teachers and missionary assistants whose status was not based in heredity (Schouten 1998:121). The development of the bangsa was supported by state schools such as the School for Chiefs (Hoofdenschool) which opened in 1865 (Watuske 1985:26), and the appointment of chiefs to regional bureaucratic positions such as the District Head (Hukum Besar). The NZG continued its policy of training missionary assistants, who often doubled as local teachers, with the establishment of a college in Tomohon in 1868, and a teacher training school established by Graafland in 1851 (Schouten 1996:115). The missionary trained intellectual elite faced an uphill battle in establishing themselves both financially and socially – they were paid less than colleagues at the state run schools, and were often perceived by the bangsa as competition in the villages where they were stationed (ibid., 116).

As a stronger sense of regional pride and the allure of cosmopolitanism pervaded the region, Minahasans outside of the elite strata also became frustrated with their inability to secure either position or status through education and government employment. For those who could not break into the elite strata, a new viable option appeared: enlistment with the Royal Army of the Netherlands East Indies (hereafter KNIL), which provided opportunity for travel and mid-level positions above other natives of the archipelago. Enlistment with the military also exempted one from taxes and corvee labor on return to Minahasa, an added bonus to the increased status attached someone who had traveled and worked in foreign areas with the Dutch (Schouten 1998:124).

Employment outside of Minahasa became commonplace, as the Dutch relied on the educated and literate Minahasans to fill positions in other areas of the Netherlands Indies. Due to the intensity of colonial contact in the region, those in Minahasa were more educated than other indigenous residents of the archipelago by the twentieth century, and by 1930, it is estimated one out of every eight Minahasans lived outside the homeland, often in positions of relative prestige as agricultural overseers, government clerks, high ranking soldiers, missionary assistants, and teachers (Henley 1996:81). Minahasans’ awareness of their elevated
position, and education vis-à-vis other native groups in the archipelago, combined with the colonial perception of the region as “civilized,” created a bourgeoning ethnocentrism, sharpening the sense that Minahasans should be considered equal to their European counterparts. Individual elites had long struggled to obtain equal status in both religious and governmental institutions, even going as far as to find private financiers to support their education in the Netherlands when they were denied these privileges in the colony\textsuperscript{53} (Watuseke 1985:11). In the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, those struggles had been fruitful as Minahasans secured a position as a sub-altern colonial elite and were rewarded with more concrete political privileges.

Travel and contact with other colonial subjects fed the growing awareness that the Ethical Policy would never grant any kind of lasting equality for inhabitants across the Dutch-controlled archipelago, and yet simultaneously made frames of ethnolocality that linked identity with territorial divisions, and the divided members of the incipient nationalist movement, more visible. There is evidence that the concept of Indonesia and place-based identities developed in tandem, and that religion was a key aspect of these formations. Theorizing the “idea of Indonesia”, R. E. Elson highlights the observations of colonial Christian scholar Snouck Hugronje on Muslim pilgrims from Indonesia who traveled to Mecca in the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Their exposure to a global Islamic ecumene exposed them to their similarities both religiously and culturally. Yet as Hugronje’s writings show, this incipient awareness of a shared homeland was filtered by an already extant sense of regional belonging, where Acehnese pilgrims in the diaspora enquired of the Javanese Muslims for news of developments in their homeland (Elson 2008:9). For Minahasans in the employ of the colonial army, religion would serve as an important factor in the embodiment of institutionalized racism that led Minahasans to hold themselves above other colonial subjects, creating the Minahasa Association (\textit{Periserikatan Minahasa}) at a military base in Java in 1909 (Henley 1993:102). The organization would be central in appeals for recognition of equality that was based in an ethnolocal\textsuperscript{54} identity:

\textsuperscript{53} Here Watuseke is referring to Lambertus Mangindaan, the first indigenous missionary in Minahasa. Although he graduated from an NZG religious college in the Netherlands, NZG officials refused to recognize him as an equal upon his return to Sulawesi. He eventually deserted his attempt at a religious career and began teaching at the \textit{Hofdenschool} in 1881.

\textsuperscript{54} Henley notes that the threat of the abolition of Minahan’s special colonial status in 1919 spurred soldiers to petition for legal equalization (\textit{gelijksteling}) which they saw not as
Minahasan solidarity, a creation of the peculiar privileged interplay of Dutch colonialism with that region, expressed itself in one form as Perserikatan Minahasa, broadening to include Minahasan civilians in both Java and the Minahasa, it was built along similar lines to SA, and had a similar point of view in relation to its support for Dutch rule, including the ‘the loyal striving for self rule’. When the colonial government abolished the special privileges enjoyed by the Minahasans in the colonial army, there was anger and frustration that loyalty could be so rewarded” (Elson 2008:33).

The desire for colonial authorities and the metropole to recognize calls for equality on the basis of the very society they had created evolved from the urban center of Manado, where the limits of assimilationist policies and precepts of the colonial era were tested. The city’s cosmopolitan environment was characterized by the embrace of Westernization and a mix of peoples – Chinese, Eurasians, and totok Europeans from the metropole. As indigenous and assimilated inhabitants adopted the accoutrements and attitudes of Europeans, and the desire to be recognized as such, both the European population and colonial officials began to rescind exhortations of the positive aspects of assimilation, labeling the city anathema to the “pure” culture of greater Minahasa (Henley 1996:76). It was a denial of how having links to elsewhere was in fact what made Minahasans local, or in other words, how Minahasan locality was created through global ties (Brown 2005:241). Furthermore, although miscegenation was common from the inception of the colonial period, rifts emerged when even those of Eurasian descent found more acceptance within the open boundaries of a Minahasan identity than with that of the totok population. Missionaries who had worked so diligently to engineer the concept of Minahasa were horrified that the cosmopolitan culture of Manado became a model for the region (Henley 1996:77).

The irony of the limits of colonial equality would not be lost on those Christians who had been schooled not just in ethics of colonial rule, but also in the equality of all men in the eyes of Christ. The transfer of the mission field to the State Church would continue to represent a major obstacle in the translation of mission ideals to an independent, ‘indigenous’ church. The colonial state continued to give priority to European employees and members of the Indische Kerk, and the naturalization but as a recognition of Minahasan’s equality with their colonial counterparts (Henley 1993:102).
rift between assistant ministers who were financed by the colonial state and village congregational teachers still under the auspices of the Dutch Missionary Society would be a point of convergence for Minahasan Christians with the rising tide of secular nationalism. B.W. Lapian, The first chairman of the Union of Protestant Churches in Minahasa (Kerapatan Gereja Protestant Minahasa, KGPM) created in 1933 by the disgruntled NZG financed teachers, had been a member of the Minahasaraad and was later elected as a member of the pre-independence parliament called the Volksraad (Aronintang and Steenbrink 2008:434).

The development of the KGPM was aimed at the extraction of the church from state control, even as it served as one expression of the growing restlessness of the Minahasan population to see what they perceived as their special status recognized, a restlessness that had also found an outlet in Indonesia’s incipient bid for sovereignty. The Indische Kerk was not particularly responsive to calls for an independent Christian institution in Minahasa, instead answering these requests with a proposition calculated to keep Minahasans under the mantle of colonial rule, granting a provisional recognition through the creation of a partly autonomous Minahasan section of the Indische Kerk in the region. The ejection of the proposal was couched in the terms inherited from the original Calvinist mission to develop an indigenously comprehensible Christianity, with Minahasans requesting independence for the church on the basis of its ethnic character (Steenbrink and Aronintang 2008:435). The resulting compromise was the creation of the Christian Evangelical Church of Minahasa (Gereja Masehi Injili Minahasa, GMIM) in 1934, which granted some limited rights of control to native members, but remained under the financial and overall managerial control of the state.

By 1942, as Japanese forces moved into the region, it was voted that the Dutch president of the synod would be replaced by a Minahasan minister named AZR Wenas. The “ethnic” character of the institution would persevere, although not in the terms hoped for by those missionaries who dreamed of a Minahasan volkskerk. The claimed ethnicity of the GMIM church was not expressed in the

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55 The Minahasaraad was a council of elected officials formed in 1919 in response to the failure of the gelijkstelling petition that sought a recognition of Minahasans elevated status in Netherlands Indies. The council was comprised of thirty-six locals and only five Europeans and took over responsibilities for taxation and public service in the region (Henley 1996:103).
inclusion of pre-colonial rituals – the church in fact continued the work of purification by phasing out those practices that did not adhere to the more pietist evangelical strain of Christian thought (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:436). Ethical theology’s goal of “inculturation” or “the development of a personal emotional bond between believer and God by situating the new religion within existing social networks and value systems” (Keane 2002:103) had articulated with the colonial concept of *adat* that “identified behavioral norms with bounded localities and assimilate[d] persons to those places” (ibid., 105). Where the concept of *adat* was used to neutralize the threat a pan-Islamic identity posed to colonial rule, the theological underpinnings of the mission method in Minahasa had instilled a sense of the borderless power of Christianity that could expand to include the faithful in religious kinship, and posited a radical equality for those who had previously been separated by social and cultural divides. Much like the social concept of *maesa*, Christianity supported relations of fictive kinship, albeit ones not based in proximity but particularized through a biblically conceived regional history.

What missionaries had not expected, however, was the way that both the categorizing practices of the colonial state and the religious import that had been infused into the ascription of Minahasan identity would form a powerful platform for local agency, buoyed by the waves of self-recognition that heralded the nationalist movement in the early 1920s. Mission practices aimed at preserving local culture but changing local religions (Keane 2002:106) involved missionaries in projects of delineating culture from religion, so as to properly identify what should be preserved and what had to be jettisoned in order for indigenous practitioners to be real Christians. This was similar to the project that that the colonial government undertook in their codification of *adat* practices. Perhaps most importantly, the theological assertion of the arbitrariness between those things deemed cultural and their meanings – the idea that rituals, words, and practices could be maintained as long their underlying meaning was reoriented toward Christian, modern understandings of the self – would set the parameters of belonging for a modern Minahasan identity within the nation-state of Indonesia. It was an identity that would be based less in the carefully recorded annals of *adat*, and more in the embrace of the modern, cosmopolitan, and inclusive Christian ethos particular to the place that Minahasa had become
The role of Protestant Christianity in making Minahasa an ethno-locality

Theorizing the role of Christianity in making Minahasa exemplifies how Christian theology and practice constitutes a cultural system (Robbins 2007:5) that contains specific systemic support for the maintenance of group identity. In contradistinction to theories that portray conversion to Christianity as requiring a radical break from the past (Robbins 2004 and 2007; Barker 2004), Michael Scott claims that “the bible and Christian theology are equipped with just as many arguments for elevating indigenous traditions as God-given ones for throwing them away” (2008:303). Built into Christianity is a “debate about the value of the past” (2008:301) which can be used “to affirm the past and elevate indigenous traditions to the point of almost erasing the exogenous character of biblical religion” (2008:302). Instead of being a force of discipline that erases the possibility of engaging with indigenous systems that existed before the disturbances of the colonial period, Scott feels Christianity contains a logic that makes unique claims about the value of indigenous histories that can be used to reconcile the discrepancies between the uncivilized past and the modern engagements of the present. In essence, this reimagination of the importance of place-based identities, and their value in the Christian world, can act as an impetus to delineate and maintain various “ethnicized” identities within the ideological framework of the nation-state form. My interest in the role that Christianity played, and continues to play, in defining Minahasan identity moves beyond the general debate over how the cultural system of Christianity and its relation to the West structures converts’ orientation towards the past, and their position within the fields of power through which Christianity became part of their communal histories. This dissertation will examine how the historical encounter with Christianity in Minahasa is situated within state-supported discourses of tradition, and how the public expression of religious identity interacts with the construction of categorical identities reliant on a conception of culture as something that is restricted to, and generated in, particular localities. Ironically, the contemporary tensions between government-supported modes of representing culture, and the identities anchored in historically-particular adaptations of Christianity, are rooted in the Protestant ideal of delimiting a
distinct sphere religion that was clearly demarcated from *adat* or traditional law in the colonial Indies (Schrauwers 1998:211).

In essence, the construction of Minahasan ethnic identity was one that was reliant on characteristics drawn from across different scales of comparison that combined into a powerful confluence of place and religious identity, one that drew meaning from other such constructions within the nascent nation-state of Indonesia. The overlap of Calvinist efforts to cultivate Christian identity in difference by locating that difference in an objectified cultural practice articulated with the colonial strategy of carving the native world into cultural-territorial units. It also blurred recognition of the overarching racial divide of colonizer versus colonized. The localization of religion, and of people, would have a similarly inscribed form in which “the subordination of cultural forms [would serve] as merely the particular vehicles for universal but abstract meanings” (Keane 2002:112). Both the religious and disciplinary expressions of this objectification of culture into standardized expressions of difference form the background to the particular combination of place and ethnicity in Indonesia which as noted in Chapter One, Boellstorff has termed “ethnolocality”, referring to a “spatial scale where ethnicity and locality presume each other to such an extent that they are, in essence, a single concept” (ibid., 25).

In Indonesia, particularistic identities or “ethnocal” affiliations are most recognizable in discourses that reference the level of the national, where they wash out the kinds of translocal, transhistorical and unbounded social connections that shape them. The Indonesian national ideology constructs participation in the national imaginary in terms of the existence of diverse ethnic populations whose cultures are purified and raised to the national level. It is difficult to conceive of particularistic identities in contemporary Indonesia without reference to the national public, in which all ethnicities are visible and viable, especially given the often contested, constructed, and unstable nature of these ethnic constellations at regional or “local” levels. The category of Minahasan ethnicity itself reflects colonial intervention in the region, “which denied the possibility of a ‘native’ subjectivity beyond the ethnocal” (Boellstorff 2002:26) even as it was grounded in the theological contention that Minahasan Christians shared in a global community of co-religionists, where difference is commuted in Christian brotherhood. As the basis for the contemporary state’s management of the relationship between identity,
place, and culture, ethnolocality is often historically tied to religious identity, and religious difference often magnified as a quality of the nation’s diversity.

As the possibilities for new permutations of Minahasa as a political unit emerge against the backdrop of a decentralizing Indonesia, Minahasa again returns to questions about how the territory evolved under the influence of colonial power and through indigenous engagement with the cultural system of Christianity. Returning to their position as the dominant ethnic group historically associated with Christianity, that association is coming under scrutiny in relation to the politics of multiculturalism in the microcosm of regional governance. Competition for resources and recognition, as well as the processes of local governance, are implicated in new discourses that claim Minahasan cultural identity is co-terminous with regional borders. Minahasa’s Christian history is being publicly examined as a part of the past in need of revision.

The restructuring of national politics around ethnolocal political units shifts the ontological ground on which groups can use religion as a marker of ethnic identity. Culture is recast as something that belongs just as much to the region as it does to specific ethnic groups, and concepts of a general local culture are conflated with a more particularistic version of Minahasan culture that is bounded by its association with Christianity. Regional movements to embrace a multi-religious or non-religious versions of Minahasan culture are supported by Christian elites in their efforts to manage a mixed-religious constituency, and have also gained currency through public displays of regional unity and harmony. However, those movements also threaten to sever the link between Christianity and Minahasan ethnicity that made Christian practitioners from North Sulawesi visible at the national level. Given this threat of invisibility, Christians in North Sulawesi must find ways to participate in new frameworks of ethnocentricity that do not erase their subject positions as Christian Indonesians. In the next chapter, I’ll examine how the discourse of religious harmony, and the state of religious relations in the North Sulawesi Province, are utilized to reengineer forms of cultural performance normally purified of religious overtones into displays where religious identity remains visible. Documentation of the public performance and narration of cultural events aimed at representing regional identity to national (and international) audiences will display strategies for keeping Christianity recognizable as part of the Minahasan locale.
CHAPTER 3
PERFORMING HARMONY, PRESENTING BROTHERHOOD: PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF MINAHASAN CULTURE AND THE CIRCULATION OF THE DISCOURSE OF RELIGIOUS HARMONY (KERUKUNAN BERAGAMA) IN NORTH SULAWESI PROVINCE

As the early afternoon shadows slid across the open-air stadium in North Sulawesi’s highland town of Tondano, the colorful costumes of the thousands of performers gathered on the field faded in the momentary dimness, giving their spectacle over the two most prominent features outside the stadium walls: Lokon mountain’s verdant volcanic peak, and the whitewashed spires of a Christian church. Illuminated by the waning light, these two features iconically invoked the Minahasan landscape as a frame for the ‘cultural’ event unfolding in the stadium below. The stadium’s strategic location in the heart of the Minahasa region, not in the more easily reached city capital of Manado, consciously invoked the cultural, ‘localized’ nature of this event. The stadium’s name, after all, is “Stadion Maesa,” a nod to Minahasa’s transformation from a loose confederation of regional sub-ethnic groups into a mapped locality. Participants uniformly spread across the field looked less like ritual practitioners, however, than players on a stage, carefully color-coordinated retinues moving in time to the same drumbeat, but enacting the movements of different “ethnic” dances. The dancers were flanked by long rows of kolintang, an instrument resembling a large wooden xylophone, all carefully arranged so that uniforms of the various kolintang ensembles participating in the event could clearly be viewed from the risers.

The presupposed audience for this event was a single individual: Lucia Sinigagliesi, an American representative of the Guinness World Records organization who was serving as the official jury for an attempt to simultaneously set four world records: one for the world’s largest kolintang, one for the world’s largest bamboo music trumpet, one for the largest music bamboo orchestra (orkes musik bambu), and likewise one for the largest kolintang ensemble in the world.
Sinigagliesi was present to witness and record two “traditional” songs performed on 1223 individual *kolintang*, as well as a coordinated performance by 3011 *musik bambu* practitioners. An article entitled “Kolintang and Musik Bambu, Indonesian Traditional Music that is Famous Around the World” describes both instruments as originating from Minahasa, but *musik bambu* conductor Hendrik Julieus Mantiri noted that despite his advanced age, he remained “energetically committed to preserving *musik bambu* instruments that represent one of the unique cultural elements of North Sulawesi culture.” Brigjen Dr. Benny Mamoto, head of the North Sulawesi Institute of Cultural Art (Institute Seni Budaya Sulawesi Utara, ISBSU) and the event’s organizer, explained that the only goal of the event was to preserve and develop the cultural art of Minahasa, adding that “I consistently work

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57 The Minahasan *kolintang* resembles a xylophone composed of lightweight wood. Although it is grouped in the same general family as the instruments referred to as *kulintang*, *gulintangan*, or *totobuang* in other regions of Eastern Indonesia and Southeast Asia, Minahasans view the instrument as unique to the region, since it is composed of wood, not a row of seated or hanging metal gongs.
to preserve the artistic culture of Sulawesi Utara. If this is recognized by the world, then praise God (puji Tuhan)\(^{58}\), it would be a blessing for me."\(^{59}\) Interviewed in another location, local leaders of the Minahasan community (tokoh masyarakat Minahasa) were laudatory of Mamoto’s efforts, despite noting his remove from the social networks and neighborhoods that normally associate people with specific places. “Just like the younger generation, we can learn much from the figure of Benny Mamoto. Although he lives and has his career outside [of North Sulawesi], he continues his efforts to protect Minahasan culture through holding these events that exalt art”\(^{60}\) they said.

![Music Bia performers at the GWR event](image)

Even while clearly rooted in the cultural geography of Minahasa, the ambiguity of whose culture was being represented demonstrates how artistic, touristic performances of culture can show that the local is composed of forces that are anything but restricted to a particular geography. Taking place on a local stage

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\(^{58}\) This discursive construction is indicative of Christianity – Tuhan is the generic Indonesian word that most Indonesian Christians use to refer to God in public settings, which both indicates their similarity with other Christians despite various ethnic affiliations, but sets them apart from other monotheistic religions in the nation, such as Islam, which would use the Arabic phrase “alhamdullilah” to express the same idea.

\(^{59}\) Minahasa registers four world records “Minahasa catat empat rekor dunia” reprinted from the Manado post on Saturday October 31\(^{st}\) 2009 on the District of Minahasa Official Website http://www.minahasa.go.id/berita-terkini/minahasa-catat-empat-rekor-dunia-.html

\(^{60}\) Ibid.
that participants hope will draw the eyes of the world, these performances may seem to be inherently anti-local in the way they self-consciously locate themselves in generalities and deterritorialized networks that are out of touch with the social realities in the location they claim to represent (Erb 2003:137). This ambiguity, however, also reflects a real tension in the production of the local identity that is mediated by the state and displayed through tourism. As Hitchcock and King (2003:4) note, “the state brings tourism together precisely because, through tourism policies and promotional activities, identities can be created, changed and presented to the nation and the outside world.” Both the state and groups within the state can use the general frames of tourism to legitimate particularistic identities, but representations that symbolize the differences between people are necessarily balanced against how they are “reconciled with national integration and assertion of a national identity” (Picard and Wood 1997:xi in Hitchcock and King 2003:4). The ambiguous positioning of these cultural displays sometimes leads them to be characterized as inauthentic, a moral evaluation that points to their failure to embody lived realities and social expectations of people living together in a particular locale. But as spaces or objects on which dimensions of identity are projected, they serve as flashpoints for the “articulation and negotiation of various hierarchical identities and relations” (Adams 2006:9) reflecting ties that exceed the context of immediate social relations.

In her analysis of how tourism relates to Torajan identity in the production of cultural art, Kathleen Adams demonstrates that the struggle over the ambiguous and multivalent nature of cultural displays (2006:11) are part of the processes of identity negotiation that have great potential to change inter-group perspective (ibid., 9). Displays of cultural objects are “vehicles for articulating ideas concerning contrasting identities” (ibid, 27), and much of the potential these displays and performances have in effecting cultural change is reliant on which contrasting identities are highlighted. Such displays and performances can serve as a point of articulation between the processes of inter-group identity negotiation, and the available categories of identity promoted by the state. In North Sulawesi, the ambiguity surrounding whether the kolintang and orkes bambu expresses Minahasaness, or instead amplify that identification into more general frames, is
literally played out on the local stage even as the lines are underwritten by national discourses on the appropriate modes of displaying difference between communities.

As Maribeth Erb (2003:130) observes, events aimed at overcoming local tensions, displaying identity or adhering to the “recipe” for cultural representation that makes culture palatable for tourism are arenas where authority rests on who gets to define the relevant community that is being addressed. Shifting the levels at which locality is calculated can occur, for instance, when those “locals” living outside the immediate social context, like Benny Mamoto, engineer a cultural event where “preservation is for the ‘us’ of the nation, not the ‘us’ of the small community” (Erb 2003:131). The definition of authenticity, and who is authorized to recognize it, is transformed when locality is shifted to a different level (ibid.). Socially embedded rituals define authenticity through the enactment of practices rooted in particular social relations, creating a context where authority from the past can be carried into the present. Groups that have difficulties in creating this context, whether resulting from the “disjuncture’ of conversion to a world religion, or the complications of locating a shared past to support the unification of a diverse population, can benefit from addressing a different audience and shifting the basis of comparison. Cultural displays in North Sulawesi seek a solution to the problem of the historical alignment of Christianity with cultural practices in the region, a convergence that cedes ownership of culture to only one portion of a diverse population.

By abstracting locality beyond the parameters of immediate social relations, touristic displays, cultural celebrations and exhibitions of cultural art (seni budaya) are part of the “social spaces created by the reflexive circulation of discourse” (Warner 2002: 95) in which people find common ground with each other and with strangers. It is a space “organized independently of state institutions, law and other formal frameworks” (Warner 2002:68) and yet structured in reference to the dominant discourse. Like ethnolocalities that tend to abstract a specific locale into a signifier of shared regional identity, these events reference imagined communities that are never quite isomorphic with the national one. At times, such as in the case of Minahasa, they may not even match up with the political boundaries that the state asserts containerizes identity in place. Both in their position as a province in the peripheral region of Eastern Indonesia, and as a population historically identified with a minority religion, people in the province of North Sulawesi
characterize their region as one that has been left behind (*ketinggalan*) in the sphere of national politics. As discussed in the previous chapter, the regional public of North Sulawesi in general, and Minahasa in particular, share characteristics with the phenomena that theorist Michael Warner identifies as a *counterpublic*: a public that maintains at some level an awareness of its subordinate status to the dominant [national] public (2005:120). If ethnolocalities are becoming the imagined community *par excellence* in Indonesia, as Tom Boellstorff (2002:26) suggests, the publics of peripheral regions take their shape from a consciousness of how their realities are not equally reflected in “the public,” the larger imagined community of the Indonesian nation. One strategy for repairing the distance between regionally distinct ‘lifeworlds’ and the dominant public is by expanding the reach of their address, or substituting their discourse for what passes as the universalizing voice of the mass public as a strategy for articulation.

Public displays of cultural art in Indonesia are always addressed to an ever widening audience, as they invoke comparison between ethnic groups in the same way that the nation-state does, as decontextualized performances or objects that stand in for specific places, but could essentially be performed anywhere: on national television, on a stage for diplomats, or overseas at an ‘Indonesian’ cultural night. The problem with this expanded form of address in North Sulawesi, the one that refers to the “we” of the nation, is that it necessarily hearkens back to those political boundaries that the state uses to categorize cultures according to their geographic location. As a political unit, North Sulawesi contains a Christian majority and a Muslim minority, a reversal of the national profile. Christianity has acted as a unifying principle projected onto the past, providing a rather unstable anchor for defining who, or what, is unquestionably Minahasan. Using religion among the defining characteristics of an ethnoregional identity is problematic in terms of acknowledging the religious diversity contained within the political boundaries of the North Sulawesi Province. Recent concerns about relegating religion and culture to their proper places have the potential to destabilize the link between Christianity and regional identity. For one, pursuing the exclusive link between Christianity and Minahasa blocks access to new forms of power available through recently repoliticized constructions of cultural representation known as *adat*. More importantly, it endeavors to make Minahasanness and Christianity mutually
exclusive, drawing stark lines of difference across previously gray zones of inclusion. As grounds for an exclusion that pits Christians against Muslims, it threatens to explode the careful political maneuverings of Christian politicians who want to see their majority Christian province get ahead nationally, politicians who promote cultural frameworks based in localized expressions of brotherhood between Muslims and Christians. Minahasan Christians, politicians, and Muslim locals alike yearn to secure the region more recognition and a better position in the nation. No one sees antagonizing the careful cultivation of harmonious religious relations as the means to doing so. Making an exclusive association between cultural identity and Christianity would imply Muslims are outsiders by default. But if Christianity can’t be the basis of North Sulawesi’s cultural distinction, what can take its place? The subordination of Christianity’s role in the making of Minahasa might support better religious relations locally, but it threatens to erase the religion’s influence on the region’s distinct cultural history.

One strategy of maintaining Christianity’s visibility without excluding local Muslims is to construct locality through the terms of a common national discourse on community relations – the discourse of *kerukunan beragama*, or religious harmony. By promoting a Minahasan identity that does not make religion a requirement of belonging, the basis for community inclusion shifts to assumptions about the relationship shared by those who are associated with the same region, contrasting Minahasa along horizontal relationships with Indonesia’s other ethnicities. Although reliant on a construction of locality ostensibly based in the national logic of place-based identities, this method of defining community also demonstrates the local’s propensity to articulate with other spatial or social categories (Brown 2005: 133), such as the political region of North Sulawesi in its current incarnation. Since this address is coupled with national belonging, it includes those “locals” who don’t actually live in the region - whose only relation to Minahasa’s material realities is through participation in a public that “maps notions of cultural particularity” (ibid.) onto the North Sulawesi province. This nod to the deterritorialized, cosmopolitan ties that underlie Minahasa’s establishment recognizes how connections to elsewhere are in part what makes one local (ibid., 241), and therefore can arguably be located in the realm of the cultural through the
kind of portable, public displays of cultural art that stand in as symbols of regional identity.

Minahasan locality’s articulation with the political category of North Sulawesi, and the importance of its ties with elsewhere, were performed both visually and discursively at the Guinness World Records event. The guest roster was filled with the names of prominent local officials, including members of North Sulawesi’s provincial government. The display organized on the field closely mirrored the official provincial breakdown of ethnic identities as seen on the North Sulawesi Office of Culture and Tourism website,\(^61\) which divides the population into three main ethnic groups (Minahasa, Sangir-Talaud and Bolaang Mongondow), and further delineates sub-ethnicities under the heading of Minahasan languages that correspond to subgroup identities (Tolour, Tombulu, Tonsea, Tontemboan, Tonsawang, Ponasakan and Bantik), all identified by their ethnic costumes.

Figure 3.3: Ethnic dancers coming onto the field.

\(^{61}\) Website of the Dinas Kebudayaan and Parawisata:
http://disbudparsulut.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79&Itemid=80. The same article and photo is shown on the North Sulawesi Provincial Government’s Website http://www.sulut.go.id/
Similar standardized costumes embodied these official categorizations on the field in Tondano, where North Sulawesi was making itself known to the world through the codification of group’s unique cultural status. Much like the official copy on societal divisions in North Sulawesi province avoids linking these ethnic groupings to religious identity, it seemed that culture’s performance in Tondano that day was equally unmoored from the articulations of history that link Minahasa with Christianity. This did not mean that religion was invisible, however. Both women in jilbab and men in Catholic frocks played the ‘Minahasan’ kolintang, and the entire event was narrated by exultations of the region’s history of peace and harmony, as seen here in a poem composed by Benny Mamoto:

Life’s Harmony
Benny Mamoto

The trumpet’s call resounds to every corner of the world
proclaiming the energy of peace from North Sulawesi
the melodious tinkling of the kolintang’s bamboo keys
reflects the song back to touch our inner selves
The bamboo orchestra music and kolintang fuse into one
Singing the soft tune of harmonious life

The cosmos accosts us with suffering
increasing the friendship between us
A fellowship that is full of harmony with nature
is there falseness between us?
Are we just acting?

The wrath of nature besets the earth
there isn’t a day without disaster and calamity
Laments and tears everywhere
signs that our fellowship is tarnished
greed and pleasure now posses our souls
Forgetting ourselves...forgetting our responsibility to future generations

Today...in this place
We come together to combine our determination and energy
to renew our fellowship with the universe
to spread the seed to green the earth
to stop exploitation and pollution and heal nature’s wounds

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62 This poem was part of the official invitation brochure for the ‘Peristiwa Kebudayaan Tingkat Bunia Pemecahan Rekor Seni Budaya, part of the 2009 North Sulawesi Arts and Culture Festival (see Appendix B for the original text). The translation is mine.
Today … in this cool and beautiful place … Tondano
The world sees us
We demonstrate the beauty and richness of the cultural art of the Minahasa people
The world listens to us
We reveal the majesty of the character and local wisdom that is an inheritance from our ancestors

Today … in this place… the Maesa Tondano Stadium
We transmit the energy of Nusantara\textsuperscript{63} unity
We incite the energy of world peace
We speak our commitment to preserve the environment
Let’s sing again the song of life’s harmony

Figure 3.4: Muslim \textit{kolintang} players at the GWR event

The discursive invocation of these nationalist idioms of harmony as an expression of local culture is both a common strategy in overcoming divisive regional interests, and as Acciaioli (2001:104) notes, is also contrary to the \textit{adat} movement’s critique of how local interests are continually subordinated to the goals of the state. The revitalization of \textit{adat} through legal frameworks has been employed in some

\textsuperscript{63} Nusantara is a poetic word for the Indonesian archipelago that has a nationalist connotation.
regions to advance political claims against those regarded as immigrants, especially
where differential access to resources falls along ethnic lines. The semantic
ambiguity of culture and *adat*, and *adat*’s basis in atavistic extension of one group’s
sovereignty over territory (Accaioli 2001:108, Li Murray 2001b:647) implies that
invocations of culture teeter precariously on the edge of promoting exclusivism.
Furthermore, the terms *adat* and *kebudayaan*, respectively translated as tradition
and culture, may have distinct lexical meaning in Indonesian, but are often used
interchangeably in everyday conversation. This semantic slippage between the
historical concept of *adat* as a reference to specific practices codified as quasi-legal
codes for arbitrating land claims during the colonial period, and the practices or
objects that symbolically represent cultural difference in Indonesia, demonstrates
the way these concepts are powerfully aligned in common-sense understandings of
difference and the politics of representation.

Without the mitigation of these national frames for communal life, the
homogenizing compulsion of the *adat* revival’s ideology can evolve into
fundamentalist alignments of religion and local identity, or predicate a minimization
of religion’s role. Neither strategy is particularly useful in Minahasa, where
constructions of indigeneity are complicated by the diverse peoples and histories
subsumed under a rather self-consciously modern unity, and religious elitism or
exclusivism runs the risk of alienating the goals for national advancement that
Christian politicians have for their region. Displaying difference through the state
discourse of harmonious relations between Muslims and Christians both promotes
an inclusive cultural identity while re-invoking religious difference through a non-
threatening nationalist idiom. This compromise is expressed in the public discourse
which organizes the bounds of the Minahasan community, and is being answered in
ways that may transform the historical association between Christianity and
Minahasa.

*Provincial publics, religious demography and ethnic borders*

North Sulawesi, like most political provinces in Indonesia, is composed of a
population whose diversity is measured in accordance with the government’s
bureaucratic characterization of those differences that matter enough to be counted.
Those differences that don’t count, at least in the administrative sense, are not
tallied up in the national census or otherwise displayed in quantifiable form that
corresponds to realities on the ground. Their conspicuous absence is named,
however, in the national admonition to avoid the sensitive issues of identity neatly
indexed by the acronym SARA that refers to ethnicity (suku), religion (agama), race
(ras) and intergroup relations (antar-golongan). What bureaucratic indexes fail to
reveal is the role relationships between these “dissociated” (Kipp 1993) categories of
identity play in determining who rightfully belongs to certain places, and who can
lay claim to the symbolic emblems that support people’s claims to power based in
those places. It is also difficult to see how the utilization of these categories can be
patterned through interaction to display the very particularistic identifications the
government seeks to minimize in engineering citizen identities.

According to the 2010 Indonesian National Census by the Indonesian
National Statistics Center (BPSRI), the North Sulawesi province is inhabited by a
Christian majority, or more accurately, a Protestant majority of 63.6%. Muslims are
the next largest population in terms of religious demographics, at 30.9%. Catholics,
who could be included under the heading of the Christian majority register as a
presence, although not a large one, at 4.40%. Hindus, Buddhists, Khonghucu and
“others” all make up less than one percent of the population.

This religious demographic data provides us with little directly readable
information about the relation between religion and other forms of identification,
since ethnicity is not a codified category. Neither is there a geographic distinction

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64 At the time of the census, the North Sulawesi Province was divided into 15 kabupaten or
districts and kota or provincial city districts: Bolaang Mongondow, Minahasa, Kepulauan
Sangihe, Kepulauan Talaud, Minahasa Selatan, Minahasa Utara, Bolaang Mongondow
Utara, Kepulauan Siau Tagulandang Biaro, Minahasa Tenggara, Bolong Mongondow
Selatan, Bolaang Mongondow Timur, Kota Manado, Kota Tomohon, Kota Bitung and Kota
Kotamabagu. Census data is recorded and calculated in accordance with these district
divisions.

65 BPSRI Sensus Penduduk 2010 Penduduk Menurut Wilayah Sulawesi Utara

66 The data can also be interpreted to exhibit how national religious subjectivity is a conduit
for making certain ethnicities invisible. Although North Sulawesi is home to large population
of Chinese-Indonesian citizens, this is not reflected in relation to religion, because the
majority of Chinese in North Sulawesi are Christian. According to the census data, the
Chinese community in North Sulawesi does not associate themselves with the newly-
authorized religious category of Confucianism (Kong Hucu) that carries over the New Order
impulse to construct Chineseness against “native” Indonesians, by always reproducing it as
that identifies Minahasa outside of the districts that bear the region’s name, which are not entirely isomorphic with the locations that share a commonsense identification with the Minahasan homeland (*tanah Minahasa*). The question then is how Minahasa is made visible, or recognizable, through the categorical identities outlined by the state, and what religion has to do with it. What I will demonstrate in this chapter across a number of public forums is how the national discourse of religious harmony, or *kerukunan beragama*, is invoked as part of the distinctive public of North Sulawesi that speaks – or wishes to speak – in the voice of the national public. This strategy is employed to mitigate the threat that Minahasan identity will be rendered invisible as the relationship between religion and culture is brought under scrutiny on a national scale. I theorize that the increasing political validity of *ethnolocal* identities and the resurgence of *adat*, as both a political and social platform at the regional level, has the potential to decouple the link between ethnicity and religion. This is especially true in regions with multi-religious populations, where the coupling of ethnicity and religion can be a source of social cleavages and local tensions.

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**67** Wigboldus (1985) locates Minahasa as the two lowland areas running northwest to southeast between the Bay of Manado to the Bay of Kema, and from the Bay of Amurang to Bay of Belang. The mountainous section between these two lowlands are in his words “the historical heartland” of Minahasa. This internal/external division is correspondent with colonial era highland-lowland categories, and is also reflected in the Minahasan ethnic constellation where centrally-located sub-groups can more unproblematically claim Minahasan identity. The identification is not as strong (or commonsense) for those subgroups settled in the lowland areas, especially along the southern borders.

**68** As Bauman and Briggs note, engagements with the words of others are part of the processes of modernity through which oral traditional texts were rendered in such a way that they could be appropriated and managed in the modern world (2003:15). The ability to lift oral traditional texts from their social situation to become properties for modern modes of circulation was in service to the ideological goal of delineating the past from the present (ibid.,16).
Some of the ethnic groups that were absorbed within the Minahasan administrative structure during the early colonial era are considered to be “immigrants” on account of their exclusion from the territorial division of the *pakasa’an*\(^{69}\) into discrete territories (Renwarin 2006:93). Today they are identified

\(^{69}\) Renwarin (2006) found no evidence that these groups were ever regarded as *pakasa’an*, which argues that their inclusion as part of the Minahasan identification was part of the historical processes by which colonial administrative boundaries and the social recognition of difference converged. Wenas (2007) claims that given their geographic location, the
as subgroups under the umbrella of the overarching Minahasan identification, although the Tonsawang, Ponosakan and Ratahan-Belang groups are more likely to be publicly recognized as part of this rubric. The Bantik group, thought to have descended from Sangirese immigrants, is more problematically positioned as part of the original Minahasan community. One complicating factor is that only part of the Bantik group was territorialized as part of the Minahasa region. The original Bantik settlers split, with some making their home in the Bolaang Mongondow region, and others settling on the outskirts of Manado. This latter group were administratively labeled as a *walak* belonging to Minahasa (Renwarin 2006:93). Their division was also configured religiously, as those Bantik in the southern provinces converted to Islam. Despite being drawn into the bureaucratic framework of Minahasa, there is some doubt about their inclusion in the Minahasan community on account of their continued patronage to the sultan of Bolaang Mongondow well into the end of the 17th century (Wenas 2007:21). Historically, the boundary between Bolaang Mongondow and Minahasa has been central to the “continued expression and validation” (Barth 1969:15) of Minahasan identity (see Chapter Two).

In reality, not all Minahasans are Christians (Wenas 2007:24), but those subgroups associated with Islam, such as the Bantik and Ponosakan, are both small in number and peripheral to the central mountainous geography from which Minahasan culture is thought to emanate. Other Muslims in the region are excluded from the dominant ethnic identification due to their affiliation with and/or descent from other ethnolocalities. The Arab Village70 (Kampung Arab) on the outskirts of Manado city was originally known as the Ternate Village (Kampung Ternate) after traders and soldiers from the Sultanate of Ternate were enlisted by the Dutch East Indies company to protect company interests around the port of Manado (Wenas 2007:23). Despite 150 years of intermarriage with surrounding Minahasan women, and the loss of their Javanese language abilities, Muslims in the village known as Jawa Tondano who settled on the shores of Tondano lake still maintain a distinction between themselves and their neighbors through their historical association with the

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70 See Berg, Birgit “The Music of Arabs, the Sound of Islam: Hadrami Ethnic Presence in Indonesia,” Brown University 2007, for a history of the *kampung arab* and musical traditions that have fostered their ethnic distinction in North Sulawesi.
island of Java, as will be described in detail in Chapter Six. Other immigrants, such as itinerant merchants hailing from the nearby province of Gorontalo, are also dubbed as outsiders not on only on account of their religion, but also due to being Muslims connected to another region or province.

The contours of how religion defines difference in the North Sulawesi province are more visible when religious demography is viewed spatially. The highest concentration of Protestants (< 170,000) is found in the districts of Minahasa, South Minahasa, and the Manado municipality, with the North Minahasa and Bitung districts also showing Protestant concentration (110,000 – 169,999). The Southeast Minahasa district, home of the Ratahan-Belang and Ponosakan groups, shows more of a spread between Protestants (80,000 – 109,999) and Muslims (40,000 – 69,000). Moving south, the demographics shift in favor of a Muslim concentration in the southern provinces of Bolaang Mongondow, with more 90,000 Muslims compared with 20 000 – 79 999 Protestants in Bolaang Mongondow, and between 70,000 – 90,000 Muslims verses less than 20,000 Protestants in the other three Bolaang districts. Although Minahasans don’t have to be Christians, most of them are, and those groups that straddle the divide between the northern and southern areas of the province inhabit a precarious position where the pairing of Minahanan identity with Christianity meets its ideological and political limits.

What these religious demographics hint at is an articulation between Minahasa and Christianity that is written into the landscape, and the propensity for a further disintegration of the province along ethno-religious lines. It also illustrates a relational pattern that is central not only to regional politics but also to how the province refracts national majority/minority religious relationships in the microcosm. Public exhortations of “religious harmony” are apparent across a number

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71 Babcock (1981:87) points out that villager’s references to Java are not in terms of current political or social ties, but with modified Javanese life-cycle rituals that maintain their distinction from the villages around them. They do not, however, have much in common with Javanese who have resettled in North Sulawesi. This, combined with their records of descent from the exiled Javanese revolutionary Kyai Modjo that also records generations of intermarriage with Minahanan families has left the door open to “not identifying as Javanese” but as Minahanan or Manadonese.

of public forums in the region, in local politics, newspapers, public events, and even non-ecumenical religious gatherings. The discourses and performative variations on the theme of religious harmony, often glossed in terms of a regional kinship through the Manado-Melayu slogan “we are all brothers,” (torang samua basudara) is a common feature of the North Sulawesi public landscape. Yet this discourse is almost exclusively invoked in discussion of relations between Christians and Muslims. Religious relations between the sizable population of Hindus in the province with their Christian and Muslim neighbors rarely make the news with this sort of positive cast, but not a week passed during my field period in Manado when there wasn’t an article in the local paper describing an event in which the ideal of good relations between Muslim and Christian constituencies was exhibited and stressed as a regional cultural value, one that should be protected and fostered. It is the inversion of the national minority/majority positions of the populations who profess these two faiths in North Sulawesi that structures their localization and regional expression.

Just as the government seeks to make some identities less visible by restricting the worlds of their public circulation, people find ways to express those identities couched in the terms of dominant discourse and through metacultural commentary that expresses their particularities in the general terms of the masses (Warner 2005:11). Doing so allows people to maintain the viability of those kinds of categorical identities that the state seeks to politically defuse or that don’t fit within the national definition of what constitutes those nationally recognized identity categories. It is also the source of local identity’s inseparability from the dominant narratives of how belonging is recognized in the nation, and the root of its inherent instability and inability to remain exclusive or closed to demographic changes or shifts in national ideology.

Minahasan identity, which has long maintained its conceptual shape through association with Christianity, is being transformed through the national revival of adat as a platform for ethnomlocal politics under the national program of decentralization and regional autonomy. As ideas about the relation between cultural identity and place are reinvigorated, and the national context of what is considered local is increasingly politicized, organizations, institutions and individuals who identify themselves as Minahasan are undergoing a public
reconsideration of the qualifications of inclusion and how this identification articulates with other subject positions such as religious and national identity. Since this is a metacultural process – one that is organized through discursive commentary on the public symbols and performative practices that explain the nature of relationships between those categories – I am relying on theories that elucidate the role of publics in cultural change to understand how the “local” is being re-constructed in North Sulawesi, and how “locality” is part of a story about being Indonesian. Therefore, local identity, and who can be considered Minahasan, is also about the relationship between the Muslim majority and the Christian minority in the Indonesian nation, and how the international character of those religious subject positions are mediated through the terms of national belonging.

Related to works that analyze the importance of the advent of print technology and its relation to the ideology and processes of modernity (Adam 1995; Habermas 1962; Fraser 1997; Warner 2002; Warner 1990), I am particularly interested in how discourses circulated through the press in Indonesia work to mediate identity. Throughout the course of this dissertation I draw examples of discourse from newspapers, electronic media, and other forms of the printed word as ethnographic documentation of the metacultural narration of categories of belonging in the North Sulawesi province, and the concepts related to them. Particularly in regards to journalistic technologies of media, the form in which these discourses are objectified and circulated is significant given the way print media is assumed to operate within particularly modern semiotic ideology. In addition, the role of the press has been highlighted in Indonesian national narratives (Keane 2009:48) as a “special kind of historical agent” (ibid., 49) that embodies the modern understanding of printed language in the form of “words and pictures [as] mere vehicles filled with information,” something “that stands apart from persons and their actions” (ibid., 57). Although as some scholars have noted, the ideal of the newspaper as a neutral repository of information or as the “voice of the people” (ibid., 48) has been increasingly problematized after the fall of the Suharto regime and the dismantling of institutionalized suppression of the press (Spyer 2002:2, Keane 2009:49). Not only does print culture presuppose the authority of printed texts over other technologies of communication and modes of discourse in alignment with modernity’s project to clearly demarcate the present from the past (Briggs and Bauman 2003:13), but it is
also constitutive in the processes that make collectivities like the nation and other social categories seem real (ibid., 17).

One of the major points of inquiry into the development of print culture is how the objectifiable and supposedly neutral nature of the printed word was in itself an ideological discourse that touted “accessibility, rationality and the suspension of status hierarchies as a strategy of distinction” (Fraser 1997:74). In other words, both the promotion of the printed word over other modes of communication, and the way that discourses of publicity asserted an equal playing field for the unproblematic representation of individuals in public, served to obscure hierarchies and power differentials through universalizing discourses. My inquiry into the ways that the politics of identity are framed in the voice of the mass public, or in this case, the Indonesian national public, is reminiscent of these arguments. Furthermore, using print media as a window into how culture, religion and regional identity are represented in public draws on the historical trajectory of print media in Indonesia as an arbiter of difference. As James Hagen (1997:110) argues, the development of print technology in Indonesia in the early 20th century was located squarely in the domain of the elite, who were not only trying to define who they were, but also the place of the masses in relation to them. One of the results of the proliferation of print was to draw attention to the vast diversity of the peoples organized under Dutch rule (Hagen 1997:110), and this process of imagining the national community vicariously through print promoted the kind of horizontal relations described by Ben Anderson in his treatise on how nationalism is imagined into being. However, as Hagen points out, the “valorization” of fraternal and horizontal relationships in the construction of the national imaginary is not complete without an examination of the relations of power (and class) that are rendered invisible in the national discourse in order to make that sort of identification with a national commonality possible (ibid., 109).

Hagen sees the newspapers, and the ideology of publicity, as something that helped to map a hierarchy of places (and categories) onto common consciousness, not only making people aware of the nation, but also their place within it. Being written and printed about lent people and places a new kind of value, so that circulation constituted an event (ibid., 112). People and places were lent authority through their
objectification and circulation. He argues that media coverage was significant not only in influencing how consumers of print media understood time, but also place:

... the use of geographic indexes – where events occurred, and where they are reported from – help shape perceptions of space, or enable readers to transform space into place. The news refers readers to conceptual map. As places are filled in, they are hierarchically ordered...awareness increases of the connections between places and a system emerges revealing specific ties to centers and peripheries” (Hagen 1997:112).

Identities were also inscribed and evaluated through narratives of progress that relied on contrasting different categories of people in terms of their successes in modernizing, implying the possibility that some groups might be left behind on the path to advancement. The coverage and circulation of reports on which sectors of society were organizing, and being represented in print, helped to shape societal categories in contrastive comparison of their progress (ibid., 114). Progress was represented in the press as “a rhetorical move designed to bring it about” (ibid.,122), and therefore print technology was a key element in the hierarchical organization of society, and simultaneously a marker of progress in that hierarchical field. It was also important in inscribing and mediating difference within the collective commons of the nation so that people related to certain collective categories.

This historical analysis highlights several important characteristics of print media in Indonesia today that are germane to my analysis of how identity is shaped in the circulation of discourse. Despite the liberal ideal of the freedom of the press, writers and readers see printed texts as powerful and decidedly not neutral, a domain that must be carefully orchestrated in relation to those references that specify particular places and people. As Patricia Spyer writes in her exploration of the style of ‘bare bones’ style of reporting that is used to obliterate any locatable references to acts of violence in the Indonesian newspapers, the press is understood to have great power in causing people to identify with divisive identities. The contemporary coverage of violence in Indonesian print media leaves out “grievances, historical relations, as well as ascribed/assumed identities of those persons directly involved in a conflict...the kind of information that makes people recognize their identities in moments of crisis” (Spyer 2002:5). This leads to self-censorship that is referred to as responsible journalism. Invoking the concept of responsibility, in
Keane’s estimation, results from the media operating in a moral domain in Indonesia, one in which both those who censor and who are censored “are united in their conviction that texts are in themselves powerful, and can serve as vehicles for their own social and historical agency, and as catalysts for the agency of their publics” (2009:50).

That the media can serve as a vehicle for social and historical agency, and is also a site of representation where progress is measured in the visibility created by circulation, explains why elites in North Sulawesi spend so much time and effort on producing media coverage for events that portray the positive state of religious relations in the region. Although the moral domain of the national public requires the censorship of potentially inflammatory descriptions of identities, positive representations, like the coverage of Muslim-Christian cooperative activities, or “safaris” where public officials visit religious sites during official holidays, both increase the visibility of the region by making it news, and specifically enumerates and locates Minahasan identity in contrast to other categorical identities. I would argue that these textual representations are engineered specifically because of the belief in their transformative potential to prove that the region, and its Christian elite politicians, are not “left behind” or relegated to the periphery of national politics, and is part of the process by which the relationship between religious and other categorical identities is produced and defined.

Dissociations and their relations – the construction of an Indonesian ethnolocality

In contradistinction to studies that focus on the way the national management of religious diversity structures similar interactions across Indonesia between majority and minority religious practitioners, I want to demonstrate that national discourses and frames for public interaction between Muslim and Christian citizens can be used to support constructions of regional particularities and ethno-local identities tied to place. Discourses of religious harmony are also consonant with the kind of standardized formula for presenting culture through public performance in line with state values (Acciaioli 2001:105), and are often reiterated in touristic displays that address an audience beyond the local context. The national management of religious relations which posits all religious citizens as
equal can be refracted in local application, especially the ideology of religious harmony, which is particularly focused on relationships between members of the national Muslim majority, and the Christian minority who suffer from a sense of political marginalization. As Rita Smith Kipp (1993:7) argues, the Indonesian government encourages the dissociation of religious, cultural and national identities as an aspect of state control. Bureaucratic intervention in the expression of religious and cultural identities, as well as efforts to mitigate ethnicity’s disruptive power by transecting it with state-legitimized religious identifications, encourages the compartmentalization of identities, but also shapes the way people think about identity (ibid., 5). Although in theory blind to the existence of ethnic identifications across the archipelago, governmental engineering of the concept of culture and the “purification” of religion from particularistic beliefs pushes ethnic constellations into alignment with the more visible, state-promoted forms of institutionalized identity (ibid., 260). The state’s denial of the viability and reality of ethnicity is in itself an ideological construct (LeMarchande 1994:19), one that obfuscates certain groups’ hegemony and supports the national narrative of citizen equality and the primacy of national identification over all other types.

In Kipp’s theory of dissociation, the separation of categorical identities have made them mutually constitutive, because government policies on one type of identity are employed to minimize the influence of the other. She notes “to the extent that ethnic consciousness diminishes religious unity, and religion pluralizes ethnic groups, policies promoting culture and religion are also about each other” (1993:261). People themselves may embrace these categorical dissociations to their own ends, and support novel configurations of particularistic identities. Kipp’s work with the Karo Batak shows that although religious and cultural identity have been compartmentalized to the point that conversion is no longer grounds for ethnic exclusion, Christianity still serves as a marker for Karo ethnicity in urban ethnic associations. Dissociation also lends to the decontextualization of ‘Karo’ identity from the larger category of Batak identity.

73This is similar to the situation described in Leonard Andaya’s 2002 article “The Trans-Sumatra Trade and the Ethnicization of the Batak” Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde 158, no. 3: 367-409.
Even though institutionally separated, religion and culture depend on one another for definition in the terms of national expression, and ethnicity is often expressed in the interstices of where these two highly visible categorical identities articulate according to regional historical trajectories. References to *adat*, the legalistic framework of Dutch governmentality that served to codify native populations, indicates association with the realm of culture in national parlance. However, *adat* more accurately glosses the complex network of political and symbolic relations that are created through historical processes of social interaction. Although the term is used to index a standardized system for measuring cultural difference on the national scale, (Spyer 1996a:25) it is in the relations between compartmentalized, institutionalized forms of identification that *adat* draws its meaning. The complex relations and “system of symbols created through the interaction of small minority societies, their ethnic neighbors, colonial administrators, the national governments, and the world religions, Christianity and Islam” (Kipp and Rodgers 1987:1) that are encompassed under the *adat* label are conceptually filtered to correspond with the categorical realm of culture. Although ethnicity may be composed of elements that are not categorically exclusive to either religious or cultural elements (Barth 1965:14), individuals and groups nonetheless must find ways to align complex constellations of interaction that define who they are with nationally constructed categories, in order to counteract ethnicity’s invisibility.

Groups use a number of strategies to gain recognition for the unrecognized ties that have both social and conceptual weight in everyday interactions. They may demonstrate that particularistic practices share a conceptual similarity with already recognized categories, such as the state-sponsored world religions (Monnig-Atkinson 1983:685). Alternately, local practices can be subsumed under religion, marking cleavages between religions or inter-denominationally. At times, in the apotheosis of the government’s efforts to dissociate religion from culture, the separation of culture and religion is internalized by citizens who themselves take on the work of “purification” (Keane 2007, Latour 1993), submitting practice and cultural symbols
to public trial in order to determine to which ontological domain they rightly belong, and on that basis, who can rightfully claim them.

The relationship between the categories of religion and culture therefore reflect the application of other modernist binaries through an Indonesian national imaginary. Culture, or adat, is correspondent and in fact indexical of the local and the particular, identifying regions as places of primordial origin. This is located in distinction to religion, a realm of modern national citizenship and participation, cosmopolitanism and the transnational ties that reiterate the global/local hierarchy in their insistence on the aterritorial nature of relationships between co-religionists. The public processes of identifying the local and what can be rightfully labeled culture relies on claims of particularity that might seem to be anathema to religion’s aterritorial and universalizing tendencies on the surface. Except that religion is also a categorical means of national belonging, that while uniting citizens as Indonesians under “one supreme God” (Tuhan yang Maha Esa) also delineates their difference in ways that can undermine identities fashioned around the local.

The parameters of identification with Minahasanness also expose the problematics of subsuming place-based constructions within a framework of “purified” cultural identity restricted to qualities that can be categorized as local. Although world religions like Christianity in some cases are aligned with ethnic identifications, a number of factors make this difficult in the case of Minahasa. First, the kinds of museumized cultural relics that are the standard index of regional, cultural particularity such as housing styles, regional dress, dance and language provide a weak basis for Minahasan identity, as these practices were either transformed or dispensed of under the pressures of colonial rule. Those cultural objects that did endure have either been recontextualized through contact with Christian logics (and therefore are no longer purely cultural) or problematically only represent one faction of the number of distinct groups were identified as part of

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74 Latour’s claim that modernism rests in the disavowal of hybridity (1993:10) or the mixing of nature and culture (ibid., 27) is literally institutionalized in Indonesia through the division between culture (kebudayaan) which is related to nature, land and localized spaces, and religion (agama) which is sign of modern citizenship. These categories are represented by separate governmental bodies. Those who do not possess one of the nationally recognized world religions are labeled as non-modern or uncivilized (terasing) on account that they do not recognize the nationally defined difference between culture (or nature) and religion.
Deciding exactly who and what constitutes the authoritative definition of Minahasa is a question that may not be answerable in terms of the way that cultural identity is conceptualized in Indonesia as a locally-bound unit, with recognizable practices belonging to one group that are both distinct in content while being standardized in form.

For most elites who are still tied to the politics of the center, it would be politically disadvantageous to base any kind of regional sovereignty on Christianity. The alignment of Christianity with Minahasan ethnic identity is a poor option for Minahasan politicians who are keenly aware of their, and the region’s, marginal status in national politics precisely because of the historical associations between Minahasa, Christianity and the colonial powers that married the two. The Christian-dominant government in Minahasa is exceptionally cautious in efforts not to impugn the Muslim majority. The 1999 Decentralization legislation that grants more power to district (kabupaten) governments also introduces the propensity for the “balkanization” (Kingsbury and Aveling 2003:1 and Jacobsen 2002:5) of the region into smaller sub-ethnic units and the further fracturing of Minahasa, as sub-regions scrabble over the rights to claim the symbolic spoils of identity. Since three of the groups which were officially recognized as part of the Minahasan group are associated with Islamic practice, there are a number of motivations for politicians to strive to maintain Minahasa as an inclusive option for local belonging.

Abandoning Minahasanness entirely to the realm of religion also conflicts with other important means of making the region politically visible and viable. Tourism, particularly the kind of regionally-based geographic and cultural tourism that figures heavily in national advertising of Indonesia as a destination for foreign

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75 For example, there is no Minahasan language, but a number of regional languages that are not mutually intelligible. The regionally specific language, Bahasa Manado, originated from a Malay trading tongue that eventually developed into a regional dialect that today corresponds to regional, not ethnic, boundaries.

76 Holtzapple and Ramstedt (2009:2-3) critique early theories that projected that the Indonesian program of decentralization would cause provinces to fracture along ethnic lines as dated in the sense that they were written prior to the 2004 update that clarified the relationships between regional governments and the center. They point out that decentralization does not provide more democratic power to local governments, but installs a local bureaucratic system to oversee regional affairs that is funded by the central government. Holtzapple defines decentralization as “the transferring from government to regions the freedom to carry out government tasks” but notes that the regions are still fiscally beholden to the central government and therefore still under central political control.
tours, influences regional elites’ desire to appropriate and control elements emblematic of particular localities. The national tourism program “Visit Indonesia” visually extends the metaphor of the museumization of culture into advertisements where each region exhibits their compartmentalized cultures as part of the larger, national whole. Selecting and promoting aspects of regional culture on the international tourist market is one way that groups frame their difference in the terms of national discourse, and “seek active participation in their own image building” (Hoskins 2002:817). As tourism can be used to legitimate ethnicity, it can be a useful strategy for those groups who lack the kind of authenticating markers that serve as a basis for political communities steeped in the discourse of shared traditions. By promoting particularistic practice as part of what the nation has to offer to foreign tourists, it can also help to transform problematic local histories (like headhunting) into nationalist ones (ibid., 818). The reflexivity that tourism practices engender can be utilized not just by the state, but by individual groups to “create, change and present” their version of self-identity to the world, forcing the nation to respond with greater levels of recognition. The touristic interest in “tradition” may even spur religious practitioners to reframe their practices as historically significant, a way of attracting a broader audience (ibid., 814). For Christians in Minahasa, asking tourists to perceive of Christianity as part of local tradition both legitimizes Christian tradition as part of their cultural identity, and disputes a common accusation that Christian converts have ‘lost’ their culture with the adoption of a Western religious system.

*Harmonious difference: asserting religious and regional identity through the discourse of religious harmony (kerukunan beragama)*

The utilization of a shared imaginary of particular aspects of regional religious relations as a characteristic of ethnolocal belonging is a common discursive construction across the archipelago. This is particularly visible in areas where an overarching ethnoregional identification is transected religiously, or religion serves as an important marker of ethnic difference between local inhabitants who participate in the same locally-based economies and political systems. In a recent
case study of the relationship between the Meratus Dayak\textsuperscript{77} and Banjar peoples of Kalimantan, religion serves as the historically differentiating characteristic between those inhabitants in the Meratus region who were associated with Islamic Banjar Sultanate in the 1500s, and those who fell “outside” of the Islamic faith (Mujiburrahman et. al, 2011:30). This ethnic difference is publicly negotiated through the local mythos of badingsanak, referring to kinship between the apical male ancestors of the Banjar and Dayak peoples in the Meratus region. This overarching kin relation (hubungan bersaudara) is echoed by the attribution of badingsanak to the relation of the central figures of Islam and Christianity, the prophet Jesus (Nabi Isa) and the Prophet Muhammed (Nabi Muhammed) (ibid., 15). Fictive ancestral kinship as an organizing frame for contemporary regional religious relations\textsuperscript{78} was also publicly employed in the aftermath of religious conflicts in Maluku (Klinken 10:2001). The theme of brotherhood (persaudaraan) is often found in the deployments of adat as an expression of local authority in overcoming tensions between religiously or ethnically diverse populations exacerbated by New Order policies of resource management (Acciaioli 2001; Adams 2006; Aragon 2001; Duncan 2009; Li 2001b; Rodemeier 2010).

Religious identity is both a requirement of citizenship and the categorical identification most closely linked to the bureaucratic functions of the state. One’s religion is printed on the national identification card (KTP), and the lack of an identifiable religion, or questions about a citizen’s self-proclaimed religious identity, can result in the suspension of civil rights such as marriage, birth registration and voting privileges. Religious populations are also monitored for indications of their propensity to fall prey to religiously-based conflict.

Concerns over the relationship between regional Christians and Muslims in North Sualwesi, as well as in other parts of the archipelago that lie outside the “center” of political management, are often spurred by reports of violence between

\textsuperscript{77} The term ‘Dayak’, much like the term Minahasa, was originally used as an exonym coined by Western scholars to describe the peoples of the interior of Kalimantan who were not Muslims, and is composed of several smaller sub-ethnic groups. Although some Dayaks in South Kalimantan still practice a traditional religion known as Balian-Kaharingan, conversion to Christianity was an important factor in consolidating identification under the umbrella term “Dayak” as it maintained the distinction between indigenous dwellers (orang asli) and outsiders (pendatang) along religious lines.
religious groups in other parts of the archipelago. Both conflicts between religious
groups and the concept of religious harmony therefore reference an awareness of
national and transnational ties with co-religionists. The specter of a horizontal
spread of violence via co-religionists across Indonesia is of such heightened concern
that journalists engage in self-censorship and suppression of information regarding
conflict with religious overtones. The bureaucratization of religious harmony in
North Sulawesi is in large part a reaction to the sustained violence in the nearby
regions of Poso and Maluku that was portrayed as religiously motivated. The
grassroots origins of the regional Organization for Cooperation Between Religious
Groups (Badan Kerjasama Antar Umat Beragama, hereafter BKSAUA) in the late
1960s stemmed from local anxieties about the possibility of sectarian violence
spreading into the region. Headed on a rotating basis by a presidium of elected local
religious leaders from the five official state religions, the organization was legalized
as an official advisory board for the Governor of North Sulawesi in the year 2000.\footnote{Ketetapan Badan Kerjasama Antar Umat Beragama Propinsi Sulawesi Utara Nomor I/BKSAU/2000 tentang Perarahan Tata Tertib Badan Kerjasama Antar Umat Beragama.}
The main mission of the organization remains the prevention of religious conflict,
and is cited as one example of why the province has escaped the kind of protracted,
vviolent interludes along religious lines that have befallen other Eastern provinces.

Anwar Panawar, head of the provincial branch of Muhammadiyah in 2010,
highlighted BKSAUA’s focus on maintaining regional security in the face of
sectarian violence in Maluku. He recalls the situation with those who had fled from
the violence in Maluku to Manado:

Panawar: He asked me if I could tell the story, and I said in North Sulawesi
don’t talk about that, but he told the story anyway. But people from Sulawesi Utara, especially from Manado, they weren’t influenced. It’s the same with those who came home from North Maluku, there were many people from Sangir living there, many Christians, and they all came home [to North Sulawesi]. They spoke to each other, they were all embracing each other, don’t let what happened in North Maluku happen here they cried. A relative called me, and said “brother, we are gathered at my house, my god, how is it in Manado?” Manado is still safe, still harmonious, they are getting together here and embracing, saying don’t allow what happened before to happen again, there’s no use for it (field interview 12/16/2009).
In his estimation, although one of BKSAUA’s main functions is as a security network for neutralizing trouble from potential provocateurs, constant vigilance against potential violence doesn’t diminish the attribution of difference to the relationship between the region’s Muslims and Christians:

Panawar: It’s really harmonious, and I think we live in one of the only regions that hasn’t been affected by public demonstrations, the burning of vehicles and those kinds of things, it’s gotten like that, everyone’s already experienced extraordinary conflict. Now, we pray to God that we aren’t infected by this virus, because when information comes, when it’s said there is a provocateur, the local leaders in the village communicate across religious groups, why, because when provocateurs show up like that, there’s no room for them and their ilk. I say there’s no room, there’s no place. If they come, they are afraid of us, because we really protect what we have so that nothing happens, including the relationship between tribal groups, religions, ethnicities, we’re really safe. There hasn’t ever been a fight between Minahasan people and Sangir people, or Gorontalo people or Javanese people, no. Because if there is private scuffle, then usually its got personal characteristics, it’s not ethnic, tribal or religious” (field interview 12/17/2009).

It’s this ability to cooperate and maintain relative safety that makes Sulawesi Utara different than other Eastern regions affected by sectarian violence:

Panawar: Ya, Minahasan people are welcoming, up until now this is still something that is cultivated. So this is why as North Sulawesi people, we are proud of this condition, imagine if we were like Maluku, Ambon, or Poso, so sad for them, it’s because of the events in Maluku, Ambon, that here we remained consolidated, and they [people from Maluku]also came here (field interview 12/17/2009).

The unique character of these religious relations is not just referred to through comparative terms in everyday conversation, but is often discursively framed as local during instances when national attention is focused on the region. Promotion of regional events situates locality at the provincial level where it is comparable with other ethno-localities, and characterizes religious harmony as a localized, cultural product. This can be seen in the coverage of a discussion on “harmony” (kerukunan) between local religious and community leaders that was commenced as part of the 2009 World Ocean Conference (WOC), an international event that drew global media attention to Manado:
The dialog between religious leaders and local community leaders that was held Monday (24/03/09) until today, Tuesday (25/03/09) in a hotel in Manado considered the topic of the excellence of the harmony that accompanied the general election and the 2009 World Ocean Conference, fostering local religious wisdom as a central pillar for strengthening harmony and brotherhood.

During the opening speech, the Head of the Regional Office (Kakanwil) of the Department of Religion (Depag) for North Sulawesi, Dr. H Halil Domu Msi, stated this was one source of pride for the residents of North Sulawesi, because the local wisdom that they have fostered has not yet been fully embraced by other regions. “As a religious as well as local leaders, we possess anticipatory steps to protect this local wisdom, just like the idiom that says ‘ready with an umbrella before the rain,’ so that harmony persists and is protected, like is being done with this meeting between religious and local leaders” he said, while clarifying that the dialogue being held in North Sulawesi was a inaugural dialogue, one of the only dialogues about harmony between religious and local leaders in Indonesia, that will now be held every year in North Sulawesi.”

The repeated insistence that North Sulawesi serves as an example for other provinces discursively performs an assertion of the region’s centrality in the national affair of Muslim-Christian relations. Efforts to align with the national ideology of peaceful religious relations are not unique to North Sulawesi, and much of the language drawn on for these local public displays of ‘harmonious life’ originates directly from the official government discourse on the desired state of religious relations in Indonesia (Acciaioli 2001:105). By serving as an example, the province is discursively positioned as different in comparison to other place-based ethnicities in Indonesia, not in alignment with religion, yet making religion central to the picture in line with the nationalist ethos. Contrasting North Sulawesi with other regions lends a gravitas to the weak and fractured sense of ethnicity that doesn’t always quite stretch to encompass the diverse populations, and histories, of the region. It posits a kind of shared history of relations that can separate insiders from outsiders through social action:

Manado – North Sulawesi has become an example and model for other regions. The realization of unity and solidarity between religious groups was

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on display from the night of takbiran\(^{81}\) until Idul Fitri 1431 Hijriah, yesterday. Like what was displayed by the North Sulawesi Christian government officials who performed silahturrahmi to the group from the Regional Consultative Council of North Sulawesi (MUSPIDA SULUT) who were celebrating the Muslim Day of Victory. The activities for Idul Fitri weren't just attended by Muslims, but non-Muslim groups also participated, like in the Pawai Takbiran last Thursday (9/9).

Lieutenant Governor of North Sulawesi Dr. Robby J Mamuaja, stated that religious harmony between religious groups has been in place for long time in North Sulawesi. If there is something that stirs up problems, it will be unequivocally rejected by the community. “As a developed region, we can’t reject the arrival of people from outside the region. Due to this, let’s set an example of how to protect harmonious relations between religious groups,” he said as he wished a happy celebration of Idul Fitri to all of North Sulawesi’s Muslims.”\(^{82}\)

Utilizing the general discourse on religious harmony to distinguish North Sulawesi has been successful in triggering the kind of recognition that is marketable on both the national and international level. The quality of social relations between Muslims and Christians becomes part of the regional flavor that makes North Sulawesi a destination like Bali, a goal that has been explicitly on the radar of the Manado city government officials who make yearly announcements that the city is destined to be the “Tourist City of the World.” The desire for securing a position as a tourist destination has a nationalist cast for a population who see themselves as both politically and culturally displaced from power on account of their minority religious status, and the historical blight of being outsiders to the nationalist cause in the early days of the Indonesian Republic.\(^ {83}\) International attention is pointedly used to

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\(^{81}\) *Takbir* is the Arabic term for the Islamic expression “God is Great” (*Allahu Akbar*). Here, it refers to the Indonesian tradition of *takbiran*, or holding parades or processions on the eve of Islamic holidays where Muslims, often students from local Islamic educational institutions like *pesantren*, circle their neighborhoods repeating the *takbir*.

\(^{82}\) Gyp/CW Saturday September 11th 2009. “Non Muslim Kawal Sholat Id.” *Manado Post*.

\(^{83}\) A plethora of recent publications describing the region’s involvement in the armed conflict of Permesta beginning in 1957 (I refrain from calling it a rebellion here as this terminology has been hotly contested by regional historians) contain revisionist histories that characterize the event as a defense of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (Negara Kesatuan Republic Indonesia, NKRI) and therefore a nationalist movement. This is contrary to the general perception that Permesta was an armed rebellion against the state was resolved only after rebels were forced to surrender to central government troops in 1961. The Permesta conflict was proclaimed in Makassar in 1957 as a bid for more autonomy from the centralized rule emanating from Jakarta and to some degree a reaction from Christians in Sulawesi who felt the protection for their religious status as citizens of the new
demonstrate that the region is economically viable and deserving of more political recognition from the center. This discourse is recirculated in responses that highlight the region’s role in national development, as can be seen in this article describing why the Forum Intellectual Indonesia (FII), a group of scholars and former government officials, decided to hold their third annual conference in North Sulawesi:

The third annual Indonesian conference of *guru besar* has opened the eyes of hundreds of *guru besar* alias professors from outside of North Sulawesi. The beautiful panorama, friendly community as well as the religious harmony has brought praise from the professors. According to the Public Head of the Indonesian Intellectual’s Forum (FII) Ahmad Zaini during the pleno session of the second annual Conference of *Guru Besar* in Indonesia (KGBI) yesterday (28/1) at the Hotel Sinesta Penninsula, North Sulawesi has the highest level of religious harmony in Indonesia. This has become a parameter for the FII organization which is made up of professors, community leaders and religious followers.

It is hoped that through the religious harmony in North Sulawesi, all elements of society and religious leaders can unify to develop the nation and the state” he emphasized. Zaini was interviewed in the afternoon meeting interval yesterday, and he heralded the “land of the waving palm fronds” success in becoming a topic of conversation at the national level after successfully holding international events like the World Ocean Conference (WOC) and Sail Bunaken 2009. North Sulawesi is also known for being safe and pleasant for local and foreign visitors alike. “So my friends agreed to use Manado, the capital city of North Sulawesi, as the location to hold the third-annual KGBI conference. Manado was picked over Makassar and Bali at the FII planning meeting” he said.84

Despite the potential for greater recognition, why would Christian politicians seeking a greater role for their region and religion on the national scene choose to restrict their political discourse to the realm of religious harmony? On examination of the trends of Christian political participation in the 21st century, Bernard Adeney-Risakotta (2008:4) points out that contrary to Muslim suspicions, most Indonesian

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Christians are strongly nationalist. Much of this nationalist emotion stems from the colonial history of Christian-dominant provinces, where the development of autonomous Indonesian churches and the theological ambivalence of Dutch missionaries to the political upheavals of the independence urged Christians into the nationalist fold. From 1960, Suharto’s dictatorial power extended through all social organizations in the name of national development, and most Christian communities benefited from the ability to tap into the government resources that were part of the push for national development (Budijanto 2009:160). Christians also saw Suharto and the army as a powerful buffer between their minority communities and the Muslim majority (ibid., 163).

The context of being Christian in Indonesia has changed dramatically in the years following Suharto’s fall in 1998. The insulated and somewhat elite role that Christians held during the first half of the Suharto era was slowly phased out as the dictator turned his attention to courting the Muslim masses. Fears of the rising number of Christian converts (many a result of the 1965 communist purge) unified traditionalist and modernist Muslim communities to demand legislation against proselytization (Hefner 2000:108) and the removal of non-Muslims from national bureaucracy (Adeny-Risakotta 2008:8). The rising tide of Islamicization that ensued after Suharto relinquished his power, and controls over Islamic political participation, has made most Christians acutely aware of their minority status. Attacks on Christians and churches in the post-1998 period, spurred by Muslim anxiety over Christianization, have been accompanied by a weakened central government that takes little action to enforce policies set in place to protect the rights of minority groups. Fear of offending the Muslim majority and the erosion of political rights have not resulted in a turn towards more overtly “Christian” politics during the last two democratic elections. Christian provinces continue to vote for nationalist parties such as Golkar or Partai Demokrat (Adeney-Risakotta 2008:8).85

Instead of overtly Christian politics, Christian communities have deployed other strategies in the name of political transformation. Adeney-Risakotta outlines

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85 North Sulawesi was a GOLKAR stronghold for most of Suharto’s rule. Partai Demokrat (PD) had a strong showing in the 2004 and 2009 elections, garnering 14.3% of the vote in North Sulawesi in 2004. The current mayor of the capital city of Manado, Godbless Vecky Lumentut, and the province’s governor, Sinyo Harry Sarundajang, are both members of PD.
five broad typologies of Indonesian Christian orientations to politics and power. These typologies take into account the diversity within Christianity in Indonesia while acknowledging a shared context through which co-religionists operate. Two of these typologies aptly characterize the strategies of Minahasan Christians in the North Sulawesi province: orientation towards enhancing regional autonomy (ethnic power) and an orientation towards inter-religious cooperation for justice (Indonesian people power). Risakotta theorizes that although Christians reject coalitions with ‘Islamist’ parties across the board, many groups are amenable to cooperation and coalition-building with Muslim groups in the name of interreligious cooperation. He uses Manado as a counter-example to this trend, citing the widespread protests in the city against the introduction of an anti-pornography law, which was widely interpreted by Christians as an effort to insert principles of Shariah law into the national legislature which would apply to all citizens. I would argue those protests can be interpreted as an effect of how the promotion of regional interests has combined with the discourse on interreligious cooperation in North Sulawesi, as Christian protests in the region focused almost exclusively on how the law limited expressions of local culture representative of ethnic groups, regardless of their religious orientation. The possible impact on tourism was routinely noted, redirecting claims that the anti-pornography campaign was a moral religious concern to the more neutral, and inclusive, claim that cultural practices that represent regions should be protected by the state. North Sulawesi residents feel a responsibility not only to protect Christian interests, but also to demonstrate how regional logics make Muslims in Minahasa different than Muslims living closer to the center. Cultivating religious harmony has also cultivated a sense of cultural difference that has the power to transect religious loyalties in favor of regional solidarity, refuting the idea that all Muslims are oriented towards politics that are anathema to Christian citizens. The development of strong interreligious social

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86 The remaining typologies are orientation to gaining or increasing political power (top down power), Christians oriented to protecting the status quo (balance of power) and orientation to expanding spiritual power (inside-out power) (Adeney-Risakotta 2008:11). These typologies are not intended to be mutually exclusive.

relations is intimately tied to the promotion of a local identity that can represent
more balanced political interests in a Christian estimation. This is not overtly
Christian politics, but politics infused with an awareness of the Christian values
inculcated in local identity.

The logic can even be taken to far extreme, seeing those who champion
multiculturalism as embodying Christianity, regardless of their religious identity.
The death of former Muslim President KH Abdurrahman Wahid (commonly
referred to as Gus Dur) in 2010 sparked strong reactions across North Sulawesi.
Considered a champion of multiculturalism who tirelessly struggled to ensure a
more just nation for minority religious groups, his loss was keenly felt.
Religious leaders gathered together around the region to mark the passing of
someone they considered to be part of the community on account of his efforts to
promote religious harmony:

Bitung – The loss of a national hero, KH Abdurrahman Wahid, usually
referred to as Gus Dur, is felt by the residents of Bitung city. This is because
the pluralism and democracy built by Gus Dur has made Bitung into a
symbol of religious harmony. Bitung Mayor Hanny Sondakh stated it can’t be
denied that the harmony developed in Bitung city is a result of Gus Dur’s
struggle to inspire emotion and democracy.88

“Manado – it’s not just members of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) or Muslims in
Java that are grieving. Christians in North Sulawesi are also grieving at the
departure of KH Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). Even the churches in this
region are joining in to pray for Gus Dur’s soul to be received at Allah’s side.
Observed by journalists, a number of pastors prayed for Gus Dur during the
New Year’s evening and morning services. This includes pastors from the
GMIM church, Catholic Church, Pentecostal church and others. In the
reflection and end of the year prayer led by the Community of Church Youth
and Teenagers (Kompag) North Sulawesi at the Manado Icon Convention
Center (MIcon) on Thursday, (31/12), the head of the Commission of Lay
Apostles of the Catholic Bishop’s Council of Manado Father Fred Tawalujan
praised Gus Dur’s activities. “For me, Gus Dur is a Muslim who is Christian-
like.” 89

These kinds of statements are striking in a contemporary context where
Muslims increasingly express their anxiety over “contamination” by proximity to

89 Tas/jpnn Saturday, January 2, 2010 “Gereja Sulut Mendoakan Gus Dur” Manado Post.
Christian communities, part of the burgeoning re-pietization movement that swept the Islamic world beginning in the 1970s and 1980s (Hefner 2005:18). Largely a civil society movement, the resurgence of pietistic Islam is thematically concerned with the purification of Islamic practice, especially within the public sphere. These concerns extend to consider the effect that interreligious activity might have on Muslims and the implications for their ritual practice. Anxieties over community “mixing” were explicitly aimed at traditions of cooperation between Muslims and Christians, such as the Indonesian Muslim Ulema Council’s request that the attorney general remove sections from national textbooks encouraging students to join in other religious groups’ holiday celebrations, a reiteration of a 1981 fatwa preventing Muslims from attending Christmas celebrations (Bowen 2003:237). Attention to the boundary policing between Muslim and Christian groups even extended to the microlinguistic level, with Muslims scholars debating if it was appropriate for Muslims to answer the standard Arabic greeting Assalamu’Alaikum’ if it originated from a Christian speaker (ibid., 238).

From a local Muslim perspective, it is the suspension of these kinds of religiously based social restrictions that situates local Muslims as ethnically similar to Christians in the region, in contrast to their co-religionists in places like Java. Muslims and Christians alike contrast the political and social characteristics of Muslims in North Sulawesi with the “mainstream” Islamists of the center. The absorption of Minahasa (and Manadonese) identity into the ethnoregional frame can inflect religious identity with local characteristics, seemingly making Muslims in North Sulawesi more like their Christian regional counterparts than Indonesian Muslims from other regions. Here, a representative of the Department of Religion in Manado explains that when Muslims from other organizations visit the region to learn about the efforts of BKSAUA, the differences are notable. For instance, he contrasts Muslims in North Sulawesi with Muslims from other regions who follow the religiously-proscribed rules about greeting non-Muslims with the shortened version of the phrase assalamu’alaikum: 

Recently the Head of Nadhlatul Ulama (BPNU) came. We gave an explanation about BKSAUA, and those from Jakarta salute us for what’s going on here, we’re still fortunate with everything. This is what a North Sulawesi person is, especially a Minahasan, especially a Manadonese, if he
does something, if he says salam, there’s no one who thinks its wrong. He’s better than a Javanese person, I’m sorry to say, but those Muslims have difficulty saying salam, right? Try and see, everything’s possible for him, even if it’s just saying salam. I’m very grateful for this (field interview, 12/16/2009).

Despite all the discussion of solidarity, Pak Panawar is careful to point out in his discussion with me that regional brotherhood does not diminish or threaten individual religious identities. Religious activity serves as a focal point for the activities of organizations like BKSAUA, and promotes a heightened inter-religious awareness between Muslims and Christians:

Panawar: The most remarkable activity is like when we are about to celebrate Christmas (natal), if there is a Christmas service on the 25th on December, outside that service there are Muslim teenagers who are on guard, the same as with the prayers for Idul Fitri at the mosque, Christian teenagers guard the surrounding area. That’s harmonizing (harmonisasi). It’s like when we celebrate Christmas, like what’s going on now, every Christmas there is a safari event, this has become a regular thing now for some time, the “Christmas Safari”. Those who participate aren’t only Catholics or Protestants, or Hindus and Buddhists, but Muslims too, the public and leaders participate together. This doesn’t mean that they mix together in worship, no, but for the worship services of our friends the Christians, and also with those from Islam, they are present too, not just Islamic people, but Catholics, Protestants, Hindus and Buddhists, even Confucians at last, yah, Confucians also join us. We don’t participate in the same worship services, but we attend to demonstrate solidarity, our togetherness, because worship can’t be mixed, one type of worship can’t be mixed with another. But we attend the worship service, yes, please, go ahead and worship, and the Muslims please have a seat, and our Christian friends we ask you to go on with your Christmas worship service. It’s the same with Ramadan. We pray, and our friends are already outside, it’s like that, very harmonious (field interview 12/17/2009).

Interactions between Muslims and Christians in North Sulawesi take their meaning by attributing a regional association to common, stereotypical anxieties over boundary maintenance between religious groups. Food is a particularly salient point of differentiation between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia, especially the Islamic prohibition against eating pork. Food practices are frequently invoked as a

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90 A safari refers to a publicized tour where politicians make appearances at local events and organizations as a group, usually during holidays or during the campaign period. These safaris are usually accompanied by orchestrated media coverage.
part of the discourse on Minahasan identity, where “substances and ways of consumption are given key status in discourses on Minahasa culture and *adat*” (Weichart 2004:64) and pork products are ritually and socially significant aspects of festive meals for events and holidays (ibid., 66). Where food habits that signify Christian identity overlap with practices of communal feasting and systems of village reciprocity (*mapalus*), the basis for comparison is scaled up to exhibit regionally distinct attitudes towards patterns of consumption. Food prohibitions aren't suspended, but the attribution of locality is expanded to include the social interaction between Muslims and Christians:

As we discussed Muslim Christian relations, again the theme of food boundaries emerged in terms of the distinction between Java and Minahasa. Mr. N discussed Muslim-Christian relations in terms of communal feasting. “Unlike in Java” he said “here Christians aren’t afraid of Muslims putting poison in their food, and Muslims aren’t afraid of Christians putting pork in their food” (fieldnotes 8/20/2009).

Interaction hinges on activities that redraw the boundaries between religious groups. By focusing on the cultural frameworks of interaction between local Muslims and Christians, enacting religious harmony can foster a more intense religiosity, as the characteristics of religious practice become part of the common currency of local interaction:

KAS: Is there a blood relation? Those who are here already, there are people here from Gorontalo, Tondano, there are many sub-ethnic groups, but they feel like one, right?

Panawar: It’s because of this that the issue of religion doesn’t become a limitation for being religious. There’s no limitation. There is no pillar to limit it. Yeah, when we worship, we worship individually, but in everyday life there is never any awkwardness in relations, I never feel uncomfortable mixing with anyone. There isn’t any, I never feel that Muslims are small [disadvantaged], I don’t feel that Christians are big people [powerful, advantaged], I don’t see it like that. I also feel self-confident, there I feel self-confident, I’m respected, that’s my feeling. Sometimes during a meeting, sometimes I’m asked “have you prayed (*sholat*) yet?” I’m reminded like that. So our style of speaking also defines us, if I see my Christian friends around the time of evening prayers (*mahgrib*), “have you already completed your evening prayers?” It’s like that, because we already know each other well. “Have you gone to Friday prayers yet?” Or if I call someone on Sunday,
“oh, yeah, sorry! [for disturbing the day of worship for Christians]. Fundamentally things are very good for us here, I essentially can’t imagine North Sulawesi any other way” (field interview 12/17/2009).

Difference is calculated in distinction from the religious practices of the mainstream, inverting the parameters of pronouncements from popular religious advisory boards like the MUI, even as they invoke them as a frame of reference. In contradistinction to the theory propagated by quasi-legal organizations like MUI that contact between religions diminishes or endangers the foundations of one’s individual belief, North Sulawesi Muslims and Christians alike assert that interreligious activity is in itself a religious activity, an expression of individual faith. Instead of weakening religious faith, interreligious activity promotes religiosity and strengthens individual religious identity. It’s not that the kind of speech Muslims and Christians use in everyday communication is distinct from the kind of language their co-religionists use elsewhere in the country (or around the world). What is distinct is the way its use is metaculturally (Urban 2001) interpreted to represent regional difference and to instantiate a distinct social context.

The idea that inter-religious activity can serve to reaffirm religious identity and intensify belief explains why activities focused on the concept of *kerukunan beragama* are often performed as religious activities in North Sulawesi. In addition to ecumenical events, Protestant churches in North Sulawesi define *kerukunan beragama* as a Christian practice, or a characteristic of Christian practice that should be actively fostered as a part of religious life. GMIM churches hold special services for their pastors on the topic of *kerukunan beragama*, where sermons explore the Christian implications of interreligious harmony from a Christian perspective. Groups of Protestants from the neighborhood where I lived while conducting fieldwork would gather weekly for mobile prayer brigades, driving the city streets and praying to maintain the peaceful relations between the city’s inhabitants, in hopes of maintaining the region’s status as safe and peaceful (*aman dan damai*). Youth from the Sons and Daughters of Bitung, a civic social service organization, invite Muslims to attend their pre-Christmas service for elderly city residents, claiming “a portion of the elderly residents we’ve invited to receive this
social service are Muslim. Jesus Christ didn’t only come to earth only for Christians, but for all of mankind. Inter-religious interactions are evaluated theologically in light of the biblical predictions about the unfolding destiny of Christianity in the era of nation-states. According to a former GMIM synod head, “over time, religious harmony becomes more common in the everyday. Friendship between different peoples is written in the Old Testament, as well as friendship between nations” (Fieldnotes 5/23/2009).

During the lead-up to the World Ocean Conference that brought politicians from around the Asian-Pacific region to Manado to discuss climate change and ocean conservation, Christian investiture in representing religious harmony was combined with discourses on regional development (pembangunan daerah), a cooption of the New Order slogan of national development that now refers to the region’s ability to mobilize resources and jockey for national recognition. In a 2010 speech for local churches during a service to welcome the new year, North Sulawesi Governor Sinyo Harry Sarundajang:

...reminded the Christian community to become pioneers in developing religious harmony. In addition, SHS also invited all components of the North Sulawesi community, from Miangas all the way to Pinogaluman to join hands in developing the region. He reviewed all the successes achieved in 2009, in the fields of governance, farming, health, developing infrastructure, the improving growth of the North Sulawesi economy, increase in life expectancy and other indicators. He also mentioned the successful implementation of the international World Ocean Event and Coral Triangle Initiative and Sail Bunaken.”

The wider Christian community also made clear the religious implications of the success of events that contribute to the improvement of the region. An article entitled “Ensuring the World Ocean Conference is aligned with God’s (Allah) Plan” described a gathering of members from sixty-seven Christian denominations gathered to pray for the success of the World Ocean Conference, contextualizing the

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91 The Indonesian term used here is diakonia, a Christian term referring to religiously motivated social service.
92 Ibadah Pra Natal IPPB (Ikatan Putra Putri Bitung) Undang Lansia Muslim.
region’s role in fighting environmental degradation as part of God’s plan, as well as a moment to exhibit the inclusive character of North Sulawesi Christians:

The struggle against the issue of global warming has been taken up by 67 denominations in North Sulawesi. This is because global warming threatens the lives of humans and other living creatures, including those in coastal areas. “Churches support the World Ocean Conference (WOC) and the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) Summit because it is in line with God’s plan” said the Head of the Daily Work Synod of churches in North Sulawesi and Gorontalo (PH SAG Suluttengo) Pastor Jan Sumakul yesterday. The head of the Board of Inter-church Deliberation (Bamag) North Sulawesi added that this activity is a form of promoting the welfare of mankind. Therefore all church members must lend their support in the form of praying together. “This prayer involves the leaders of the church as well as the congregation heads and pastors. In addition, the congregations and congregation assemblies from 67 church denominations have to pray every day for the success of this event” said Pastor Sumakul.

He also appealed to all of the people of the North Sulawesi community to express themselves in a friendly manner and be full of smiles (Smiling People) as well as to follow the slogan “Torang Samua Basudara” or “We are all sisters/brothers [to] each other.” He added that everyone in the community should demonstrate that religious harmony is truly a part of the society.”

Discourses on development and tourism are linked to constructions of regional identity that position North Sulawesi in competition with other areas of the archipelago, a concern that is demonstrated by both Muslim and Christian communities in characterizing religious harmony as a resource in promoting the region:

The congregation of GMIM Theodoron Tateli held a pre-Christmas service on Tuesday, 1/12...interestingly, the pre-Christmas ceremony was characterized by the sharing of love (membagi kasih) as a means of creating and strengthening harmony between religious groups around them as well as within Christian denominations. It’s not only for this that the church engaged in worship. The service was led by Pendeta Robot Sumilat. He quoted from the Book of Matthew, 1:18-25. “Let’s all change the way

we live our lives and the way we think as we enter the year 2010, that is, the era of competition.”

Vice Mayor of the City of Manado, Abdi Buchari SE MSi, in a discussion with Muslim clerics and the Head of the Ta’mir Mosque Committee for Manado, stated that all sectors of the community need to support the governmental program to make Manado become a world tourism city. “There are already many programs that have been put in place for the promotion of Manado, like the organization of the Unity Park (Taman Kesatuan Bangsa) and the creation of the Monument to Brotherhood (Tugu TorangBasudara),” he said on Sunday, 5/4. “One of the challenges that we have to face is the rigorous competition between regions, so we have to compete in terms of development”.

That expressions of religious harmony often coincide with events designed to draw attention to the region is no accident. Tourism and development are linked in efforts to draw more resources to individual provinces and raise regional profiles. Especially in the “era of regional competition,” tourism is an axis of interaction between regional economic concerns and the maintenance of cultural distinction; in fact, tourism has the potential to transform difference into something that generates resources. In Indonesia, this process of commodification is filtered through existing ideologies about how “authentic” cultures are those tied to particular places.

Recontextualizing religious harmony as cultural distinction works in both directions. It both creates a sense of authenticity in displaying cultural continuities between Muslims and Christians when compared with other regions, and gives both communities motivation for investing in that construction given the potential it has to attract recognition and resources. Promoting religious harmony as a cultural

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96 The Taman Kesatuan Bangsa is located in the Center of Manado city, and serves as an open-air theater for city events. It features a statue of Dotu Lolong Lasut, believed to be the founder of Manado City, and a large blue cross. According to the tourist site The Aeronbinang Travelogue, it’s a place used to “display the art and culture of Minahasa.” http://thearoengbinangproject.com/2010/09/wisata-kesatuan/. The park is popular spot for cultural performances held in conjunction with national holidays.

97 This pillar monument is located at the Hill of Love (Bukit Kasih), a tourist site dedicated to the representing the five official religions of Indonesia. The pillar displays excerpts of religious text from all five religious groups.

commodity also sidesteps the problematic association between Christianity and Minahasan culture.

Although framing religious harmony as a culturally distinct practice refutes the convergence (and confusion) between Christianity and local culture, it does not remove religion from the sphere of discourse on culture and local identity. Instead, culture is located in socially specific practices of religious interaction. Beyond the benefits of allowing Christianity to be central to local culture without being exclusive, these expressions also serve as an entrée into the world of national politics. While not overtly ‘Christian,’ these assertions do indicate a niche in which Christian nationalists can take a leading role. It opens a space for the expression of Christian desires for the future of the nation, to see the nation more infused with Christian morality and a more substantial role for Christians citizens. It is also a strategy for reinforcing the first formative ideological tenet of Indonesian nationalism, which assures the nation-state will not submit to the will of the majority population to institute Islamic law at the national level. In principle, the government cannot codify one religious system’s morality over others in national law, but minority religious groups fear that this promise won’t be kept. Given the importance of Christianity in the social history of the region, the continued religious neutrality of national legislation is both a religious and a regional concern. Christians in North Sulawesi will often cite the exclusion of the Jakarta Charter, a 16-word clause originally attached to the first tenet of Pancasila indicating the country’s religious orientation would be Islamic, as the basic condition of remaining part of Indonesia. Some interpret the advent of decentralization policies as a concession to the demands for greater regional control that were the basis for the Permesta conflict, with decreased economic dependence on the center acting as a failsafe should Indonesia move towards the establishment of a de-facto Islamic state (Jacobsen 2002:7). As one of my informants casually stated in 2009 while passing the grave of her uncle who was killed during the Permesta period, if the then newly-elected president SBY ended up catering to Muslims by allowing the country to drift towards an Islamic state, “it would be Permesta all over again.”

99 Jacobson (2002:32) has described similar public debates in 1999 over whether regional inhabitants would be satisfied with greater autonomy through federalism or should push for independence from Indonesia. With the advent of decentralization and regional autonomy in
In some cases, decentralization policies have pushed regional leaders to defend their application of religious morality at the local level as part of cultural distinction and the expression of the right to regional autonomy. This has resulted in ethno-religious exclusivism, where the religion of the majority is portrayed as part of the region’s cultural tradition, and arguably serves as the appropriate basis for independent local governance.  

This extreme is not a particularly viable solution for fostering a political community in the North Sulawesi region, as discussed above. Historically, it has been Christian politicians who have originated official discourse and slogans urging local inhabitants to see the management of their religious difference as a part of their cultural distinction from other groups. The popularity of the slogan “We Are All Brothers” (Torang Samua Basudara) is attributed to politician EE Mangindaan, who served as the Governor of North Sulawesi from 1995 – 2000.  

During the lead-up to the 2010 regional elections, however, the deployment of the discourse of religious harmony as representative of local by both Muslim and Christian candidates demonstrated the viability of this discourse for both sectors of the North Sulawesi public. These campaign advertisements also demonstrate that symbols of Minahasa in public settings are being divorced from their exclusive association with Christianity, and are being used to signify a multi-religious cultural identity that encompasses the entire North Sulawesi province.

2001, most agreed that the region should continue to be integrated within the Indonesian state as long as the ideological principle protecting religious diversity was upheld (ibid., 36).  

Most notably, those provinces that have made religious edicts into law at the district (kabupaten) level through the creation of religiously-based regional policies (peraturan daerah).  

Mangindaan was recently honored for this contribution during a celebration of his birthday in Manado, as described at beritamanado.com “Tokoh SULUT: Selamat Ulang Tahun Evert Erenst Mangindaan” January 5th 2012 edition online, http://beritamanado.com/berita-utama/tokoh-sulut-selamat-ulang-tahun-evert-erenst-mangindaan/73092/.
Figure 3.6: Wempie Frederik, Protestant Mayoral Candidate for the Manado municipality in 2010. The slogan reads “Manado for Everyone.” The photos inset across the top portray houses of worship. From right to left, they are a mosque, a Protestant church, a Catholic church, a Hindu temple and a Chinese temple.

Figure 3.7: Lucky Harry Korah, Protestant Mayoral Candidate for the Municipality of Tomohon in 2010. The slogan reads “firm in my struggle for the people of North Sulawesi – we are all brothers.” The red and white background is Indonesia’s national flag.
Figure 3.8: Danny Sondakh, Protestant Vice Mayoral Candidate for the Manado Municipality in 2010. The slogan reads: “United we break through our differences. Requesting your prayers and support.” The red and white color scheme again invokes the Indonesian flag.
Figure 3.9: Stefanus Vreeke Runtu, Protestant Gubenatorial candidate for the North Sulawesi Province in 2010. The slogan reads: “Requesting the prayers and support of the people of North Sualwesi.” Pictured in the background are statues of Toar, Lumimuut and Karema at the tourist site The Hill of Love (Bukit Kasih) which monumentalizes the religious diversity of the region. These characters are central to the origin myth of the Minahasan people.

Figure 3.10: Hi. Burhanuddin, Muslim Vice Mayoral Candidate for the Manado Municipality in 2010. The slogan reads “Diversity is beautiful.” Buildings in the background are houses of worship: a mosque, a church, a Chinese temple and a Hindu temple.
Figure 3.11: Sinyo Harry Sarundajang, Governor of North Sulawesi Province running for a second term in 2010. The slogan reads: “Develop without corruption. He’s been tested and proven (this section in Bahasa Manado). North Sulawesi is changing, North Sulawesi is known by the world, North Sulawesi is moving forward/becoming developed, North Sulawesi is well-off, let’s continue this!” The text in red “I Jajat U Santi” is a phrase in Tombulu language, a Minahasan war cry that references cultural identity.
Figure 3.12: 2010 Christian Mayoral Candidate Louis Nangoy and Muslim Vice Mayoral Candidate Rizali M. Noor’s campaign poster with the slogan “Kasih and Amanah”. In addition to wearing clothing that indicates religious identity, the term *kasih* (love) is drawn from Christian theological discourse, and the term *amalah* (truthfulness) is similarly a reference to Qur’anic discourse. The white text in the box below states “it’s what we need!” in the regional creole, Bahasa Manado.
These campaign advertisements are notable in that they reflect the dual implications of coopting the national discourse of religious harmony as a characteristic of cultural distinction. First, politicians hoping to build an inclusive political community based on an ethno-local distinction portray social interaction between religious groups as part of local culture. This implies that local culture is not restricted to those areas historically associated with Minahasa, but extends to encompass the diverse community living within North Sulawesi’s provincial borders. Cultural symbols of Minahasa are disarticulated from ownership calculated through the exclusive ties of descent and association with land, and instead reference shared regional ideals. If patterns of social interaction between Muslims and Christians are characterized to reflect something essential to being Minahasan, it follows that Minahasa is not always portrayed as being exclusively a Christian domain. This second implication – that enough of a delineation exists between culture and religion to enable Christian practitioners to share a culture with Muslims – has spurred a re-examination of where the division between Christianity and culture should fall, and how “culture” should be properly displayed, and understood, in public performance.

The spectacle of harmonious culture: tourism, ethnicity and the circulation of a multi-religious regional identity in North Sulawesi

In Indonesia, culture’s definition relies in large part on its role as part of a spectacle, a performance aimed outwards as a demonstration of diversity to a national, or international, audience. The development of an aesthetic concept of culture follows the historical trajectory that began with the delineation of adat from religion during the colonial period, into the era of the nation-state where adat was further decontextualized and divested of its ritual import. The evolution of adat from an all-encompassing cosmological system into a matter of “consciously adhering to prescribed ceremonial, of performing ritual” that is primarily aesthetic (Acciaioli 1985:152) was part of the state’s strategy in managing a highly diverse population. Similar to missionaries who labored to separate ritual aspects from their original social context and invest them with theological meaning, the Indonesian government engineers objectified displays of culture that replace problematic ritual meanings
with nationalistic values, including sanctioned religious belief. As Acciaioli describes:

...the Indonesian state has had to confront the diversity of ways of life in its constituent peoples, in short, their *adat*. To maintain the appearance of respect for all these differing forms of *adat*, it has not sought to eradicate diversity, but to emasculate it. Regional diversity is valued, honoured, even apotheosized, but only as long as it remains at the level of display, not belief, performance, not enactment (1985:161).

This concept of culture as a contextless display can articulate with the tourist’s desire to take cultural performances at face value, “replicas of life in the ethnographic present, static, timeless, without history, without agency, without context” not as “contemporary rituals offered in a particular political and touristic context” (Bruner 2004:4). These kinds of performances are often critiqued precisely because they are divorced from context. However, it is exactly in the potential for touristic displays to downplay problems, power differentials and contentions, allowing participants to re-narrate cultural symbols, that can make them so appealing in Indonesia. As Bruner (2004:5) points out, since all touristic performances are novel because they occur in a new context, with a new audience and in a different time, we should see them as essentially constitutive. We should consider how the objectification of ritual life into a display of “cultural art” (*seni budaya*) allows participants to invest these symbols with meaning that reflects and resonates with a community in the process of redefinition.

In Minahasa, the decontextualization of cultural performance deemed “Minahasan” has long been utilized as a strategy for maintaining cultural identity through association with ritual symbols, a means of experiencing culture in a way that does not conflict with Christian beliefs. Spectacles of cultural art embody this method of displaying identity and deploying it as a object that can be marketed, preserved, lost or stolen, but also can be possessed without the requirement of being ritually efficacious or sanctioned by authorized figures in the community. Importantly, in its decontextualized state, it is transformed into a resource for the entire community, regardless of their religious orientation, an achievement that can nevertheless be evaluated religiously. Minahasa district’s Mayor, Steevenus Vreeke, articulated this in his opening speech for the Guinness World Record Event at the Maesa Stadium in Tondano:
Ladies and gentlemen, respected guests, I want to communicate my happiness and appreciation that this world record, this MURI record, would not have happened without the power of God the All-powerful, and elevates the name of Minahasa. Furthermore, as we all know, Minahasa possesses diverse kinds of potential, including culture, oceanic tourism, and culinary tourism. This is something that is the government of the District of Minahasa is paying attention to which will function as an alternative sector of development and will help to increase the quality of life for the people of Minahasa. Through breaking this world record, and the MURI record, the music and dance of Minahasa will be promoted and valued by the whole world. I consider the achievement of these records important in the process of patenting (mempatenkan) cultural art, especially that which is admitted to be in existence in Minahasa. This momentum will also spur the government and the people of Minahasa to be more productive in loving their local culture, and furthermore, the existence of this music will advance us to the same level as the islands of Java, Kalimantan and Bali. Because of this wonderful opportunity, I call for all components of the Minahasan community to protect this culture wherever it is, including in church and other places of worship (field recording, 10/31/2009).

In these narratives, the value of Minahasan cultural art is presented as a resource for promoting regional identity, one that clearly articulates with the national constructions of culture as a display of diversity. Overtly aligned with state development goals that are translated into regional aspirations, the event is also open to being narrated in terms of its religious import. Dr. Benny Mamoto echoed this sentiment time and time again in news coverage of the event:

Head of the North Sulawesi Institute of Cultural Art (ISBSU) said that everything they have done was fully intended by God. “We turn this whole event over to God, and we are certain that God will display his power tomorrow” Mamoto told the Tribun Manado at the Measa Stadium yesterday. Mamoto was accompanied by another leader of the organization, Dwi Putra, who said that from the beginning the breaking of the world record was arranged by God.”

Mamoto’s religious exhortations are consonant with the way his organization perceives of culture as a performative artistic act. The ISBSU clearly promotes the performance of ethnic and cultural identity through a nationalistic idiom, one concerned with demonstrating that Minahasa possesses a cultural heritage equivalent to other ethnolocalities in Indonesia. Performance, not ritual, is sufficient.

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to demonstrate cultural belonging, sidestepping the contentious potential of questions about the authenticity of cultural practice in non-ritual context:

The national Kawanua Festival was conceived of by the North Sulawesi Institute of Art and Culture to introduce the artistic potential of the Kawanua community as equal to the artistic potential possessed by other peoples of Indonesia. This activity is part of a five-year routine that is part of the Institute’s agenda in the form of providing support for a tourism and culture program. For the first year, 2007, activities remained focused on one type of art form, the *Maengket* dance. However, for this second time [holding the festival] there will be a number of different kinds of activities, containing artistic elements drawn from outside of Kawanua arts. This year’s theme is “CULTURE AS THE UNIFIER OF THE NATION”. This is our commitment to protect and preserve existing cultural values so that the next generation will not forget about the richness of the cultural values in this beloved region while simultaneously serving as a means of unifying the nation.”

The use of the term *Kawanua* is revealing as it signals the kind of decontextualized, portable social aspects of local identity that are neither static nor stationary and exceed both localized geographies and national boundaries, and yet draw meaning from the emotionality invested in shared spaces of habitation and history. Renwarin (2006:211) explains that the term evolved as part of the transformation of the social organization of identity in North Sulawesi through the colonial period. The root *wanua* is a spatial description that indicates a shared residence or domain, based on village collectivities for defensive purposes, and *kawanua* refers to the relationship of residents who belong to the same place (ibid., 210). This principle originally transected the *pakasa’an* ethnic constellations that reckoned a shared identity on the basis of living in a defined area, using the same language, and sharing a common group name (ibid., 211) but later came to represent frames of ethnic and regional collectivity (ibid., 212). It was the recognition of relations

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103 A 2011 adat festival organized by ISBSU at the watu pinebetangan site had a theme that similarly juxtaposed local/particular identities against nationalistic themes: “Develop the Character of the Nation, Formulate Self-Identity” (*Membangun Karakter Bangsa, Membentuk Jati Diri*). The term jati diri is often subsisted for the Indonesian version of the word ethnicity *etnis* in academic parlance.


105 The word *wanua* is found in Javanese, and also related to the Austronesian word *benua.*
between sub-ethnic groups within colonial-era borders that expanded the idea of kawanua as a social collectivity that aligned with regional borders. Contemporary use of the term can be still be used to stand in for regional identity, referencing “sharing of the same territory, civil administration, religion, and Manadonese-Malay language” (ibid., 208).

Today, kawanua also commonly refers to those individuals who claim Minahasan identity but live somewhere beyond the physical borders of the Minahasan homeland. The term is encountered in businesses and social organizations for individuals who trace their roots to North Sulawesi but live their lives in other places around the archipelago. Kawanua USA,106 is an organization that connects Minahasan families living in the United States to each other and the goings-on of the North Sulawesi region through websites, social networking, electronic news and regional events. Many of the organization’s activities are held under the aegis of US Indonesian Christian congregations that are composed predominantly of members who identify as Minahasan, and the organization maintains national ties through affiliation with Indonesian diplomatic institutions in the United States.

That the word kawanua evokes a shared homeland for those who may have never set foot in North Sulawesi exemplifies the relational production of locality that Arjun Appadurai (1996:195) theorizes is the result of a disjunction between associations built on actual spatial proximity, and the virtual associations that are not contained by specific geographies or political boundaries. Making a distinction between ethnoscapes or neighborhoods which are “lifeworlds constituted by relatively stable associations, by relatively known or shared histories, and collectively tranversed spaces” (ibid., 191) and the production of local subjects, he sees the production of “the local” as a process that is increasingly problematized in the modern era. In his estimation, there is a discrepancy between the way nation states create a context for locality dependent on bounded geographic units that “reproduce compliant national citizens” (ibid.,190) and the increasingly unbound, mediated connections that are part of the processes of localization that exceed both

territorial and political boundaries (ibid., 195). Even as the nation engineers contexts that support localization through *ethnoscapes* that are imputed to rely on territorial associations, those contexts experience friction with the context-building of everyday lived experiences that expose how ways of being local often “exceed or [can] be non-isomorphic with the material and conceptual boundaries of the neighborhood” (ibid., 185). Localization is not a new phenomena, but the hybrid, deterritorialized and increasingly virtual contexts that breathe life to the local as a category sometimes fall into counterposition to the structures of feeling based in shared social lives, producing the disorientation that characterizes modern local subjectivities (ibid., 197). In Minahasa, however, it is a shift in the “mass mediated discourses and practices surrounding the nation-state” (ibid., 199) towards constructions of cultural identity that have unsettled the structure of feeling that sees Minahasa as a place that evolved through connections that exceeded territorial bounds, always re-centering attention on the locality’s development within cosmopolitan streams of trade, commerce and the cultural assumptions carried by Western civilization.

Placing cultural association squarely in the realm of performance also removes constructions of local culture from coming into conflict with the theological values of the GMIM church for which Mamoto serves as an active leader. In his position as the Head of the Committee for the Annual Assembly Meeting of the GMIM Synod Council, he elucidates the role of the church in ensuring that Minahasa will persist into the future, and that the next generation will know who they are:

Mamoto explained that the organizing committee intentionally presented the opening worship service with an artistic performance so that the culture of Minahasa will remain familiar. He explained that the artistic performance during the opening worship service was presented for and involved children. According to him, children are an important asset to the church, because they are the generation that will continue both the church and the nation. “Children are an important asset for GMIM. If they are taught to know the culture and unique art forms of Minahasa, they won’t suffer any identity crisis in the future. They’ll also love their region more.”

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If regional identity is to be based in culture, it must do so in a way that does not conflict with GMIM’s Protestant principles about the rightful realm of culture in respect to religion, a ontological concern that is shared with national compartmentalizations of religious and cultural identities into separate but related categories. Cultural loss is understood not as the transformation or usurpation of ritual knowledge by the institution of the church, but as not recognizing oneself (and not being recognized) as belonging to the compounded category of region and cultural identity.

Tourist displays that highlight religious identity’s role in local culture are nothing new in Minahasa, where one of the most well known sites for local tourism is a monument to religious diversity. The Hill of Love (Bukit Kaisih) was erected in 2002 at the urging of a Muslim-Christian cooperative network called the “Network of Loving Work” (Jaring Kerja Kasih, henceforth JEJAK) founded by a Muslim senior journalist from the Manado Post (Thufial 2010:154). Responding to concerns over the conflict in Maluku, provincial Governor Sondakh declared 2002 the “Year of Love” (Tahun Kaisih) and in cooperation with JEJAK and the GMIM church, erected miniature models of houses of worship representing the five officially sanctioned state religions as a monument to peace (Thufial 2010: 156-157). The obelisk displaying texts from the five religions (tugu torang basudara) was added later, as well as statues depicting scenes from the origin myth of Minahasa portraying the mythical ancestors Toar, Lumimuut and Karema. Critics of the monument point out that while claiming to promote religious harmony, its location near the ritually significant center of Minahasan culture, Watu Pinawetengan, as well as its heavy reliance on Christian theological language such as the word kasih (love) makes it more akin to a symbol of Christian political power in the region (ibid., 156).

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108 In my many visits to Bukit Kasih over the years, I’ve observed that most people experience the site as a park, not as a religious space in any way. Most locals go to enjoy the natural beauty of the space, including the panoramic view from the top, and the sulfurous pools below. In a talk entitled “Bukit Kasih, The Hill of Love: Multireligiosity for Pleasure” at the International Consortium of Religious Studies (ICRS) at Universitas Gadjah Mada on April 13th, 2011, Professor Judith Schlehe postulated that the site was not only dominated by Christian symbols, but that the attempt to symbolize religious harmony failed as most visitors only paid attention to the miniature of the house of worship belonging to their own religious practice.
Where Bukit Kasih can be accused of Christianizing the local frameworks of religious interaction, the growing resurgence of *adat* movements across the archipelago have spurred the creation of marketable cultural objects that reject an exclusive association with Christianity for a more neutral monotheism. In 2006, an organization calling itself Karema, an acronym standing for “the creation of the people of North Sulawesi” began production of a woven material they refer to as *bentenen*, a weaving tradition from the districts of Minahasa associated with Islam: Pasan, Ratahan and Ponosakan. Described as a Minahasan tradition dating back to 7th century, the organization claims to have resurrected three motifs that have been lost for over 200 years. One was designed by Jessy Wenas, a noted cultural historian in Minahasa, and the other two designs were drawn from patterns associated with the Bantik sub-ethnic group, and the people of the Sangir-Talaud islands. Both groups are considered peripheral to Minahasa and not usually associated with the groups listed under the umbrella of Minahasan identity.

In the promotional material explaining the organization’s name, Karema, a character of the Minahasan origin myth, is explained in religious, but not exclusively Christian, terms. Although there is much that can be interpreted as referring to Christian values in this text:

Based on the legend of the Minahasans, Karema was the First Female Spiritual Leader in Minahasa...KAREMA proved that there were already females in leadership in Minahasa in the past, so that the issue of gender is no problem for the people of North Sulawesi. KAREMA was also the first person to become familiar with the presence of power “above” all others (*Empung Wailan Wangko*).\(^{109}\)

The product is unequivocally earmarked as an object of cultural representation for a diverse regional community, according to the organization’s stated goals:

To value the cultural richness and the growth of civilization among the North Sulawesi people. KAREMA has come for all people of North Sulawesi, and we have expended all our energy, effort and money to restore the product of the work of the people of North Sulawesi, so that they may possess once again a feeling of pride as well as love for nationally produced products. We have made an effort so that cultural products, or more specifically artistic

\(^{109}\) This is a gloss for “God Almighty” drawn from Bahasa Tombulu.
products can be produced by the sons and daughters of the region, opening the production sector to the broader population. The result of this creation of the people of North Sulawesi is an offering towards the advancement and benefit of the wider population.

Just like tourists, people in North Sulawesi are sometimes able to take these touristic displays at face value, while others question their authenticity, or in other words, see them as failing to embody an authoritative iteration of local culture. Some see them as cultural innovation, and others as the tainted collapse of context where religious morals and the market separate culture so far from its ties to specific histories and practices that it renders them unrecognizable. Similar to what Bruner describes in his analysis of Maasai tourist performances that celebrate national harmony despite the reality of ethnic conflict (Bruner 2001:900), the performance of religious harmony in Minahasa is a performative way of addressing the contradictions about the role Christianity plays in defining who belongs and can rightfully lay claim to aspects of local culture. As cultural festivals and other displays of the local are a tool for consolidating identity in uncertain times (Guss 461:1993), this theme is picked up, circulated through a number of contexts, and organizes the disparate discourses on ethnicity, religion, culture and region in Minahasa. Commonality is created as strangers participate in this discourse (Warner 2005:68) that defines and in essence creates an ethnolocal public that is linked to the North Sulawesi province. What is infused in common consciousness through the circulation of texts and discourse has no predictable outcome, but builds on each utterance and instance, each performance that is narrated and re-narrated to circulate again.

In the next chapter, I'll examine how the objectification of culture that supports constructions of a multi-religious identity can alternately be used as an argument for the eradication of the link between religion and culture, in a battle over the meaning of a potent symbol of local society and religion in Minahasa. Regional elites may engineer performances and media events that utilize the national discourse of *kerukunan beragama* as a strategy to refute the peripheral status of the region through the creation of newsworthy events, and the circulation of texts that locate Minahasan identity in relation to other groups in the archipelago. These mediated discourses may also be a way of talking about
Christianity in public that adheres to the rules of the moral domain in which Indonesian media operates, to make Christianity a visible part of the region’s past in ways that are acceptable in terms of the dominant national discourse on the relationships between minority religions and the majority Muslim population. However, the touristic performances of Minahasan traditions as objectified, representational cultural art that stands as a symbol of ethnic identity for the nation and the outside world (Hitchcock and King 2003:4) can also disarticulate those practices from the religious economy of meaning in which they have historically been embedded. The separation of Christian identity from Minahasan “culture” in performance can present tradition (and cultural identity) as something that is ontologically separate from the domain of religion, predicking new possibilities for the public redefinition of the relationship between religion and culture, and who can identify as Minahasan.
CHAPTER 4

A TAPE OF TWO BIRDS: PUBLIC POLARIZATIONS AROUND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND ADAT IN THE LAMBANG MANGUNI DEBATE

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated how the national discourse of religious harmony (kerukunan beragama) is publicly enacted as a quality that distinguishes North Sulawesi from other regions in Indonesia, and supports the construction of an ethnolocal identity that is not mutually exclusive to Christianity. Christians in North Sulawesi use the discourse of religious harmony as a space of expression to narrate the complex regional history that has blurred the distinction between Minahasan Christianity and cultural identity. The deployment of the discourse of religious harmony is a strategy to wrestle with the conceptual distinction between religion and culture in the Indonesian public, one that denies the great ambiguity in where the boundaries between the two can be drawn in either a historical or practical sense.

This chapter examines how the concept of adat is employed in the classification of local practices and symbols, usages that are problematic for some actors, yet create strange new alliances as people seek to fit their experiences into discrete categories without losing the paths to the recognition that they seek. Examining a public debate around a particularly potent symbol associated with the divide between Minahasan religious and cultural identity, the stylized symbol of an owl locally known as the manguni, will serve as an ethnographic window into what the stakes are in the regional redefinition of the relation between culture and religion for both Christian practitioners and cultural activists. This will demonstrate how the relationship between different parties, and the contemporary discourses of identity in North Sulawesi, depend in large part on a new relationship which is evolving between the categories of religion and adat, as these classifications themselves undergo their own renegotiation.

As several scholars who have theorized about adat in Indonesia note, the concept itself is one that straddles the line between regional particularity and national homogeneity, acting as a standardized form for exhibiting and organizing

The reinterpretation of adat mediates between local and supralocal processes of political integration in Indonesia. Adat lends a sense of continuity and national unity to temporal and geographic discontinuity; it has become an ideal cultural operator by which authorities “translated” radically new ideas into ideologically familiar terms. But it also constrains those efforts within a framework of reconstruction rather than explicit replacement; “imposed law” becomes “partially indigenous” (1994: 275).

The term adat is often employed in a sense that is reminiscent of political claims of indigeneity, and is used to refer to practices and institutions from the past that pre-date government intervention (Henley and Davidson 2008:817). However, the act of defining communities through a complex of rights that posits a relation between particular histories, places and social obligations (Henley and Davidson 2008:818) was a mechanism of indirect rule that developed during the colonial period and later evolved into part of the state’s ideology of control (ibid., 836). The categories of religion and adat have always been mutually constitutive, as adat evolved in the 19th century as a means for colonial powers to deny the impact of Islam on societies across the archipelago both culturally and legally (Bowen 1994:280).

The Reformasi era has seen a shift in the definition, and increased use of the concept of adat, including discourses that have been spurred by the development of organizations with links to pan-Asian indigenous rights movements (Henley and Davidson 2008:822). The early formal incarnations of this revitalization movement expanded the concept of adat from something pertaining to control over land into a more inclusive international discourse agitating for local control over resources, and for recognition of indigenous groups’ ability to make claims against the state. Groups using adat as a frame for developing a theory of local sovereignty in Indonesia maintained an egalitarian tenor, positioning their efforts in line with other civil society organizations oriented towards human rights and democratic participation within the state (Acciaioli 2007:345-346). Now associated with goals of political mobilization, activism, and social justice, associations utilize the term adat to refer

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110 Organizations or associations that claim to represent adat take on a number of forms, but their orientation can be divided into three broad categories, none of which are mutually
to a set of traditions and quasi-legal local institutions inherited by certain communities as a platform for demanding greater representation at the national level, and as a strategy for circumventing the state’s corrupt legal system (Henley and Davidson 2008:818). Yet the core of these ideas about self-regulating communities also contains elements of the New Order ideology that reinterpreted adat as a tool for maintaining the national mandate of harmony between societal groups, especially along divisive religious and ethnic lines (accioli 2001; Aragorn 2001; Bowen 1988; Li 2001; Spyer 1996).

Henley and Davidson (2008:849) argue that the revivalism of adat is not derivative of the discourse on international indigenous movements, but “reflects a specifically Indonesian ideological tradition in which land, community and custom... provide normative reference points for political struggles.” Similar to studies of the Pacific that analyze the politicization of tradition (labeled “kastom” in Melanesia) as a potent symbol of contemporary identity and as a discourse of difference (Keesing and Tonkinson 1982, Lindstrom and White 1995), contemporary scholars of Indonesia take a critical approach to analyzing the uses of adat, recognizing the concept’s shifting meanings, usages, and potential as a socio-cultural symbol that is particularly sensitive to changes in the nation’s political horizons.

As blanket terms for the politicized practices and discourses that define a relationship between place, history, and a cultural community, the concepts of kastom in the Pacific and Indonesian adat have both been subject to Hobsbawm and Ranger’s (1983) critique of traditions that have been “invented,” or are presented as having primordial or historical origins for the sake of political advantage. In line exclusive. The first category is that related to maintaining community harmony amongst populations who may or may not share a unified ethnic identity, but inhabit the same location. The second is related to the preservation and performance of artistic forms of culture, what Acciaioli (1985) calls “seni-budaya.” The newest incarnation of adat organizations is more globally oriented, representing claims based in identities that although rooted in place often transcend regional borders, and borrow from the discourse of international indigenous rights movements. The most visible and well-known of these contemporary adat associations that emerged in the post-Suharto era is the Indigenous People’s Alliance of the Archipelago (Allianzi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara or AMAN). For a detailed history of this institution’s genesis and the indigenous people’s movement in Indonesia, see Sandra Moniaga’s 2007 article “From bumiputera to masyarakat adat: a long and confusing journey” In The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics: The Deployment of Adat from Colonialism to Indigenism J.S. Davidson and D. Henley, eds. Pp. 275-295.
with scholars who have critiqued this perspective (Briggs 1996, Handler and Linnekin 1984, Linnekin 1991) my goal in analyzing the discourse surrounding _adat_ and religion in North Sulawesi is less concerned with interrogating the historical veracity of such narration about personhood, place, and the past, but to understand these concepts as categories with shifting referents, whose meaning is constructed in public interaction with political effect.

Of particular importance to my analysis in this dissertation is how the publicly constructed definition of _adat_ provides a commentary on the meaning of the past, and how it relates to present-day social relations. The question of what properly belongs to the realm of religion versus the realm of _adat_ is also an inquiry into who has the authority to claim certain historical practices and symbols as their own, a token of belonging to a cultural community. The tension between the categories of _adat_ and religion is often generative and dynamic, shaping the parameters of other socially defined relations such as gender (Blackwood 2001), kinship (Hadler 2008) and ethnicity (Duncan 2009). As Duncan notes, people in Indonesia are less concerned with questions of the “authenticity” of tradition or _adat_ than they are with the articulation of the concept “as a discourse that links together a set of beliefs and practices with a particular group of people” (Duncan 2009:1080). That process of articulation can be used to shift people’s locus of identification from one categorical identity to the other (ibid.,1078). In the context of decentralization politics and the increased validity of regionally-based ethno-local identities, attempts to articulate Minahasan _adat_ with the religiously diverse population residing within the borders of the North Sulawesi can be interpreted as a practical political move. The perseverance of this concept, however, seems to rest in its inherent ambiguity, and its development as a mediating concept between the local and the supralocal (Bowen 1988:274). Bowen argues that the shifting and inconsistent institutional definitions of _adat_ over time have not exhausted the concept’s utility, but that local communities have addressed the tensions created in these contradictions by _changing the relations between categories_ (ibid., 289, italics mine). It is this process of public negotiation over the relationship between religion and _adat_ that I will address in the case presented in this chapter.

In North Sulawesi, the discourse of cultural revival has increasingly been framed in the terms of _adat_, and organizations that have gathered under the banner
of adat have been promoting the preservation of culture as a nationally protected right. This constructs adat and local traditions as something correspondent to regional culture, and offers an interesting solution to the problem of Minahasan identity by interpreting Minahasanness as something separate and distinct from Christianity. By expanding the concept of Minahasa into something that can encompass other religious groups throughout region, Christian elites, local politicians and civil society groups invested in regional politics enter into debates about what is representative of local culture that are linked to competition for recognition and resources that could potentially divide the regional population along the lines of both ethnic and religious identity. This movement calls for the reimagination of what Minahasa means and the emergence of new, and sometimes competing, definitions of the relationship between religion and culture.

The consequences of siding with culture: public polarizations and the scope of debates over religion and culture

I begin this discussion of the polarization of religion and culture in North Sulawesi by examining a debate that exemplifies how the emergence of public conflict simultaneously divides and unites people (Schattsneider 1960:62) as they consolidate around newly-created divisions. Furthermore, drawing on the public discourses regarding a particularly loosely defined and encompassing local symbol, the manguni, I intend to show how the new pragmatic political reality that has spurred a nation-wide revitalization of adat in Indonesia has shifted the structural relationship between the categories of adat and religion, and in North Sulawesi, is opening those categories to reinterpretation and redefinition. However, people’s consolidation around the repoliticized line between culture/adat and religion can constrain those same actors within certain frames of recognition once lines have been drawn. The mobilization that occurs when new alignments are made in the course of defining a conflict are in themselves a political act, one that has no predetermined outcome. In initiating a conflict about the value of adat as a form of representation, actors take a calculated risk by trying to address an audience whose form they can’t determine in advance.
Yet this risk also entails the possible benefit of increasing the scope of the argument (Schattsneider 1960:40), shifting the focus from issues of regional authority to matters of identity at the national scale, including the utilization of new legal avenues for self-identification that are linked national incarnations of the discourse of *adat* (Ramstedt and Thufail 2011:2). Increasing the scope of a conflict over the symbolic means of representation also has a practical function, as forms of identity act not only as a social labels but also as a means of conveying access to national, and international, resources. As John Bowen (2003:6) notes, in Indonesia, these kinds of “arguments are amplified at the level of the nation, often counterposing religious and national allegiances in debates about equality, pluralism and political legitimacy,” concurrently increasing the stakes of local public disputes. Although this amplification may benefit some by inserting issues of local import into metacultural discussions about Indonesian life,\(^{111}\) widening the scope of the debate can ossify positions and preclude further mobilizations as the audience increases. This is also part of the “world making” potential of publics – they address anyone, yet the responses to this address are never certain nor can they be determined in advance (Warner 2002:115).

Analyzing public debates to understand how certain structures of feeling (Williams 1977) are expressed in pragmatic action demonstrates how actors attempt to instantiate new realities, with the hope that their perceptions will be taken as normative, natural, and authoritative by those they address. Public debates also unfold in particular cultural milieus, referencing metacultural frameworks, whether implicitly or explicitly. Publics are characterized by social relations built among strangers who participate in the same discourse, who draw a sense of communality from that simultaneous participation although they do not know each other personally. Examining public debates can elucidate how these kinds of relations are created in “spaces of discourse organized by discourse” (Warner 2002:68) as participants use media and public discussion to ally themselves with a particular group and create new relationships between previously existing categories. Relations of opposition may also be key in the elucidation of metacultural frames, because actors have to draw on existing cultural assumptions to analyze the relation

\(^{111}\) Or in other words, by trying to make local ‘publics’ stand in for the public (Warner 2002:117), framing particular problems in the terms of a universal address.
between the new positionalities created in the course of public conflict (Bowen 2003:8).112

In order to make sense of the horizons of meaning available to actors in Minahasa as they deploy the categories of adat and religion, I will examine a debate stemming from the ambiguous nature of the regional symbol of the manguni owl that has represented Minahasan identity since the early 20th century. In trying to fix the meaning of this particular symbol, some local actors have polarized around the line separating religion from adat. Participation in the circulation of discourse and texts about the symbol locally referred to as the manguni can be analyzed to understand how both sides of the debate engage in a conversation in which metacultural, national frameworks create a background against which important differences can be made to appear (Harrison 2006:49). Politicians, religious practitioners, local historians and those involved in adat organizations publicly try to address an audience under a common perception of what differences are important (Kipp 1993:17-24), and whether the line between adat and Christianity is significant, or if what matters is the way in which culture is adapted to Christian logics. The public interchange about the manguni symbol’s proper ontological definition, whether it belongs in the realm of adat or can straddle both adat and religion, requires actors to reassess how people position themselves, the relation between these categories, and how they are defined. In reference to the national metaculture that “consists of judgments people make about similarities and differences” (Lee 2001:xi) these dialectical processes seek to move the public – that which stands in for the national form of address – closer to the particular, local perceptions of the relations between nationally-mandated categories.

112 Bowen relates his explanation of public debate directly to the judicial process in Indonesia, focusing on how actors induct meaning as they try to understand new relations in the process of reconciliation or compromise. It is this level of reasoning that characterizes the judicial process according to Bowen, where judges must reason to understand why certain positions are taken (2003:10). I would add that this process is not restricted to reconciliation but also to the process of polarization around a given issue.
Between two birds: the lambang manguni debate in the Southeast Minahasa District (Kabupaten Minahasa Tenggara)

In the spring of 2009, stories began circulating that government officials in the Southeast Minahasa District (Minahasa Tenggara, MITRA) planned to officially install a new provincial logo. Utilizing legal avenues opened through the central government’s program of political and economic decentralization, the office of Bupati Tjelly Tjanggulung, the first definitive head of the district since its creation in 2007, announced that the previous regional logo depicting the Sulawesi Scops Owl, known locally as the manguni, would be officially replaced with a logo centrally featuring the burung merpati, the white dove recognized internationally, and in Indonesia, as a symbol of Christianity.

Figure 4.1. The embattled official logo for the Southeast Minahasa District (left) and the new logo (right) installed by under the regional law (perda) by the Office of the Southeast Minahasa District. Source: http://beritamanado.com/berita-utama/merpati-mitra-terus-bermasalah/5590/

An animal that played an important role in the pre-Christian cosmology of groups inhabiting the highlands of today’s North Sulawesi province, the manguni owl was reborn as the symbolic representation of political and cultural unity of the

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113 The Sulawesi Scops Owl, or Otus Manadensis, was the genus of owl most commonly pointed out to me as a manguni during the period of my fieldwork. However, at times people referred to different owl species as a manguni, perhaps because the association with the manguni bird is mostly aural – it is more often heard then seen.
population when it become the logo of the Minahasaraad, an indigenous-majority representative council for the colonial region of Minahasa, in 1931 (Henley 1993:104, Mamoto et al. 2007:52). The *manguni* image continued to represent Minahasa and its people after the region was restructured as part of the of the newly independent Indonesian nation, being installed as the official logo of the district (*kabupaten*) of Minahasa during the term of Bupati Fritz Sumampow in 1966 (Mamoto et al. 2007:54). A consistent symbol of the ethnoregional Minahasan identity which has been carried through from the colonial period, the stylized visage of the Otus Manadensis was adapted for the newly independent *kabupaten* of North Minahasa (*Minahasa Utara*), South Minahasa (*Minahasa Selatan*), and the autonomous city-region of Tomohon in 2003. The *manguni* symbol can also be spotted in the logo for the capital city of the North Sulawesi Province, Manado.

Reactions from a local group with a history of association with Christian militia activities now referring to itself as an *adat* association called Brigade Manguni Indonesia (BMI), as well as from locally respected cultural experts to the changes proposed for MITRA logo were swift and vociferous, perhaps illogical given the widespread application of the *manguni’s* form around the region. The *manguni* serves as the most recognizable symbol of the effort to reconstruct and represent a Minahasan past in the contemporary setting, and yet like most other symbols of pre-Christian culture in North Sulawesi, its meaning is contested. Connected to ritual practice before the advent of Christianity, the *manguni* is perceived as a “messenger and friend” of the Minahasan people, its call a forecasting tool interpreted by ritual specialists (Graafland, cited in Mamoto et al, 2007:46 and Wenas 2007:89).

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114 The *manguni* was also associated with the Permesta rebellion, most notably the “Batylon Manguni” led by Minahasa’s 10th Bupati, Lourens Saereng (Wenas 2007:61). It is from this army unit that the contemporary *adat* association “Brigade Manguni” takes its name.

Missionary reports in the 19th century describe the *tumalinga* (BT) ritual to “hear” and count the *manguni*’s call to foretell the advent of the dry season, or to delineate malevolent spirits from the spirits of the ancestors (Mamoto et al 2007 and Wenas 2007:89). In its symbolic incarnation, the *manguni* is always tied to the construction of a pre-Christian past and is regularly employed as a signifier of the cultural heritage of the tribes of North Sulawesi. It serves as “summarizing symbol” (Ortner 1973) which sums up, expresses and represents the Minahasan cultural

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116 Local historians’ interpretations of the *Tumalinga* ritual exemplify how the *manguni* encompasses theories about the relationship between Christianity and pre-colonial practices. Although local historians and cultural advocates such as Benny Mamoto, Bert Supit, Jessy Wenas and B.E. Matindas agree in their book “*Manguni: Antara Demitologi dan Remitologi*” (2007) that the ritual was connected to the complex of beliefs tied to ancestor worship and spirit possession by ancestral spirits (*opoisme*), spirit possession is sidelined in their description and the meaning of the ritual is reflected through a Christian standpoint. Changes to the ritual, as well as contemporary uses of the *manguni* symbol, are not interpreted as cultural loss but part of the civilizational evolution of humanity which is part of God’s will: “the reality that rituals like these tend towards extinction or being left behind, or to undergoing new modifications, constitutes a another issue which is in accordance God’s plans and desires for the development of human history” (Mamoto et al, 50:2007).
system for participants in an “emotionally powerful and relatively undifferentiated way” (Ortner 1973:1339). As an “all or nothing” symbol of what it means to be Minahasan that “does not encourage logical reflection on the relations among the ideas it represents, nor on the logical consequences of them as they are played out in social actuality, in time or history” (ibid., 1340), the image of the manguni smoothes over the discrepancies of history that threaten a unified Minahasa in the very place people seek to locate it.

The problem with summarizing symbols, however, is that they often encompass contradictory principles, that if extracted for “logical reflection” can spark a process of fixation where selected meanings are highlighted at the expense of an undifferentiated framework that encompasses heterogeneous meanings. Although the adat contingency protested the erasure of the manguni under the logic of cultural preservation, their insistence on such a discrete interpretation of this symbol of local identity only exposed some of the tensions which were subsumed under the owl’s plumes. The rejection of the manguni’s replacement with an internationally recognized symbol of Christianity implied that Christian symbols were inappropriate to represent the Southeast Minahasa’s population. In theory, this would place the manguni symbol squarely in the realm of ‘culture,’ and fix it with a meaning that contests the association between Christianity and the Minahasan ethnic identity that represents a portion of the North Sulawesi Province’s ethnic diversity. Yet this same bird that embodies the ethos of the Minahasan people, and signals association with the realm of adat, also perches conspicuously over church doorways as the symbol of the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, GMIM), the largest and most powerful Christian denomination in North Sulawesi. The manguni began to figure in as one of the recognizable symbols of the place of the GMIM church as a hallmark of Minahasan identity, and the link between Minahasan culture and Christianity, around 1934, when the institution declared its independence from its colonial predecessor, the Indische Kerk (Wenas 2007:54).
Uncertainty about how the symbol should be interpreted was evident even in those early days. According to Benny Mamoto, before the GMIM Synod’s constitutionalization of the logo, debates erupted over the non-Christian implications of referencing the sacred bird. One strategy to neutralize the *manguni’s* referential ties to pre-Christian beliefs was to stress that the bird was chosen because it represented wisdom in number of cultural contexts. Ironically, Decky Maengkom, head of the Brigade Manguni Indonesia organization, used a similar rhetorical turn to disassociate GMIM’s use of the symbol from other contexts where it indicates the realm of *adat*:

This whole region shares a closeness with the ancestral Minahasan stories about the greatness of the *manguni* bird that provides so much of
significance, for instance its ability to fight in the darkness of night by showing the way with his voice.” explained Maengkom “In addition, it’s because of the benefits the manguni brings that even the GMIM church uses him as a wise and holy bird.”

Despite the occasional emergence of proposals to change the mascot prominently featured in the church’s logo (most recently discussed in connection with the celebration of the GMIM Synod’s seventy-second anniversary in 2000, according to Mamoto) the image has persisted as a representation of the church, conspicuously minus the regional motto often associated with the manguni’s visage “I Yayat U Santi” (BT) – a traditional war cry variously interpreted to mean “readiness to engage in the struggle to develop Minahasa” or “readiness to protect the unity of Minahasa” in the context of governmental use. Official theological interpretations that minimize connections to the less Christian-friendly aspects of cultural practices associated with the manguni still circulate as well, as the former head of the GMIM Synode and Professor at the Universitas Kristen Tomohon, Pastor Willem RoeRoe explains in one of his many works on the relationship between culture and Christianity in North Sulawesi:

[The Manguni] is considered as the messenger between humans and he on high (2003:170) and in the beliefs of Christians, and in issues of theology, we have to say that the burung Manguni and all types of creatures are also the creation of God (2003:172).

The battle to authoritatively voice who and what the manguni symbolizes indicates more than just a rift between perceptions of what belongs to the domain of world religions, and those practices which should be restricted to the objectified realm of adat, and kebudayaan or culture. It also muddies that same division by exemplifying the difficulties of teasing out which phenomena can be irrefutably classified as one or the other. Exposure of the heterogeneity of interpretations that has allowed the manguni to encompass various and sometimes contradictory

constructions of Minahasan identity complicate the ontological grounds on which arguments about the relationship between culture, religion and identity can be made. It also speaks to the pragmatic political changes enfolding across Indonesia as regional political boundaries undergo a process of fission. As percentages of religious and ethnic populations shift with the formation of new inter and intra-regional boundaries, conceptual understandings of how people belong have to be reassessed.

In North Sulawesi, belonging to the Minahasan ethnic homeland (and equally, to the geographic region) has long been measured in terms of a Christian identity not only by regional Christian practitioners, but by others in Indonesia who associate the region and its people with Christianity. The repoliticization of adat has opened other avenues of belonging that better serve the governance of a diverse population. It is a concern that characterized the early stages of the debate:

From a sociological perspective, the Merpati (dove) logo is considered not to fit with the population of the Southeast Minahasa population, because the merpati tends to give the impression of those associated with Christianity, whereas the people of MITRA are composed of a number of ethnic groups and religions, “we have to value all of the different components of the Central Minahasan people,” said Jimmy Rambi, a resident of Ratahan. ¹¹⁹

The insistence on interpreting the manguni as a symbol of a religiously diverse community carries the underlying assumption that Christianity and regional culture are not one in the same. As the discourse surrounding the debate grew, those “siding” with adat themselves were forced to rethink the border between Christianity and a Minahasan identity – especially as other voices entered into the conversation.

In MITRA, representatives of Brigade Manguni Indonesia, a group headed by men active in regional politics and with strong ties to Christian politicians that had recently begun calling itself an adat organization, were offended by the removal of the manguni image because the action marginalized Minahasan cultural values at the geographic epicenter of the Minahasan region, where claims that lend an air of

primordial gravitas to contemporary identity are tied. According to Brigade Manguni 
Tonaas (leader) Decky Maengkom:

Those of us from the adat organization Brigade Manguni strongly reject the revision of the Central Minahasa (Mitra) logo. Remember, the Manguni bird symbol is the symbol of the land Malesung that must be respected, as it is an inheritance from our ancestors the Minahasan people.

In April of 2009, the group began to use the mass media, as well as their personal website, to threaten more decisive action if the government of the Southeast Minahasa district refused to cease and desist with their intentions to replace the manguni logo. In addition to claiming that they could mobilize mass demonstrations, Maengkom and others at times relied on a racial or inherited definition of who could be classified as a Minahasan, particularly aimed at attacking District Head (Bupati) Tjelly Tjanggulang’s Chinese heritage:

“We are going to hold a huge demonstration, and bring enough people to reject the plan [to change the logo]. We are going to force Bupati Telly Tjanggulung to give up on this goal” said Maengkom. He noted that the District Legislature (DPRD) had not discussed the proposal which was already displayed by the government because the new regional logo in no way reflects the unique characteristics of the life of local residents, and is more concerned with their own needs. That’s because the District Head is ethnically Chinese (Tionghoa, Cina) and not an original inhabitant of Central Minahasa.

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120 According to some reports, Malesung, meaning “rice mortar”, is the oldest name used in relation to the area now referred to as Minahasa, and colonial sources use this name to describe a territory and associated territorial identity separated from the Bolaang-Mongodow people to the south by the Wulur-Mahatus mountains range (Renwarin 2006:39), which coincided with the colonial territorial possession called Lans Raad Manado. Today, the district of Bolaang-Mongodow is contained within the borders of the North Sulawesi province.


122 In the Indonesian text, Bupati Tjanggulung is described as Tionghoa (Cina). Tionghoa is the more politically correct term for persons of Chinese descent, and describes cultural as well racial aspects of belonging. Cina is considered somewhat more derogatory and implies outsider status in the Indonesian nation. Whether the addition of the term Cina was due to journalistic discretion or was originally added by Maengkom is not clear from the text.

Pak Thom, a BMI member who runs a blog dedicated to the organization, echoed a similar sentiment when asked what was behind the decision by the bupati’s office to erase the manguni symbol from the regional logo: “Maybe it’s because the bupati is not Minahasan, she’s still of Chinese descent. She doesn’t have an emotional tie as Minahasan person” (field interview, 05/08/2009).

The exclusion of the bupati on the grounds of racial difference – which the adat contingency would later criticize on other accounts – shows the dangers of using primordial aspects of identity, especially viewing ties of descent as a limiting factor in group membership. Although kinship relations indicated by the possession of certain surnames (marga) is one characteristic which is commonly used to define Minahasaness (Renwarin 2006, Jacobsen 2002) the region is widely known for a high density of Chinese inhabitants, as well as Chinese descent through intermarriage, especially in the provincial capital of Manado, a colonial trade port. Contemporary scholars in the region often theorize that Minahasan “origins” (asal-usul) can be located in China, and wide-spread apocryphal tales about a Mongolian princess landing on the shores of Manado and marrying an indigenous inhabitant are often repeated with pride by families who have both a Minahasan surname and Chinese ancestors. Public figures associated with BMI would also later criticize the new logo as containing elements of SARA, referencing the national taboo on identifying race, ethnicity, and religion in public governance. It is important to note in this case that even as the normative constraints of group belonging are being defined in comparison to others, internal definition may still be in process, as “each set of norm advocated can play to its own audience while engaged in serious negotiations with the other camp(s)” (Bowen 2005: 167). The problem with primordialism is that even as it roots identities in an immutable past, it can limit one’s hoped-for audience by making the criteria for belonging more defined.

Protests spearheaded in local media by Decky Maengkom in his role as the elected public head of the BMI continued to gain steam as it became clear that the

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124 This name is a pseudonym.
125 As Bowen (2005:154) notes “in New Order public contexts one could only speak in terms of the residents of a geographical region, as in ‘people of South Sulawesi’ and not mention ethnic names, lest one be guilty of exacerbating ethnic tensions.”
new logo, referred to officially as PEMULIHAN, had already been installed in July of 2009 through legal avenues available under the program of regional autonomy (otonomi daearah). The bupati’s office instituted new regional regulation (peraturan daerah, or Perda) No. 19 2009, in reference to the Southeast Minahasa District’s regional regulation No. 3 2007, to bypass the involvement of the provincial government and district inhabitants in the process of instituting a new logo. Brigade Manguni Indonesia responded by organizing mass demonstrations in front of the bupati’s office in early August, demanding the logo be returned to its original form. Advocates tried to draw national attention by insisting that they would appeal to the highest authorities if their requests went unheeded:

According to Maengkom, those fighting the change of the logo would carry their struggle to reject the plenary decision from the regional house of representatives, which became a regional regulation (perda), all the way to the center. “Those of us from BM will bring this issue to the Ministry of Home Affairs shortly, we’ll even take it to the Supreme Court (Mahkamah Agung)” said Maengkom.127

On September 17th 2009, a regional television station broadcast the MITRA Government Public Affairs Officer (kepala bagian hubungan masyarakat or Kabag Humas) David Lalando announcing that the logo was already approved for use, and that the district did not have to seek permission from the provincial government to put such changes in place. The provincial government responded quickly, ostensibly on behalf of the greater public of the North Sulawesi Province. After an internal review, the office of provincial Governor Harry S. Sarundajang issued a gubernatorial decree (surat kuptusan, SK) on the 30th of October, 2009, stating the proposal to change the logo under the regional regulation was in violation of a national law on regional governance (UU No. 32 Tahun 2004) that states “no regional regulation should be in conflict with the needs of the public, or higher forms

126 PEMILUHAN is an acronym for the new regional slogan that would accompany the new logo, replacing the original slogan in Bahasa Tombulu “Patokan Esa”. It stands for Obedient (Patuh), Efficient (Efisien), Developed (Maju), Superior (Unggul), Smooth (Lancar), Indah Beautiful (Indah), Hygenic (Higenis), Safe (Aman), Comfortable (Nyaman).

of regulatory law.” Furthermore, it was insinuated that the new logo contained “discriminative elements” and would “cause problems between residents.”

Arguments highlighting a threat to regional stability were often used in support of the position of adat organizations such as Brigade Manguni Indonesia, and to further blur the line between Minahasa as a sub-ethnic group and Minahasa as a framework of cultural belonging that extended to the provincial borders. Prior the Governor’s release of the SK in late October, Dr. Roy Tumiwa, head of the Bureau of Government Public Affairs at the provincial level, explained that North Sulawesi’s provincial government was working with the Bureau of Public Affairs, the Law Bureau, and the Body for National Political Unity (kespangpol) to examine whether the change would have an effect on local culture, or on the local wisdom of North Sulawesi’s community, especially in the Southeast Minahasan region. He added that the provincial government and the district government offices needed to consider the consequences of keeping the new logo. If it only invited the disruption of culture and the harmony of the people, then the original logo would be reinstated.

Muslim voices speak out for Minahasa?

By November 2009, it was clear that the office of the bupati was not going to acquiesce to the demands of the provincial government so easily. Public Affairs Officer Wungow Harry Rofian SH announced to journalists that they would not cease to use the PEMULIHAN logo, but that the Governor’s letter had given the team an opportunity to reclarify the regional regulation regarding the installation of the new logo. It was at this point that new voices began to be heard in the debate, coming from an audience it seemed the adat contingency was keen to address: local Muslims. Whether adat activists actually sought the support of Muslims in North Sulawesi or not, if the logic by which these actors had rallied for the manguni as a local symbol contrasting with strains of religious essentialism held true, non-


Christian residents of the region should have been quick to coalesce around the pole of adat. The support of local Muslim constituents would also serve to instantiate the reality of a discourse into a practical reality, proving that the symbol of Minahasan culture – and therefore Minahasan culture itself – is something that resonates with local Muslims.

On December 17th, 2009, a number of Muslim organizations contacted media outlets in the province to report a rather strange dilemma. According to an article in North Sulawesi’s daily newspaper Komentar on December 19th, the debate about the validity of the new MITRA logo had been taken up by a number of Muslim organizations. In a rather vague allusion to Muslim “oraters,” Komentar reported that there had been some dissension amongst local Muslims about their involvement in the “rejection” movement. Although some expressed their support for the return of the logo’s previous incarnation, other public statements urged that “the name of local Muslim groups not be brought into the fray.” This idea was circulated in (undocumented) public reports, attributed to a group of Muslims from the sub-district (kecamatan) of Belang, part of the greater Southeastern Minahasa district. Yet on December 19th, a coalition of local Muslim leaders represented by Artly Kounter of Syariakat Islam contacted Komentar to ensure their support for the rejection of the logo, and to clarify that statements credited to Muslims who allegedly spoke out against anti-PEMULIHAN movement were “engineered by the other camp”. Although who they meant was never specified, the implication was that those in support of the PEMULIHAN logo had fabricated reports of Muslim support for those arguing that the manguni culturally represents all inhabitants of the district. According to Kounter, a statement attributed to Ishak Ntoma, speaking on behalf of the MITRA Muslim Ulema Council (MUI MITRA) was fabricated, as Ntoma claimed never to have made any statements connected to the logo debate. Kounter added that the position of the MUI MITRA was clear: the new logo had to be rejected, because it was unjust, and it tended towards displaying a particular religious identity. He added that the MUI in Ambon had seconded this recommendation.

Although the pro-\textit{adat} groups framed their arguments in terms of the preservation of culture, the implication, clearly recognized by both sides, was that siding with culture meant opposing a mono-religious interpretation of local identity. This highlights an assumption from those championing the PEMULIHAN logo that the Muslim community in MITRA would not respond to public terms of address seeking to identify, or create, a community of people who recognize themselves as culturally “Minahasan,” since Muslims have historically been excluded from that classification. Muslims who responded to the address aimed at Minahasans entered into a relationship of commonality with others who responded to the same address, through their participation in the discourse about \textit{adat} and its relation to both to religion and the regional identity. It seems that some participants within the discursive horizon of the debate mistook what Michael Warner (2002:105) calls cultural publics – spaces of circulation of discourse and texts, that allow participants in the discourse to understand themselves as directly and actively belonging to a social entity that exists historically in time and has a consciousness of itself”– with “a bounded and knowable audience.” As the discourse that promotes a religiously inclusive Minahasan identity grows, new incarnations of the regional public begin to coalesce, destabilizing the taken for granted tie between Christianity and ethnic affiliation.

Finding an audience where it wasn’t expected demonstrates how the movement of culture, or the generation of new structural frameworks, is facilitated by the inherent nature of metaculture, which in “focusing attention on a cultural thing helps to make it an object of interest, and hence, facilitates its circulation” (Urban 2001:4). As Urban theorizes in his explanation of metaculture, it is the need to question how something represents a novel combination of tradition and newness$^{131}$ that accelerates an object’s circulation, transforming it into something cultural as it is more widely disseminated. Public disavowals of novel interpretations about the \textit{manguni’s} meaning, and the nature of Minahasanness, bolstered the cultural reality of a multi-religious cultural identity.

\footnote{Urban defines newness as something determined in comparison with other similar objects mediated through a third object and determined by public response, or metaculture (2001:196). The difference between cultural objects of tradition (or the metaculture of replication) and new cultural objects is that the latter require investigation to see if the new claims they make will impact their dissemination (2001:218).}
Although Vecky Rambi, the field coordinator responsible for the December 9th demonstration, admitted that there was previously no Muslim involvement in the kinds of public protests organized by Brigade Manguni Indonesia and other adat organizations, he stated that invitations had been extended to Muslim groups from Belang after reports that the “policy authorizing the change in the logo discredited Muslims.”

Careful to clarify that he was not speaking on behalf of local Muslim groups, he nevertheless included them in his characterization of the events as “a call to the citizens of MITRA who want to preserve the culture of Minahasa as completely as possible.” From Rambi’s perspective, the debate over the logo was not tied to “individuals or organizations acting in the name of religion.”

In an interview with local adat ritual practitioner Pak Frankie, who describes himself as a follower of aliran, the perception is that the separation of Christianity from Minahasan identity is necessary for the prevention of a rising fundamentalism that threatens local forms of spirituality and encourages ethnic exclusivism:

If Minahasa becomes too Christianized, than we can say it is “dangerous,” because it can arouse an extraordinary kind of fundamentalism, not just in the sense of religiosity but also tribalism, and that is even worse. I suspect that a few years from now this is what will happen, especially with those opportunists in the political field who are brave enough to use religious idioms in the regional elections and the like, really I don't agree. It’s like we’re building the Tower of Babel here. That’s what is dangerous (field interview 5/22/2009).

His perception of local culture is clearly formulated as one in which religious identity should have no particular place, and yet is telling in its focus on erasing the distinctions between Muslims and Christians and promoting regional stability:

133 Ibid.
134 This name is a pseudonym.
135 “Aliran” here refers to aliran kepercayaan, the catch-all category for indigenous beliefs and practices, or religious groups not listed in the roster of nationally recognized ‘world religions.’ However, Pak Frankie was raised in the Protestant church, and his father is still a GMIM pastor. Pak Frankie refers to himself as someone who continues to practice the rituals associated with the realm of adat, practices that fall outside the domain of the church. I am using the term adat ritual practitioner to describe someone that continues to engage in ritual practice that occurs outside the church and is often considered to be opposed to Christian practice.
In terms of culture, it [culture] doesn’t care who you are, what is important is that which is peaceful, that we are welcoming. No one asks ‘can you recite the Syahadat, or say the Lord’s Prayer?’ No one asks those questions. (field interview, 5/22/2009).

Focusing on the preservation of ‘openness’ and harmonious relations between Muslims and Christian inhabitants of North Sulawesi corresponds with the compendium of non-specific characteristics, like bravery, forwardness, education, and food traditions, that highlight Minahasan difference in comparative relation to other ethnoregional identities in the archipelago. This results, in Michael Jacobsen’s (2002:40) estimation, from the ‘double blindfold’ of colonial era religious policies that devalued traditional practices, or only found them acceptable when reinterpreted in terms of Protestant theology. Minahasan ethnic identification is dependent on regional history and language. A significant part of that regional history is the role of the region’s Christian heritage in national politics. In discussing his take on the manguni logo debate, Pak Frankie also notes the difficulty of separating Minahasan identity from the religious affiliation that colors the region’s involvement in national politics:

At it’s base, Minahasa is open, yet it has a reactionary response or impulse, to the point where there are symptoms of this being political, something contemporary, with an unknown background. Especially regarding the idioms of regional symbols. In the end Minahasans feel that if Christians are bothered, that they are too. But actually that’s inaccurate (field interview, 5/22/2009).

The difficulty of separating out the manguni symbol, and participation in those forms thought to indicate Minahasan identity, was much more pronounced for Christian practitioners. Members of the GMIM church, for instance, appeared to be caught between seeing the logo as part of their cultural heritage, yet also needing to purify the symbol of any traces of “traditional beliefs” that are viewed as inconsistent with Christian theology. As the discourse situating the owl symbol in the realm of adat circulated, it sparked discussion amongst GMIM members as to its appropriateness as something representing the synod’s members. On the “GMIM Youth” (Pemuda GMIM) Facebook page, under a topic thread called “GMIM Youth –
the Young Mangunis” (Pemuda GMIM - Manguni Muda) young church members focused on the problematic aspects of using an owl as a symbol, which in the national language is called a “ghost bird” (burung hantu). These church youth equated the name with the realm of the spiritual (and traditional):

Respondent 1: (first thread commentator): When they say that the manguni is a 'ghost bird' and doesn’t have the Holy Spirit, what is our response as Young Mangunis (GMIM Youth)?

Respondent 2: Hehehe who are you referring to that says that? Birds, geckos, lizards, cockroaches, trees, people are all creations of God the most beautiful, whose creations are extraordinary for the world, if the manguni is connected with ghosts, that’s just an opinion, something thought up by humans, not God. So, there is no connection at all ... just enjoy it... whether the Holy Spirit is present or not does not depend on the church’s logo, but on everyday actions.

Respondent 3: Remember that when Jesus was baptized, a dove (merpati) landed on Jesus’s shoulder, meaning that the dove is a symbol of sincerity, majesty and the like ... the problem here is not the merpati, but the logo ... so, manguni or even the merpati or whatever else, maybe the problem is just that the logo shouldn’t be a bird. However, when there are parties on one side who want to change the mark of the ancestors, he/she will be cursed (see chapter Jeremiah from the Bible) so because the manguni represents an inheritance from our ancestors it’s going to cause a commotion, and condemnation. Look at GMIM's Manguni Bird Logo. In the middle [of the logo] there is a picture of a red heart and a cross. This means that the Manguni can accept Christ. What about GMIM members.136

Many of the same themes that are employed by those parties protesting the erasure of the manguni logo are represented here: a geography tied to ethnic identity, the threat that the historical basis in which contemporary identity is located will be invalidated, and the fictive kinship which links regional inhabitants together in ancestral ties. Even the ancestral retribution promised for those who censure such a potent symbol of identity, a common rhetorical flourish used by adat defenders,137 is located by one of the respondents in reference to biblical edicts.

137 For instance, in an article about the debate which ran in May of 2009, Brigade Manguni Indonesia Kalimantan representative Ferry A. Malonda was quoted as saying “where is the love for our ancestors? If the district government work hard to institute the logo's change,
As GMIM members react to the manguni’s public transformation into something exclusively cultural, they too must return to the question of what constitutes an appropriate link between Christianity and culture. One method to refute the exclusivity of the domain of adat is to delineate the appropriate place of cultural objects in the hierarchy of Christian belief. By proving that cultural aspects have an acceptable role in Christian life, Christian practitioners deny the movement towards a purification of adat that strips believers of their particularistic identity, making them “just Christians” who have no connection with the images of the past that bolster current formulations of ethnic identity in the region. In a widely circulated blog posting by Roy M. Langoy, a theology Professor at the Christian University in Tomohon (UKIT), theological explanations are used to correct the “misunderstandings” about the role of the owl symbol (and by proxy, the manguni) in Biblical literature, proving that it is appropriate to symbolize Christian practitioners. He even goes as far as to find a biblical reference that proves the dove (merpati) is not always portrayed positively in biblical literature. In his final argument, Langoy also rhetorically frames the protection of particularistic cultural identities as a national mandate:

I know that Indonesia professes a democratic system of governance...not an authoritative one, where all decisions originate with the leaders. Therefore I support the suggestion from the local adat leaders to sit down and discuss the polemics of this issue at one table, without being unilateral. To sit together and discuss an issue is an inheritance from our ancestors, which in my opinion is just compatible with the mandate of Pancasila (represented by the Garuda bird)\textsuperscript{138} that issues should be decided by deliberation, and that needs to be preserved.”\textsuperscript{139}

Uncertainty still exists, however, for Christians who see the increasing public polarization of the manguni’s symbolic meaning:

\textsuperscript{138} The Garuda is the mythical national mascot of the Indonesian State.
The *Manguni* emblem doesn't need to be made into such an issue anymore. The symbol doesn't have to be interpreted as a something that occurred as a result of religious syncretism, but has to be seen as an ‘integral’ characteristic of Minahasaness. The *Manguni* is not a symbol of the cult of ancestor worship anymore, but has come to represent something that aids the people of MITRA to maintain their feeling of unity with Minahasa Raya. If the concept of the *Manguni* as a “herald of good news” is still believed, then I don’t think that it is appropriate to become the icon of the religious people of MITRA. If the icon of the *Manguni* bird becomes the emblem of MITRA as a sign of a unified history, culture and kinship with Minahasa Raya, then the icon of the *Manguni* Bird cannot be nullified.  

The effect of these polarizations has also produced responses from Christian communities who identify as Minahasan. Since 2005, a select group of Catholic and Protestant congregations started a program of “contextual” or “cultural” liturgy, which aims to re-fuse Christianity to Minahasan ethnic identification, engulfing those practices which might be labeled as *adat* in Christian ritual. These congregations use some of the same practices that *adat* organizations claim as part of cultural ritual practice, like the *maengket* dance, as part of the liturgy for special church services. Questions about how Christianity can be made recognizable as an aspect of traditional culture suitable for the tourist’s gaze, or can elevate sub-ethnic identities to the level of comparison with other cultural “entities” are part of the local reconfiguration of the relationship between *adat* and religion as cultural categories. The particulars of this movement will be explored in detail in Chapter Five.  

*Making the manguni a national cause*  

A more frenzied and politicized round of public debate ushered in the new year in 2010, when a small team of pro-PEMULIHAN members of the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) from MITRA traveled to Jakarta to consult on the legality of the regional regulation that allowed the district’s logo to be changed. Their January 20th departure was hailed as an “illegal action” by some as reported in  

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Berita Manado on the 21st of January, 2010, since the team was only composed of those representatives in support of the new logo, and furthermore from the political party GOLKAR, the bupati’s party. The politicization of the debate seemed inevitable as the bupati’s office was accused of political factionalism.

In line with the rights granted to the provincial government (PemProv) to override policies that originate at the district level (perda), the Office of the Governor appealed to the Department of Home Affairs in an official capacity in early January of 2010 to override the district policy. This decision was supported by official decree of the Home Affairs Department dated February 12th, 2010. By May, the bupati’s office had yet to officially restore to manguni logo, questioning the legality of the decree by the Department of Home Affairs. This incited another round of protest from Brigade Manguni Indonesia members. With the debate now politically framed as a test of the ability for regional and central governments to rein in policies created under the legal aegis of regional autonomy legislation, activists in the anti-PEMULIHAN camp increasingly referenced their protests to national law. Equating the protection of adat with human rights guaranteed by the national constitution, BMI threatened to call the Department of Law (DepHukum) and the Committee on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) – both national governing bodies – to represent the MITRA community in their efforts to have the manguni symbol replaced.141 Decky Meangkom’s statements about the logo’s importance to the people of MITRA tried to establish the protection of local identity as part of citizen rights, as well as returning to the theme of regional stability: “the manguni is equal to the Garuda bird in the eyes of the Minahasan people, therefore when it is changed with another emblem it ignites disintegration. One strategy to avoid this discord is to change Telly Tjanggulang with a wiser leader who can rehabilitate MITRA from this enmity.”142 Calls for Bupati Telly Tjanggulung to step down from her post were circulated, for the sake of protecting the unity of the district’s inhabitants.

Another major protest was organized in late October, when members of

141 For a more detailed account of the link between rights advocacy and adat in Indonesia, see Davidson, Jamie S. and Henley, David, ed. The Revival of Tradition in Indonesian Politics: The Deployment of Adat from Colonialism to Indigenism. London and New York Routledge 2007.
Brigade Manguni Indonesia “came down the mountain” to the provincial government center, urging the bupati to relent to pressure from the provincial government. Starting at the office of North Sulawesi Council (Dewan SULUT) and ending at the Governor’s office, the demonstration again focused on leveraging legal pressure to defend their stance. Novi Kolinug, SH, legal advisor for Brigade Manguni Indonesia, stated at the demo that “the regional government has already stated their rejection of the replacement of the regional logo, yet the new logo continues to be used. This is an act of insubordination against the regional government of the North Sulawesi Province, which represents an arm of the central government.”

The bupati’s office still did not return the logo to its original form. It seemed the debate had finally reached its ceiling in January of 2011, when activist Veppy Rambi announced that the Indonesian Supreme Court had signed in support of the ruling that would return the manguni to its place as the symbol of the district. However, at the time of the announcement, the PEMULIHAN logo was still in use and there was no indication that the bupati’s office would move to officially restore the symbol to its former incarnation. Telly Tjanggulung had other problems to face, as she and her office were facing several accusations of corruption. The public polarizations that portrayed adat and Christianity as two mutually exclusive categories had reached wide enough circulation to seep into other affairs. Brigade Manguni Indonesia, under Decky Maengkom, continued their public campaign against the MITRA district office. Maengkom, accompanied by Deputy Hukum Novie Kolinug SH, claimed that Tjanggulung was making undocumented statements about the regency obtaining an award as a paragon of the newly created districts under regional autonomy laws. Furthermore, he accused the bupati’s office of using public funds to finance trips aboard, significantly pilgrimages to Israel – a common activity for Christian politicians in the region.

Brigade Manguni – from Christian militia to adat organization

The Brigade Manguni144 organization itself serves as an apt example of the kind of discursive redefinition that has been spurred by the emergence of regional adat movements, and the recreation of adat as a valid form of political organization used to agitate for rights and recognition at the national level. Locals locate Brigade Manguni’s origins to the year 2002, in response to protracted violent confrontations between Muslims and Christians in Poso, Central Sulawesi. The purpose of the organization was to ensure that the interreligious violence that had been ignited to the south did not infect the North Sulawesi Province. Several scholars have referred to Brigade Manguni as a Christian militia or a paramilitary group, including Michael Jacobsen (2002) and most recently Sven Kosel, whose extensive coverage of the genesis of Brigade Manguni contends that the organization was actually created in 2000 by the security forces associated with the Kongres Minahasa Raya, a forum on regional secession (Kosel 2010:309). Kosel portrays Brigade Manguni, and its later incarnation, Brigade Manguni Indonesia, as a paramilitary group145 masquerading as an adat organization, with a roster of members dominated by military officers and GMIM leaders, engaging in activities inextricably tied to Christian regional politics (ibid., 311). He describes Brigade Manguni’s ability to mobilize members for militant actions like organized “sweeping” for suspected troublemakers or “jihadi” elements, and their involvement in money-politics surrounding a case against the US-based Newmont Mining Corporation activities in Minahasa (ibid., 313).

As Kosel reports, the group’s core members have been involved in rallies and

144 The use of the word Indonesia to Brigade Manguni’s official title is a recent addition, associated with their registration as an adat organization. Outside of media coverage, most people simply refer to the organization as Brigade Manguni.
145 In their report on the “Condition of Freedom of Religion and Belief in Indonesia” for the period of 2007-2009, The Setara Institute also lumps Brigade Manguni in with several groups they identify as “civil militias” (militia sipil) such as Laskar Maesa, Militia Waraney and and Legium Cristum. The emergence of these organizations is attributed to “fear of threats from outside,” (Setara Institute 2010:25) but no specific reference is made to the religious character of the groups mentioned.
demonstrations focused on the rejection of national policies or proposed laws perceived to threaten religious minorities – in this case, Christians – and simultaneously, Minahasa. The conflation of Minahasa and Christianity in these instances is unmistakable. Yet the organization itself is nationally affiliated, and furthermore is not restricted to Christian membership, although its members may be predominantly Christian. When I confronted Pak Thom, an unofficial historian and blogger for the group in an interview at government office where he works, responded to a question about previous classifications of BMI as a militia or a religiously-based paramilitary organization by highlighting the organization’s official, national status and their multi-religious membership:

KAS: Maybe this is wrong, but I have read in articles from other scholars that Brigade Manguni is a Christian militia.

Pak Thom: That article is likely incorrect. We have just recently held a national meeting at a local hotel for the celebration of Brigade Manguni’s anniversary. It has already been announced in a national meeting that Brigade Manguni is not exclusively for Christians, but [draws members from] Muslim circles as well.

KAS: What is Brigade Manguni’s role in national activities?

Pak Thom: As it happens, during our most recent meeting, our highest leadership, along with the government entrusted Brigade Manguni to hold a workshop about loving the Indonesian homeland, because this public organization has already become a partner to the government. We are already officially listed with the Department of Home Affairs (field interview 5/08/2009).

Outside of suspicions as to whether Brigade Manguni Indonesia can be classified as a religiously-based militia or not, their insistence on presenting themselves as a nationally affiliated adat organization needs to be examined in terms of members’ motivations to make this claim, and what it says about genesis of adat as a category for action. As Patricia Spyer (1996:172) notes, state intervention in the definition of culture has re-formulated practices linked with adat as

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146 In order to protect my informant, I am not identifying the office where I met him (at his request) for the interview, other than to identify it as a government office. Pak Thom invited me to his place of employment for an interview after I contacted him via his blog to inquire about his involvement with the Brigade Manguni organization.
interchangeable with other “homogenously defined and bounded units such as ‘religion’ or citizen,” since the Suharto era. Although adat was used as a legal term demarcating the boundaries of group identity and referenced plural legal practices under colonial rule, during the New Order adat was increasingly cordoned off as a set of objectified practices that corresponded with the state’s demand for homogenized, ‘artistic’ (Acciaioli 1985) presentations of difference amongst citizens. Prior to the fall of the New Order government, the term had little resemblance to international legal designation of indigenous peoples (Li 2001b:645-646). In the years after the fall of Suharto’s dictatorship, the terms adat or masyarakat adat (adat community) have taken on dimensions of the international indigenous rights movement by using the category to demand legal recognition in claims for land rights and regional political control. Unlike some international indigenous rights movements, however, many of the organizations making claims under the banner of adat demand recognition in a way that supports the government’s role as the arbiter and legitimating body of cultural communities in Indonesia, redefining adat as a national category with all its inherent contradictions. These groups seek power in a way that acknowledges the legitimacy of the nation (Li 2001b:653) and the definition of cultural communities that is promoted as commonsense through the control and display of culture as an aspect of Indonesian identity.

Registering Brigade Manguni as a ‘societal organization’ (Organasasi Masyarakat, Ormas) is a key aspect of redefining the group as something that transcends the regional, even as it is defined by it. The categorization of civil society organizations into Ormas under Law No. 8 (1985) allows groups to register with the national offices of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Directorate General of National Unity and Politics and receive an official letter indicating their special status (Nugroho 2011:13). Although largely a tool of state control over the freedom of assembly and a way to check the power of groups identified as anti-national or a threat to public order (Nugroho 2011:16), since 1998 registering as an Ormas has afforded some political advantages. Groups have used the status as a registered societal organization to request governmental recognition and protection of their citizen’s right to public assembly. Especially in the case of practices that are labeled as ‘deviant’ from the norm, the Ormas status can act to counter the threat of being dissolved by the government for provoking public disorder. Combined with a
reference to the adat organizations that have become synonymous with representations of regional culture and the rights of regions to manage their own affairs under decentralization policies, Brigade Manguni’s decision to register for Ormas status can be interpreted to highlight the group’s vision of itself as representing a recognizable cultural group in line with nationalist ideals. In this sense, adat represents a standard form of national belonging tied to a concept of tradition rooted in particular locales – but transportable to new contexts, and inextricable from the concept of citizen’s rights.

I am not qualified to assess whether Brigade Manguni Indonesia should be classified as a militia group, and the issue is subsidiary to my focus on how the members of the organization publicly link themselves to a particular interpretation of adat that has implications for other forms of representation at the national level. I am more concerned with analyzing how the circulation of public discourse about the organization reflects an emerging metacultural discourse about the function and definition of adat, and how that redefinition effects connections between other categories linked to national citizenship that are key to the definition of identities in Indonesia.

Now boasting 30,000 members in a number of provinces across Indonesia, Brigade Manguni Indonesia represents Minahasan-ness, and the North Sulawesi province, across the nation. As the controversy over the proposed shift from the manguni logo picked up speed in 2009, a representative of the Brigade Manguni Indonesia branch in Kalimantan outlined how adat has come to serve as a standard form of political and social capital, which can be deployed in the name of group right

According to Tonaas BMI Kalimantan Ferry A Malonda, the desire to change the manguni logo to the merpati logo is clearly wrong. “Remember, the merpati is the symbol for the political party “The Peace and Welfare

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147 Other examples of high-profile Ormas who use their status to protect against government intervention is instructive of how the status can be used to advance bids for political authority under the guise of preserving religious freedom and societal harmony. The Islamic Defender’s Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI) engages in violent acts against activities or organizations they accuse of denigrating Islam, claiming that they only act when law enforcement fails to address their complaints (and the government fails in its role to “protect” religions from defamation). The government has not responded calls for the forcible dissolution of the group in part because the renewed commitment to protecting citizen freedoms post-1998 frames the dissolution of these kinds of groups as a return to the repressive methods of the Suharto era.
Party” (Partai Damai Sejathera) [A Christian-based political party], while the manguni symbol represents the ancestors from hundreds of years ago. This is really regrettable. He went on to use Kalimantan as an example, saying that the manguni symbol can be equated with the kebesaran symbol of the Dayak Adat Community. The belittlement of these kinds of symbols by the Central Minahasan District Government is very disheartening, given the cultural cooperation between Minahasans and Dayaks.  

Malonda not only turns his defense of the manguni logo into a veiled critique of Christian-based political parties, he does so by distinguishing the manguni as something that belongs to the realm of culture with his reference to an ancestral, ahistorical past – while not the same past that is shared by Minahasans and Dayaks, it is similar in its opposition to religious politics.

During a rally I observed in the summer of 2006 on the streets of the provincial capital of Manado, nearly a thousand members of Brigade Manguni Indonesia flooded the streets, dressed in military-esque black uniforms with the manguni symbol emblazoned in front. Walking on foot or piled in the back of trucks festooned with flags carrying the black and red Brigade Manguni logo, the parade demonstrated the organization’s spread around the archipelago. Branches from Kalimantan, Papua, Ambon, and Jakarta represented the presence of Minahasan people around Indonesia. With sixteen branches currently active across the country, the majority of members live outside the North Sulawesi region, since it estimated that there are only about 7,000 active members settled around the Minahasan homeland. Like an inversion of the well-known idiom about regional cultures “sitting at Jakarta’s table” representing iterations of regional culture purified for national consumption, the proliferation of Brigade Manguni makes culture a route for regional visibility, making Minahasa visible as part of the national fabric. The amplification of Minahasan adat beyond its territorial associations solidifies Minahasan identity as it is reflected in relations of contrast to other ethnic groups in the nation. It is through these kind of standardizing, national forms of representation that the identity’s own contrastive elements, such as religious identity and sub-ethnic association, can be downplayed. This is conducive to achieving the kind of political aspirations that many Minahasans share:

Pak Thom: I would say that Minahasans are people who have a strong unity when they are away from their homeland, but when they are in their own region, there isn’t a feeling of unity. This is why the Minahasan people are left behind in many important realms, such as governance. Minahasans just aren’t utilized (field interview 5/08/2009).

Pak Thom goes on to describe how it is the historical and mythical roots of Minahasan identity itself that contain a fundamental problem in using regional culture as a platform for national political aspirations:

So in the end this is why Minahasans aren’t unified, because once they come together, they break apart again. Why? Toar and Lumimuut [mythical progenitors of Minahasan people] parted and then they met again, and they presided over the division of their people, placing the Tontemboan tribe here, and another tribe over there. Therefore there was no unity. It means that the Stone of Division was a division of area, land. So really everyone had already broken apart, there wasn’t even a sense of unity when there was a meeting at the Stone of Division.149

The question of national recognition then lies in finding an appropriate basis on which to build a strong local identity, like other ethnolocal identities in the archipelago:

Pak Thom: Now, how do we bring Minahasans together today, so they can be counted among others in the nation? So that Minahasan people will be used nationally, will become leaders. Where are the Minahasans who posses government positions in Jakarta? There are no Minahasan ministers. Once the New Order arrived, there were no more Minahasans. Look at the Bataks, their unity, it’s only here in this place that as Minahasans say, they are “perplexed” with the lack of any sense of unity (field interview 05/08/2009).

The group’s national orientation through the metaphor of adat implies that a sense of ethnic and/or regional belonging are more important than a shared religious identity in terms of who can be identified as a Minahasan. This allows for a conflation of Minahasan identity with regional identity, especially in terms of

149 The reference to the Stone of Division (Watu Pinawetengan) discusses a well-visited local site in Minahasa, a stone at which leaders of pre-Christian tribes met to create a contextually-based unity against common enemies. Inscriptions in the stone are said to refer to the original divisions of land delineating the domain of different ethnolinguistic groups in the region.
realizing political aspirations:

KAS: Maybe you can explain the mission and vision of Brigade Manguni?

Pak Thom: Our main goal is to preserve Minahasan adat, the foundation of BM is based on Pancasila and adat-istiadat. Our goal is to elevate the rank and status of Minahasans specifically and North Sulawesi in general...to lay a foundation for unity amongst the people of Minahasa who are of the same knowledge and ideology. To uphold the law and culture of society. This is always emphasized. To create a sense of community solidarity (field interview 05/08/2009).

The genesis of adat from customary laws differentiating tribal groups to a form of national representation, and vehicle for regional identity, has been fostered by the legalization of adat under the legislation on regional autonomy. The emergence of civil society groups or adat organizations (Ormas adat) in connection with the development of more elaborated canon of human rights law in Indonesia post-1999 facilitated the expression of local desires through the discourse of adat, a form nationally associated with the domain of regional rights. As Sandra Moniaga (2007) explains, the evolution of the terms used to describe those associated with the realm of adat occurred within the framework the redefinition of land tenure rights by both adat organizations and national environmental groups, beginning in 1993. Trying to find a balance between previous terms used to describe historically disenfranchised groups, like the ‘backwards people’ (masyarakat terasing) or government labels that implied indigeneity such as orang asli, pribumi, and masyarakat hukum adat, the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Advocacy Network (Jaringan Pembelaan Hak hak Masyarakat Adat, Japhama) settled on the term ‘Adat Community’ (Masyarakat

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150 As the basis of the national ideology, the first tenet of Pancasila implies that all citizens of the nation must be religious through ‘Belief in one God.’ Strong religious identities, however, can sometimes be seen to threaten nationalism. Early drafts of the law on Ormas were controversial due to the application of the principle of Asas Tunggal, referring to the ‘single basic principle’ of Pancasila that should be the basis of any societal organization (Nugroho 2011:15). The Ministry of Home Affairs used this section to the law on Societial Organizations to dissolve the largest Islamic student organization in the country in 1987 because they held religion, not Pancasila, as their guiding principle (Ibid., 16). In 2006, the Ministry of Home Affairs introduced a bill to amend the 1985 law which was considered no longer appropriate in the democratizing nation (Ibid., 19) The bill was a legislative priority for the year 2011.

151 See Moniaga’s 2007 article “From Bumiputera to Adat Community: A Long and Confusing Journey” for an analysis of legislation related to adat communities.
Adat), which they defined as “people who have origins in the same region, and share one unique system of values, ideology, economy, political system, culture and system of land management” (Moniaga 2007:282). Although referring to a radically different context, this definition is echoed in the description of Brigade Manguni Indonesia’s terms of belonging.

Like many forms of representation in Indonesia, the meaning of adat is undergoing a process of transformation. New avenues for seeking control of resources or agitating for local rights, and even displaying regional diversity, should not be mistakenly labeled as inherently destabilizing or anti-national. Doing so ignores the way in which adat still draws its meaning from a wider, national discussion about culture and identity. In a recent article about the attempt to liberalize or “regionalize” television media networks in Indonesia, the difficulty of breaking from centralized forms of representation despite political and economic reformation is aptly summarized. Even as TVRI, the main national network located the capital city of Jakarta, is legally bound to provide local stations airtime for regional programming, those stations fail to come up with novel, locally contextual programs that express their unique perspectives. “The movement of the dances, and the costumes, in events after the model of “Unity in Diversity” (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika), for instance, are certainly different across the regions. But the camera angle always places the dancers in front of the governor’s office, not only demonstrating the standardization of aesthetic patterns, but also the standardization of forms through which regional officials look for recognition from the center in Jakarta”¹⁵² Adat movements, such as the one Brigade Manguni Indonesia now represents, may similarly have become a legally appointed way expressing diversity through standardized forms. It is in the public stakes of defining the content of standard forms where the effects of political change has sparked the beginning of a dramatic shift in social and cultural realities.

Re-igniting religion and culture: thinking through identities in a decentralizing Indonesia

As the political framework of Indonesia has shifted in the post-Reformasi era, the complicated rubric of religion, culture and identity in Indonesia has been shaken as old categories resettle into new political realities. One effect of this “unsettled” (kegalauan) state is that groups are increasingly utilizing the interaction of legal processes with the discourses on religion and adat in order to debate or affirm their existence (Thufail and Ramstedt 2011:3). The ‘adat revival’ which swept across Indonesia in tandem with processes of political decentralization (Henley and Davidson 2007:2), is considered to refer to a new era of the employment and politicization of adat.

What seemed on the surface like an isolated squabble over the exercise of new forms of political power granted to government officials at the district level in North Sulawesi exemplifies how the “deployment” (Henley and Davidson 2010:4) of adat may be self-limiting when it blocks other nationally recognized forms of identification. As is the case in many other post-colonial nations, culture has been invoked and constructed as a political basis for a national community in ways that have transformed how people conceive of their own histories and identities. These processes of making culture a national object makes other forms reckoning identity less politically viable, and transforms the category of culture altogether into a measurement of difference or sameness displayed through objectified forms (Linnekin 1992; Linnekin 1990; Gladney 2004).

While the demarcation (and relation) of adat to religion varies according to regional and historical context, as ontological categories both are institutionalized at the national level. Contemporary adat therefore can be characterized as something that has local characteristics yet simultaneously functions as a “pan Indonesian discourse tied to history, land, and law, as well as a political ideology” that is commonly perceived to share a connection with “authenticity, community, regulations and justice” (Henley and Davidson, 2007:25). This inherent contradiction

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between the universal (national) and particular (local) aspects of *adat* are similar to the construction of religion and religious identity in Indonesia, which while always firmly entrenched at the national scale is also used in various ways to express regional variation or ethnic difference. Not surprisingly, these two concepts often define each other, whether in competition or cooperation. Although scholars have discussed how the new political context in Indonesia has provided opportunities for either category to be extended into previously untested realms through political or legal avenues previously unavailable in the New Order, few have considered how these opportunities reframe the relation between these two avenues for national recognition, and how this shift may call for the transformation of the categories in question.

Previous associations characterized the deployment of *adat* or tradition as something linked to irredentist movements, anti-national sentiments (Atkinson 1983:688) or as a form of resistance to modernity, especially during the New Order era. Those without ‘religion’ in the official sense also had difficulty at times maintaining visible distinctions between themselves and other ethnic groups on the basis of cultural content alone. In response, groups tried to redeem customary practice and strengthen ethnic or regional boundaries by inserting tradition within the frame of one of the five nationally accepted world religious practices: Christianity (Protestantism), Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Jane Atkinson’s 1983 article describes how the Wana people of the central Sulawesi highlands used “an innovative response” to fit their traditions within the logic of what she terms as Indonesia’s “civil religion,” the category known in Bahasa Indonesia as *agama* (1983: 685). Using the same criteria that defines religious membership for world religions in Indonesia – monotheism, adherence to specific dietary practices, and the unity of Indonesian citizens under the same God – the Wana construe their practices as equally deserving of the label *agama* as the practices of their Muslim and Christian neighbors. Atkinson sees religion as a “principal idiom in which Indonesian politics is couched” (1983: 692) and the distinction of having a religion as a means to accessing resources and the benefits of full participation in the national citizenry.

A case with similar characteristics can be seen in Bali, where Agama Hindu Bali became part of the national pantheon in 1958, and in 1965 was renamed Agama
Hindu in order to better fit within the parameters provided by the Department of
Religion that identified Balinese ritual practices as a branch of Hinduism (Picard
2004). The complex of rituals, performance, and beliefs that represented Balinese
identity were reconceptualized under the rubric of the Indonesian national version of
a “world” religion, in a complex negotiation between local elites, government
officials, and the general public (Picard 2011: 485-486). Examples abound of the
reclassification of traditional practices through the qualifications assigned to
represent world religions in the national perspective (Schiller 1996). During the New
Order, religion could serve as the antithesis to an anti-modern, unchanging, and
undeveloped life in the communities of orang terasing or backwards people.

A dramatic shift seems to be occurring in the perception of adat in the
metacultural value that it is assigned in public discourse. Through the initiation of
the government’s restructuring of the regional political system under regional
autonomy heralded by the 1999 legislation, these reconceptualizations are part of
the new pragmatic reality in which governance at the regional level, as well as
control over land tenure is now as politically valid as using religion as a means of
defining identity and agitating for rights. Novel deployments of adat certainly echo
the growing politicization of the category of indigeneity, a transnational
classification and discursive formation usually used to ensure the rights of minority
groups within the nation-state. This does not imply that revival of adat around
Indonesia should be viewed as a derivation of international indigenous movements.
Adat compromises a reference point and a discursive form that in John Bowen’s
estimation is unique to Indonesia, downplaying differences in language or claims to
indigenousness, focusing more on shared territory and control of resources (Bowen
2003 in Henley and Davidson, 2010:3). In Minahasa, the debate over the manguni
emblem demonstrates that adat can be a flexible category that defies primordialism,
naturalizing those inhabitants who don’t possess the characteristics commonly
thought to identify a member of the ‘indigenous’ community. Although adat as a
political resource can be employed in public debates about regional autonomy in the

154 For a detailed analysis of the 1999 reforms, as well as the amendment of the 1945
Constitution and the 2004 revised legislation related to regional autonomy, see Holtzappel,
Coen G. "Introduction: The Regional Governance Reform in Indonesia, 1999-2004." In
Decentralization and Regional Autonomy in Indonesia: Implementation and Challenges, edited
same way that ‘minority’, ‘ethnic community’ or ‘religion’ can (Bowen 2005:157), it nevertheless has a very different basis than these concepts, one that is rooted in overarching, regional affiliations (ibid., 158).

In some areas, the relationship between adat and religion has been historically fraught due to theological perspectives on where pre-Christian practices should fit within kind of new concept of the individual (Robbins 1998) introduced by Christian theology. The government promotion of consumable cultural objects such as dances, clothing and ritual performances that reached its peak during the New Order has had varied effects on regions already possessing developed theological perspectives on appropriate uses and interpretations of culture. In the nationally promoted formulation, adat was a collection of representative cultural practices that could be lifted from their original context to be displayed as artistic representations, particularly generative of the kinds of cultural performances that develop under the tourist’s gaze, displaying culture as objects or dances that can performed outside of their social and ritual context. In some regions where religious institutions had already successfully instituted a process through which cultural practices were analyzed for their appropriateness in terms of Christian beliefs, adat was characterized as local habit or culture that supported social cohesion and was separate from the realm of religious belief (Erb 2007:281). In her study of changes in ritual practice in the Manggarai region of Flores, Maribeth Erb describes how the rituals of sacrifice were almost impossible to find through the 1980s, because they had been identified as a supernatural practice deemed unacceptable for those professing the Catholic faith. The following decade, however, saw a massive resurgence of these rituals, usually attended by religious clergy. Even non-Catholics in the region identified Catholicism as something essential to their existence.

Erb attributes this change to a spirit of “reformation” (reformasi) that for the people of Manggarai meant not only national reformation, but a reformation of Catholic dogma and an investigation of how the relationship between Manggarai identity and Catholicism would move forward through the coming decade (2007:282). The rituals of sacrifice that had been repressed by the church were “restored, regalvanized and renewed” through a Catholic perspective, one that has necessitated a reconceptualization of church policy through locally informed perspectives. Although people feel more secure within a religious identity which now possesses a
much looser interpretation, they feel less sure about the reformation of Manggarai adat that has ossified the qualifications for ethnic belonging.

The case in Minahasa suggests a different path, one in which adat becomes the basis of a less exclusive identity that encompasses a diverse regional community, where Christianity is purified of culture in its oppositional relation. There are indications, however, that a reformation movement is also rumbling from within the walls of the GMIM church, the denomination most closely associated with Minahasan history and heritage. As new forms for the mobilization of people emerge in the public sphere, new cultural discourses about culture compete for legitimacy, sometimes to the peril of other possibilities for identification. Novel ways of being, produced from familiar forms, seek to widen the sphere of their circulation and become, in essence, something unquestionably cultural. The definitions on which communities are based are often contested, when “the categories of description are among the resources drawn on by various local actors in their struggles among themselves and those who govern them” (Bowen 2005:167). What is clear is that although the results may vary from region to region, a redefinition of the relationship between religion and adat has become the flashpoint through which both categories will be renewed in Indonesia’s contemporary context. Pragmatic changes may change the structure of politics, and the socio-political horizon, but equally important are the metacultural processes through which people establish continuity with the past in the face of dramatic change, flows of “reconciliation and convergence through processes of reinterpretation” (Bowen 2005:167). These commentaries also influence cultural structures and the direction of social life.

The prediction of early scholars of decentralization was that the process would result in weakened provinces and “empowered” rural districts, leading to fission or the “balkanization” of the Indonesian national landscape. Michael Jacobsen (2003) made a similar prediction for the North Sulawesi region. From a political perspective, MITRA officials’ move to redefine the district’s image via legal avenues created by decentralization policies reflects the legal possibilities that support this sort of political genesis. Yet Jacobsen misapprehended where the lines of a reconceptualized identity in North Sulawesi would fall, and that political elites and other players might appeal to an already extant sense of sameness created through a shared locality. Instead of the “balkanization” of the province into
regencies aligned along the sub-ethnic divisions which have long been gathered under the umbrella of Minahasan identity, the battle to redefine the symbolic markers of identity straddle the fault line between culture and religion – a line that corresponds to official divisions between state promoted “world religions” and the realm of the traditional, ideally a space which is linked to a particular territory.

This chapter has considered the redefinition of the national categories of adat and religion (agama) as a process of negotiation in North Sulawesi’s regional public. By documenting the metacultural narration of debates over a key public symbol of Minahasan identity, this case demonstrates how the political processes of decentralization play into new deployments of cultural and regionally-based frames for identity, social organization, and political representation. As religion (agama) and adat are mutually constitutive categories, the contemporary use of adat as a basis for regional identity entails a re-examination of those ‘cultural’ elements that are projected backwards to construct a shared past. The religiously diverse population of the North Sulawesi Province problematizes the historical intertwinement of Christianity with symbols of Minahasan cultural identity. Furthermore, the debate over the meaning of the manguni elucidates the role that the public plays in mobilizing identities through attention to and the circulation of discourse, a dynamic process where assertions loosed into the public sphere can be utilized in unintended ways, and have unforeseen consequences in the continuing definition of the parameters for belonging. In the next chapter, I’ll examine how Christian practitioners, who have found themselves relegated to a place of “no culture,” are working to redefine Christian practice as something that can’t be separated from realm of adat.
CHAPTER 5

SPEAKING FOR GOD: CREATING AUTHENTICITY AND PERFORMING CULTURAL PROFICIENCY THROUGH PROTESTANT LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN LOLAH VILLAGE, TOMBARIRI

It is difficult to theorize about the impact of Christianity - as a form of institutional power, a vector of colonial discipline, a vehicle for the transmission of ideas about the modern subject, or as a cultural system in its own right - without addressing the conundrum of how to conceive of cultural change. As a system that evolved “somewhere else” than the colonial settings into which it was introduced, Christian practices and systems of belief are often marked as an outside, universalizing influence in the kind of binary ontological divisions that the processes of modernity impose on our understanding of the world. For many cultural commentators, Christianity’s gain always in some way implies culture’s loss. But just as indigenous versions of Christianity can spring from the contradictory promise of a particularistic, intimate experience of God through the portability and iterability of Christian text and ritual, Christian ideologies of the human subject can facilitate intimate, communal experiences that invigorate a group’s connection to the past, or to the past that they hope to lay claim to in the definition of their identity.

Where Christianity ends and culture begins is a question that structures the public discussion over the appropriate practices and symbols that should represent Minahasan culture in the way other regions (and ethnicities) are portrayed throughout Indonesia, and on the international market for cultural tourism. It also speaks to the issue of how a region with a mixed religious demography perceives of a history dominated by a colonial presence and the influence of Christianity on the cultural landscape. As has been described in previous chapters, several factors, including the political restructuration towards decentralized rule, shifting demographics, and a nation-wide resurgence of the use of adat as both historical commentary and political capital in contemporary battles for power, have reopened the conversation about the role of religion in defining identity at the regional level.

155 I am referring here to the loss of traditional practices or “indigenous” culture as my informants describe, in line with the objectified concept of culture, glossed as kebudayaan or adat in Indonesia.
In North Sulawesi, local anxieties over who can claim to be Minahasan are explicitly framed as a question of what influence Christianity has on the past. In Chapter Four, the debate over a key symbol of Minahasan identity, the *manguni* owl, was used to demonstrate how public polarizations around the categories of religion and culture make Christianity’s influence on local cosmologies seem antithetical to the regional promotion of religious harmony. In this chapter, I’ll consider what effect this polarization has on a congregation of Minahasan Protestants, whose understanding of the past is mediated by the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa’s (Gereja Injili Masehi di Minahasa, GMIM) theological perspectives on the proper place for culture in Christian lives. By utilizing Protestant language ideologies to make the performance of culture possible in the church environment, these Christians are challenging prevailing notions of cultural authenticity. Yet in making the tie to the past so amenable to their Christian present, these methods also narrow the possibilities for who can be identified as truly Minahasan, not only between religious groups, but in relation to other Christian denominations in the region.

Drawing from ethnographic cases where the meaning of culture is created publicly within the institutional form of the church, this chapter will investigate what kind of “technologies and ideologies” Christianity provides to facilitate an experience of culture, one that constructs a different concept of authenticity than the continuity model (Robbins 2007) implies. Ironically, it is the institutionalization of social and political relations within the realm of religious institutions in North Sulawesi that creates a sense of disjuncture from those practices emblematic of the local in Indonesia’s politics of identity. Those who call themselves Minahasans today experience cultural loss not through the paradigmatic break of conversion, but more due to the politicization of an ‘anthropological’ model of culture that stresses continuity and “authenticity” of meaning, as opposed to the self-conscious work of preservation and cultural rediscovery supported through religious institutions.

Recently, both religious practice and non-religious traditions throughout Indonesia have been resubmitted to “purification,” the process where it is decided to which categories elements appropriately belong. Those groups with a long institutional history of association with Christianity must find ways to alter their orientations towards the mutually constituting roles of religion and culture. A
resurgence of religion documented in Indonesia since the close of the New Order with Suharto’s fall in 1998 has been characterized by increasing attention to defining what is orthodox, and the proliferation of a number of publicly visible “piety” movements (Hasan 2009, Hefner 2010, Hoesterey and Clark 2012). This has pushed religious practice to expand beyond the boundaries of religious institutions and into the public space. As orthodoxy denies that there is a clearly demarcated boundary between the public and the private in religious practice, signifiers of religious identity have seeped into the ordinary, everyday interactions between individuals. The demarcation between what is religious and what is not can become a powerful sign of inclusion in political communities and control over resources, as well as a symbolic resource, as was clearly demonstrated in the course of the 2010 regional elections (Laporan Tahunan Kehidupan Beragama di Indonesia 2011:66-69). This often leads to very public displays that seek to define (and redefine) what kind of symbols are appropriate to represent diverse communities, in incidents where seemingly benign signifiers of ‘local’ culture become a focal point for the way in which religion demarcates boundaries between groups. These publicly unfolding debates are often competitions over who has the authority to set the standards for identification, as discussed in the analysis of the debate over the manguni symbol in Chapter Four.

The redefinition of what belongs to the realm of religion is not the only category that has undergone political transformation in the last decade. Through the 1999 decentralization legislation that relocated political and economic power to the level of district governments, cultural identification has been granted a kind of legal efficacy by the state that can also be used to access national resources or to cohere a diverse population under the umbrella of a regional cultural community. This leaves Christian communities like the one found in North Sulawesi faced with the terms of a conceptual debate on just how religion defines their identity. It is a debate that has far reaching political consequences not just regionally, but nationally. The uneasy position of Christian communities whose identity is in some sense constituted through religious affiliation is colored by the national religious politics in which Christians play a minority role. Although constitutionally codified as one of Indonesia’s official religions, Christians nonetheless often express their frustration at being under-recognized and politically crowded out in the wake of the Islamic
turn in Suharto-era politics (Budijanto 2009:163-164). Minahasan Christians, who were patronized as subaltern colonial elites during the Dutch occupation, and later strongly associated with the inner cadre of the military, have taken the limited space for Christians in contemporary national politics particularly hard.

Ontological and epistemological analysis of the past, and its role in terms of Christian belief, is nothing new for the Minahasan Protestants. Since Christianity’s introduction in the region, Christian practitioners have been engaged in a process of deciding which subjects should be attributed with agency (Keane 2003), and how to attribute meaning to ritual practices that were redefined under the tutelage of missionaries promoting the ideals of Ethical Theology. It is a task that the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa, as the dominant religious institution, as well as the largest Christian denomination in the region, has taken up in earnest. It has also largely defined the public presentation of pre-Christian culture in the region since the institution’s members dominate the ranks of local politics. Although the terms of the debate are as old as Christianity’s arrival, what has changed is how the debate echoes newly circulating forms of recognition in the national politics of identity. On one hand, the ability of Christianity to contextualize particular practices as part of a universal category can now be parlayed into political capital, making Christianity recognizable as an aspect of traditional culture suitable for the tourist’s gaze and therefore national recognition, or to elevate sub-ethnic identities to the level of comparison with other cultural “entities” in the nation. However, defining the place of culture in the lives of the faithful is no longer restricted within the walls of the church. Why then are some Christians trying to see that it remains inextricably housed there?

To answer this, I’ll examine how one congregation of the Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (hereafter GMIM) has instituted a program of “cultural liturgy” in an attempt to publicly align Christianity and culture. The Imanuel Lolah congregation in Lolah Village, Tombariri, has been reconstructing their relation to the past through the medium of local language by translating GMIM Protestant liturgy into the Tombulu language during select Sunday

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156 The North Sulawesi Province currently lists three main categories of regional languages in the region: Bahasa Minahasa, Bahasa Sangihe-Talaud and Bahasa Bolang-Mongondow. The sub-languages associated with Minahasan ethnic identification in official publications are
worship services and church special events. Spearheaded by individuals who want to redress their lack of authoritative knowledge about Lolah’s history, traditional ritual and Tombulu language, members of the church’s Cultural Commission (Komisi Kebudayaan), describe their role as one of preservation and transmission. Started in 2005 by Hendrik Paat as an effort to increase the use of cultural aspects in their church’s liturgy, the Commission is overseen by Pastor Djemmy Sinubu and several members of the congregation who volunteer their time to create “cultural” or “contextual” liturgies for church services. Their approach to making culture intimate, however, has implications for the way that Christianity can offer techniques for the reclamation of the markers of cultural identity that have currency in the national representational economy (Keane 2002:65) of a decentralizing Indonesia. By investing traditional performance with meaning through church ritual, authenticity can be created not in the “correct” or authoritative repetition of past practices, but through the principles of sincerity and emotionality. Worship services achieve a kind of authenticity through their hybridity, their refusal to delineate cultural aspects as objectified performances devoid of spiritual or religious meaning. In conceptualizing cultural authenticity through the kind of “sincere performance” that is enacted in Protestant ritual in Minahasa, inhabitants of Lolah create an alternative authenticity, one in which a local, highly particularistic connection to culture is facilitated through Christian faith.

The work of the Cultural Commission within the Imanuel Lolah congregation allows Lolah residents to become a people with history. In Jonathan Friedman’s (1992:837) description, identity is the “empowerment to fashion a life-history that defines an individual or a group from others.” By relating the past to the present-day in Lolah through Christianity, Protestant residents define themselves against other groups in the region through association with Tombulu culture, a sub-identity of the Tolour, Tombulu, Tonsea, Tontemboan, Tonsawang, Ponasokan and Bantik. Bahasa Tombulu speakers are identified as part of the core of four ethnic groups that united under the moniker Minahasa, with the name itself having roots in the three syllable Tombulu phrase “Wata Esa Ene” Wata = all, Esa = one, Ene = agree or “all agree to become one” (Waroka 2004:30).

157 Some elderly members of the congregation also belong to the Commission, but act more as advisors, as they often cannot attend evening rehearsals and meetings. Members The church’s youth koloms often are asked to participate in performance of contextual liturgies as well.
identification with Minahasa. Their differentiation is also, however, conceptualized religiously, a point of increasing importance given the current state of relations among different denominations of Christianity in the North Sulawesi province. The engagement of culture not only identifies how Lolah fits into the rubric of ethnolocal culture in terms of national representation, but also locates Protestantism as having a privileged relationship to the Minahasan locality, restoring an authority that is being threatened by the growth of new denominations in the region – particularly Pentecostal and Charismatic groups.

Making worship cultural in Lolah Village, Tombariri

In many ways, it’s a typical Sunday in Lolah, one of the fourteen villages of that makes up the ward of Tombariri in the Minahasan District of North Sulawesi Province. About an hour’s ride south on public transport from the highland capital of Tomohon, the road to Lolah winds away from the urban trappings of the city where GMIM’s central office is located. The road itself materializes the historical interpolation of Lolah’s population into the institutional forms of the colonial period through religion. Until the 1970s, Protestant villagers lacked a pastor of their own, maintaining worship activities through contact with the center of missionary, and later GMIM, administration in Tomohon (Rochelle 2009:156). Moving southeast of the city, the divisions between villages become less remarkable than the stretches of green terraced rice-fields, and the occasional traditional wooden residences, flanked by two sets of stairs leading to the elevated front entrance. The borders between villages are most predominantly marked by churches, the central feature of the landscape and a visual representation of local religious demographics. The religious composition of the three administrative divisions of Lolah can be read through the spatial divisions of Catholic and Protestant churches.\footnote{Karel Steenbrink (2004) identifies three major divisions in the Christian communities in Indonesia: Roman Catholics, Classical Protestant Churches like the PGI (Protestant Church of Indonesia) and Evangelical or Pentecostal Churches. The phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism in Indonesia, and the threat this represents to more established churches, has begun to have an effect on this tripartite division. Although the divisions between Catholics and Protestants in Lolah is still clearly demarcated, the influx of Pentecostal congregations has also lent to a growing tendency towards Catholic-Protestant ecumenical relationships in the Christian-dominant population in North Sulawesi.} As the oldest religious
institution in the village, The GMIM Lolah Imanuel church in the predominantly Protestant Lolah I represents the original inroads that religion made into the village in the early 19th century. Lolah II is roughly divided 60/40 between Protestants and Catholics, and serves as the buffer between the Catholic populated Lolah III. These administrative divisions began in the mid-1980s, providing separate government services and representation for villagers along denominational lines (Rochelle 2009:197-198). In the last few years, Pentecostal/charismatic congregations have also been making inroads into village society, representing the third denominational division of Lolah’s population.

There is little doubt that the generations of villagers who stream down the road on Sunday mornings in Lolah I, heading for a small church that stands in the shadows of a much more imposing structure to the left, are members of the Imanuel Lolah Church (which previously went by the name El-Fatah GMIM Lolah). As one of the over eight-hundred GMIM congregations, Lolah Imanuel’s members normally participate in a Sunday service that is replicated across the province of North Sulawesi following the liturgical guide (tata ibadah) that is circulated weekly from the GMIM Synod’s central office in Tomohon to all of the institution’s active pastors. On any Sunday morning in Minahasa, GMIM members throughout the province are moving through the motions of the same service, participating in the exegesis of the same section of biblical text, albeit through the various interpretations of individual pastors.

This Sunday in Lolah, however, it is not the familiar sounds of Western hymns translated into Indonesian that greets church members as they stream through the narrow doors of the church. It is the sound of far older, and for some perhaps much less familiar rhythms that are associated with the maengket rituals that once marked important life-cycle events in villages like Lolah. Performances of dances and songs drawn from the various repertoires of sub-regional maengket traditions are now often encountered in a non-ritual context at political events, church administrative functions, and displays of “local” culture. In this context, the sound of drumbeats sends a hush over the raucous cacophony that echoes from the church walls, as the nearly 300 congregants settle into the pews. Elevated on the platform around the church pulpit, a female member of Imanuel Lolah’s Cultural Commission, dressed in a coordinated black and red costume, sings the first
haunting, high notes of the service’s ordination (tahbisan) not in Indonesian, but in the regional language, Tombulu:

Sigi wangko iyayonai pelengee …wia si Opo Empung, wia Si OkiNa Lenas, wo wia si Roh Lenas. 159

The congregation, standing, answers in kind, while young women who belong to the Church’s youth committee move through a set of choreographed poses in time with the rhythm of the chant. As the call-and-answer couplet of the tahbisan finishes, they are kneeling in prayer at the front the of the church while from behind them, the sound of the conch shell (bia) rings out in nine short bursts, a metonym of the manguni bird’s call that entreats God’s presence in the church hall.

What is constructed as the effortless flow of a known ritual is belied by the coordinating cues that lead the congregation through the recitation of the familiar structure of GMIM Sunday service in an unfamiliar tongue, not in the formal register of Indonesian but in the local, specific sound of Tombulu language and harmonies. For the Cultural Commission members, this is just as much about performance as it is participation, the culmination of nights of practicing in the empty church after hours, much as a one would before a theatrical performance, memorizing lines and notes, correcting and re-correcting aspects of how the service should unfold. Words projected on screen over the congregants’ heads act as a kind of instructional guide for the audience’s role in the service, hinting at the didactic nature of the event. It is a ritual of transformation based in translation: the translation of an Indonesian Christian lexicon into Tombulu language, the translation of homogenized GMIM worship practices into particularities of local ritual form, 160 and the translation of culture into the intimacies of Protestant ritual. It is also a translation of authority, using techniques and theories drawn from Christian worship to lend authenticity to the performances of those congregation members too young to claim cultural competency through language abilities or

159 The Cultural Commission’s translation of this phrase in Indonesian reads “Salam hormat kami naikan kepada Allah Bapa, PuteraNya Yesus dan kepada Roh Kudus.” My translation of this is “our respectful greetings are sent above to God the Father, His Son Jesus, and to the Holy Spirit.”

160 See Appendix C for the tata ibadah model in Bahasa Tombulu and Bahasa Indonesia on which this service was based.
possession of ritual knowledge. The Tombulu language services translate the process of learning culture into living culture through Christianity.

These services, referred to as “contextual” or “cultural” liturgy by members of Lolah Imanuel congregation, began through the efforts of Hendrick Paat, a Lolah native who returned from an education overseas to continue the archival and preservation work of his father, a local historian. The desire to, as Hendrick explains it, “unearth” (menggali kembali) the cultural and social history of Lolah village was fanned by effects of the restructuration of local governance systems under the 1999 decentralization legislature, particularly reformation of the national education system\textsuperscript{161} to include curriculum covering local cultural elements (*Muatan Lokal*). As an educator, Hendrick noted the rapid “loss” of cultural elements like Tombulu language, which came sharply into focus when appropriate teachers could not be located to teach Tombulu to junior-high and high school students. Although Tombulu is still spoken in the village (Paat estimates that around seventy percent of the GMIM congregation are at least passive speakers), the generation of villagers still fluent in the tongue are a resource that will not be present to educate the youngest generations of Lolah people. The question of preservation and revitalization found their point of focus in the social nucleus of the church, and the shared institutional history of the GMIM institution provides a positive historical frame for the story of Lolah village across the generations.

The core of the commission is composed of church members in their forties and fifties, who have varying levels of competency in Tombulu language. Pendeta Djemmy Sinubu, who started his pastoral duties as the Principle Pastor in Lolah in

\textsuperscript{161} Local Content Education (*Muatan Lokal*) was added to the national curriculum at all levels of primary education in relation to the legislation on regional governance (UU No. 22 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah), and was specifically outlined in legislation on the national education system in 2003 (UU No. 20 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Pasal (37) ayat (1) and Pasal (38) ayat (2). According to the National Department of Education literature, the goal of developing local content curriculum is to “provide provision of knowledge, skill, and behavior to students so that they have a stable perception of their environment and the needs of the community that is congruent with the values and rules of their region, to support the continued development of the region as well as national development” (Department Pendidikan Nasional Jakarta 2006: 2) More specific goals are that the students should become more familiar with their natural, social and cultural environments, have knowledge that is useful to the surrounding community, and develop and attitude and behavior that is harmonious with the values and rules of the region (ibid., 3).
2004, does not speak Tombulu, but is active in a community of theologians and scholars who populate contemporary local debates on the relationship of Christianity and culture. Pursuing a PhD in theology at the Christian Theological University in Tomohon (UKIT), Pastor Sinubu was under the advisement of anthropologist and Catholic priest Ricardo Renwarin, a noted authority on Tombulu culture and an advocate the use of local rituals in the church. The Pastor attributed the renewed theological interest in traditional practices in the 1970s to the influence of religious clergy returning from universities in the West. The problem with GMIM policy, in his opinion, is that there is no guide for how individual churches should approach things like the mixture of traditional culture and religious doctrine. He noted that the only real guide for ritual and liturgical practice is the *tata-ibadah*, and that in the past the GMIM church has rigidly adhered to that guide – including previous pastors in Lolah.

The use of Tombulu language has been central from the first attempts to author a program of interpolating elements of 'local' culture in church practice. Its use has both the pragmatic function of identifying speakers as local while simultaneously representing the kind of objectified cultural object that is open to the "risks of interaction" (Keane 1997) as its meanings are especially open to interpretation and contestation given the small pool of those recognized as authoritative speakers and the language’s association with pre-Christian ritual. The church venue in some sense is perceived to minimize the danger involved with invoking elements that have the propensity to reference ‘non-Christian’ contexts.

The use of Tombulu language in liturgical practice makes culture legible through a modern linguistic ideology, the same ideology that facilitated the spread of Protestantism by freeing linguistic signs from a one-to-one correspondence with meaning. The theory of language that conceives of words as “empty conduits” for communication (Keane 2009:60), allowing the Bible and liturgy to be translated into vernaculars the world over, is applied to Tombulu language as part of Christian ritual speech when performed as contextual liturgy. The Protestant principle of sincerity – the idea that speech should reflect the truth of one’s inner state - can be used to neutralize some of the elements that complicate contemporary efforts to claim Minahasan ethnic and cultural identity. Yet this construction also depends on a clear association with Christianity. To make sense of what culture means for
Christian practitioners in North Sulawesi is not related to the impulse to purify those practices identified as “traditional” from the influence of the colonial encounter, but instead concerned with how to revive those practices in a way appropriate for modern Christian citizens.

The insertion of cultural aspects, especially language, into the ritual canon of the church transforms the meaning of authenticity into a question of interiority and emotional connection. If “digging up” the past means uncovering the instability of authoritative claims about pre-Christian traditions, the principle of sincerity can redeem those explorations as a part of a congregation’s efforts to infuse standardized liturgical practice with particularistic meaning, highlighting local identities through Christian practice. Focusing on the interiority of experience acts as a panacea for the anxieties that surround the renewal of cultural practices that have historically been suppressed and devalued. The anxiety about authenticity may be differently experienced across generations: older members of the village who experienced firsthand the denigration of their mother tongue and the process of reevaluating local practice in relation to the culture of Christianity are cautious that opening the door to the pre-Christian past might threaten their authenticity as ‘real’ Christians.

For members of the congregation under the age of sixty, the lack of authenticity is conceptualized as a loss of authority, the inability to claim the right to their cultural identity given the interruption in its transmission from the previous generation.

Speaking as though culture is an object buried under layers of history and years of suppression, the metaphor of pulling culture out from under the weight of the past encapsulates the national concept of culture as objectified practices that unproblematically function as indexical references for particular ethnoregional identities. Like an archaeological object, once exposed, it can be read for traces of the past, understood for its function, and restored to its position as part of the symbolic characteristics that stand in for a particular group or region. But the metaphor of digging culture out from under the layers of history also implies a disconnection between what is conceptualized as culture and the very people through which these traditions lose their objectified nature and become, again, something “cultural.”

An awareness of this disjuncture between two very different concepts of culture, one an antiquated object that can be unearthed and revitalized, and another that sees culture as something inseparable from the kind of lived experience that
underwrites the concept of authenticity, is a tension that members of the Lolah GMIM congregation must address in their hope to make the past part of their present-day identity. It is expressed along generational lines, since the demarcation between members of the village who can claim competency and authority in Tombulu language, and those who are experiencing local traditions as something to be rediscovered, is age related. The generational divide between those who lived culture and those who learn it encapsulates the region’s historical experience of Christianity, and the institutionalization of local identity along with the growth of the GMIM Church.

Members of the local congregation under the age of sixty are quick to accede authority to their parents and grandparents generation, those who were raised in households where Tombulu language was still the primary form of spoken communication. Ibu Annie, a 42-year old member of the Cultural Commission who was born in Lola, highlights this after an evening practice session for an upcoming service in Tombulu language:

KAS: I want to ask, why did you decide to participate in the contextual liturgy activities like using Tombulu language and joining the Cultural Commission?

Annie: Because with Bahasa Tombulu, usually those people who are older than me really want to converse in Tombulu, you know? It’s rare to find a woman of my age who is very fluent in Tombulu language. So when there are new songs or just any songs that I think would be easy to move into Tombulu by translating them, I really want to do it so that these elders, I think that maybe they have a much deeper understanding of the meaning from these songs....they really miss hearing songs translated into Tombulu (field interview 07/22/2009).

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162 This name is a pseudonym.
163 The interview from which these transcripts are drawn was held after I joined the practice session with the Cultural Commission in July of 2009, during a two-week field period in Lolah Village. Two female members of the Cultural Commission, in addition to Hendrik Paat, who organized my field visit to Lolah, were present for the practice and the interview that followed. Pastor Sinubu later joined in the interview as it was in progress. In addition to attending practice for the cultural liturgy service and interviewing a number of community members at the suggestion of the Commission’s organizer, Hendrik Paat, I also returned to document the cultural liturgy ceremony used for the inauguration of the new church for the Imanuel GMIM congregation in Lolah in December of 2009.
The tension between the modernist construction of culture as something that has an objective and traceable history and more constructivist notions\textsuperscript{164} loom large for Minahasans, since they have little objective authority to prove the veracity of their connection to a cultural past.\textsuperscript{165} Members of the Cultural Commission have found a particular solution to this problem by locating the locus of their relationship to the past through their Christian faith. This is not a project that minimizes the question of authenticity. Instead, members of the GMIM Lolah congregation juxtapose the question of two kinds of authenticity: the right to claim an authoritative commentary on cultural practices due to lived experience, which we can call inherited authenticity, and the authenticity of emotion that is created through concepts of sincerity in performance supported by certain language ideologies contained in Protestant Christianity.

For Protestants in Lolah, the problem of cultural authenticity, or more appropriately, the lack of it, has been translated into the terms of a common religious dilemma regarding the tension between the ritualized, rote aspects of Protestant practice, and the forms of spontaneous, emotion-laden speech that is unmitigated by textual barriers between the speaker and the divine (Keane 1997a; 2002; 2003 and Shoaps 2002). For the majority of the members of the church, as well as the Cultural Commission, mastery of Tombulu language can only be achieved through rote repetition, literally making the presentation of culture in the church a performance. If the use of Tombulu language in worship is conceived of as a form of

\textsuperscript{164} The modernist versus constructivist approaches for locating a basis for one’s identity is reminiscent of Geertz’s 1973 explanation of the possibilities for ethnic identities in “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States” In The Interpretation of Cultures 255–310. New York Basic Books.

\textsuperscript{165} Although the social construction of identity, or ‘invented traditions’ (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) are clearly part of the process of self-definition across Indonesia, and especially in those performances aimed at national audiences, an awareness of the modernist anthropological position in which the “constructed character of representations and therefore the assertion of their falsity, and by implication, their mystificatory character” (Friedman 1992:849) is also part of the public awareness, due not only to the influence of anthropological study on the concepts of culture in Indonesia, but also to the influence of the global tourist market that imbues “authentic” culture with a tangible, monetary value. This leads to the politicization of the authority to identify what is authentic as a kind of politically efficacious commodity – both the authority to back up claims of authenticity, and the ability to authoritatively define, demystify and debunk others constructions of the themselves’ (Friedman 1992:850). As I have mentioned in previous chapters, it is my contention that decentralization has opened new political avenues to establish authority on authentic claims to identity – which may be achieved through modernist or constructivist approaches.
ritual language where authority emanates from the skilled performance of texts drawn from an “ancestral medium” that is rooted far from the present context (Keane 2003: 679), practitioners are destined for failure since they cannot fulfill the conditions for entextualizing words from the past in the present. When I asked

Figure 5.1: Performing a liturgy in Tombulu language in the Imanuel GMIM Church in Lolah Village, July 2009

Annie about how she felt when speaking in Tombulu language, she expressed that not being able to anchor a tie to the ancestors through competent linguistic performance is a source of anxiety for her and other members of the Cultural Commission. She related this especially as a measurement of the generational status of the group’s members, who are mostly in their forties and fifties:

KAS: Can you explain a little about how you feel when you use Tombulu language

Annie: I feel like my Tombulu language is not one-hundred percent, I can speak Tombulu or relinquish myself in worship activities to use Tombulu in songs and the like, certainly in my heart I have a wish, a longing, to understand because I don’t have the ability to express myself, because I grew up in a family that didn’t use Tombulu. We only heard the language, and I only heard the language from my older neighbors who were fluent in Tombulu...
Although it’s altogether true that we [the Cultural Commission] are not perfect and there are still many mistakes, weaknesses, and detractions, we always try to do our best, because so many of the older people are so happy to hear the songs sung in Tombulu over the loudspeaker, and when there is a summons in Tombulu they are so happy, because it is rare to find people who are brave enough to express themselves or make announcements in Tombulu. It’s something I really long to do but there are so many challenges, there are people who feel they are more senior than me, and it seems they know more than I do, maybe there is a little jealousy involved, because some of the people who are older than I know how to speak Tombulu but they are not brave enough to demonstrate it. If they correct me, I’m open to it, I’ve never said that what I convey is already perfect, no, I perform it so that people can hear it, because if they want the Tombulu to be more perfect, they can come and correct it, improve it, that’s what I want. It doesn’t mean that perform because I want to be praised, no (field interview, 07/22/2009).

If ritual speech is related to the authenticity of contemporary culture because it invokes the authority of the past in the present context, it engenders a crisis for those speakers who lack the requisite experience to speak, or repeat the Tombulu language with confidence. Since those with the linguistic competency are unwilling to establish their authority in public interaction, which as Keane notes in his observation of Sumbanese Protestants, can be central to the establishment of that authority (2002: 79, 82), younger generations of Tombulu speakers must find an alternative method of entextualizing speech that while emblematic of the past is not necessarily directly of it.

How then is authenticity enacted in the church, or in other words, how do contemporary cultural practitioners make the past present in a context where history is unmoored from experience? For these Christians, authenticity is generated through the same principles that facilitate an emotional connection with the divine, specifically in conceiving of language through a particularly Protestant lens. The concept of sincerity, introduced along with the Protestantism (Keane 2002:65) carried by Dutch missionaries to the highlands of the North Sulawesi region, brings the experience of culture into a realm of theological understanding.

Sincerity – what Keane identifies as a metadiscursive term that describes how people understand the way words function to express underlying beliefs or

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166 Keane describes sincerity as a metadiscursive term because it is part of a particular linguistic ideology, or assumptions about how language functions (2002:74). He is not arguing for sincerity as a universal pattern of human conversation as Grice (1975) does, being
intentions in a way that directly communicates an individual’s interior state to others (Keane 2002: 74) – has implications for the processes of entextualization that are connected to the production of authenticity in Protestant practice. In her study of American Pentecostals, Robin Shoaps (2002) investigates the tensions between authenticity as a product of sincerity and reliance on rote text and prayer as a metapragmatic mark of Protestant worship. On one hand, entextualization (rendering a given instance of discourse a detachable text) serves as text-building strategy that minimizes the previous context and allows for the iterability and authority of the speech in the present context, enacted through genres of rote speech. However, Pentecostal practitioners construct authenticity in concepts based on a Protestant estimation that speech “rises from within and is immaterial” (Keane 2003: 683) that makes the ritualistic aspects of Christian worship seem both “hollow” and inauthentic. Spontaneity and personal experience are markers of authenticity that come from seeing words as ancillary to one’s inner state. Similar to other types of ritual speech, this kind of entextualization creates a “disalignment or disjunction between the speaker, the author and the animator, diminishing the role of the speaker’s agency in the production of the speech” (Shoaps 2002:45). Keane (2003:687) makes a similar observation in pointing out that language can never be free of its exteriority, as it is always cultural and external because it is learned from someone else and emanates from beyond the present context.

It is this “flaw” in the Protestant language ideology that complicates the modern concept of agency (Keane 2003:690), one that Pentecostal practitioners reject in favor of what Shoaps (2002:35) calls transposition, where speakers highlight the situated, contextual, “here and now” nature of religious texts, recasting them as something spontaneous that emanates from a particular speaker at a particular time and place. Using parody or evaluating repetitious texts recontextualizes rote speech from its tie to the previous context (ibid., 51), cleansing speech of the traces of previous authors and grounding the speaker as the source of talk with metapragmatic cues. For the congregation members in Lolah, however, it is in the recognition that the performance of speaking Tombulu during worship invokes a

more concerned with the cultural specificities of sincerity as a moral or ideological system (2002:87).
shared regional history that allows younger church members to make a connection with a past that seems beyond their reach.

Given that members of the Cultural Commission lack the ability to invoke the authority of the ancestors through the performance of entextualized speech, and the anxiety that accompanies their lack of linguistic mastery, they have to find an alternative way to enact their tie to the past and instantiate a link that bypasses the generational disjunction in cultural transmission. While techniques like transposition express the requisite external signals to communicate sincerity, it poses a unique problem for the Lolah congregation in that it highlights the speaker as the originator of talk, negating the tie between the present and a previous context. For a speaker’s performance to be considered cultural, it must continue to carry some trace of the past that emanates from a context outside the speaker, one that others in the group assent represents communal identity. This in essence conflicts with the assumptions that underlie the Protestant concept of sincerity, admitting that words can never transparently convey a speaker’s internal state.

Yet it is through sincerity, as the antithesis to mastery and rote repetition, that for the younger generation of Lolah congregants is the only possible way to structure a relation to the past. This is a dilemma that is not unfamiliar to other Christian communities who have been driven to evaluate their connection to the past through a theology that sees the attribution of agency to non-human forms as dangerous, and the reclamation of the true understanding of the ontological division of the world as liberatory. Theories of how language works can expose the heart of competing theories about the nature of the subject, and are also central to anthropological debates about the intersection of culture and Christianity. The primacy of speech and an orientation towards authoritative textual forms in Christianity, as well as the theological focus on sincerity and belief, imply a hierarchy by which participation in Christianity can be deemed authentic or inauthentic. Robbins (2004) has extensively argued that a group’s engagement to Christianity must be judged by their assent to certain principles, including the way that the “cultural content of Christianity foregrounds issues of moral change” (2004:317). Challenging “continuity models” that claim Christianity (like other vectors of cultural change) cannot be understood outside of people’s older cultural forms, Robbins theorizes Christian conversion as a process of adoption where
converts assess and re-order the hierarchy of their value system, allowing them to maintain two separate cosmological systems, albeit ranking one as more dominant. This restores the agentive field of Christianity and denies theories that focus on institutional integration (ibid., 8), indigenization, and hybridity, since “morality, as a domain of conscious deliberation and considered action, takes on a special role in cultural change...as a conscious domain it is the one that change registers most readily for those involved” (ibid., 316).

If negotiation between Christianity and an alternative cultural system constitutes a field in which “actors are culturally constructed as both being aware of the directive values and of the choices left open to them in responding to that [Christianity’s] force” (Robbins 2004:315), then theories of syncretism also falter in their explanation of cultural change as an aspect of religious conversion. It is possible, though, to find moments when the two systems converge or can be relied upon to adjudicate the inherent contradictions within Christianity itself. Keane (2002) describes a similar convergence between ideologies of ritual speech for Sumbanese Protestants and their reliance on public, rote performances of Protestant prayer that essentially provide a reiterable structure that cues congregations to read performances as sincere. While ideologies about ritual language rely on the idea that the authority of speech is located outside of the current context, Protestant ritual relies on a similar premise which has to be overcome by the affirmation of sincerity in a public setting. Much like Keane’s Sumbanese Protestants who doubt the veracity of the claim that language, as system originating outside the speaker, can ever really be free of the traces of others (2002:77), members of the Lolah congregation highlight the propensity for Tombulu language to connect them to a context out of time, linking them to their ancestors.167

This link, however, has to be established in a performance that makes individuals’ sincere connection to the words, and as will be discussed, the bodily experience of that language, clear to those around them, and sanctioned by the authoritative pattern of Protestant ritual. In Keane’s estimation, these kinds of

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adaptations do not represent syncretism, but a place where two systems merge. Both Protestant language ideologies and Sumbanese concepts of efficacy of ritual speech must be publicly affirmed (2002:82). This overlap provides an efficacious solution to negotiate the generational orientations that church members in Lolah have to a concept of traditional culture, one that prioritizes Christian morality without negating other understandings of the nature of language and its ability to inculcate an authority connected to the past, if not directly of it. It also stresses the communal construction of meaning that uses the congregation’s specific experience of Christianity as part of the proof of their unique cultural identity.

The practitioners who are promoting these links between the past and the present in the performance of contextual liturgy, however, are not the members of the community for whom the constraints of an older linguistic ideology are of imminent concern. Instead, it is the application of the elements of the most familiar view of language and its effects, the modern focus on interiority and intention, that provides younger generations the ability to experience the force of culture as a communal phenomena. They have found a way to exploit the tensions in a very Protestant way of experiencing language to reconstruct and revitalize those orientations of the self to speech that are essential in their estimation to an authentic experience of culture. This implies not so much that linguistic ideologies converge, but that a new technology for making culture a “lived” experience is drawn from the performative and linguistic repertoire of Protestant Christianity. Instead of trying to “accommodate a traditional listener-oriented semiotic to a speaker-oriented one of modernity” (2001: 909) as Robbins describes his Urapmin informants do in locating God as the mediator of speech, those invested in asserting a tie to the past in Lolah use God’s presence to authorize intention as the primary expression of cultural belonging. In the Urapmin case, Protestant practitioners reassess the principles of an older language ideology that values action over speech (ibid., 904), seeing God as a listener who can see the intention behind unreliable spoken forms and can give them the ability to speak the truth, at least in prayer. This creates a ritual format where God’s omniscience (ibid., 907) provides the requisite proof of the speaker’s social commitment.

God listens to Lolah cultural practitioners too. He exempts them from the kind of technical mastery that they assume older members of the congregation use
to judge their performances, and their authority to claim cultural identity. The intentionality of their performance in Tombulu language, the emotional sincerity displayed by members of the Commission, are used to overcome feelings of inadequacy and to repel criticism from more experienced speakers. Their descriptions of singing in Tombulu in the church environment prioritize their internal states, and are marked by the employment of certain lexical markers (Luhrmann 521: 2004) that identify these experiences as part of the spiritual engagement of Christian worship.

Gertrude\textsuperscript{168}: If you're not brave, it's hard.

Annie: At first I felt embarrassed, embarrassed because of my language. I spoke with restraint you know? When singing in Tombulu, even though I don't really understand the words, the sentences soaked into me so that I had a feeling of joyfulness (sukacita) inside, it's like I can feel it all over my body, and that the deepest desire of my heart is that I want to entertain, to give energy to the elders. There are many hardworking elders here like that here, they really want to absorb [the sound of Tombulu]. In the worship service there are songs in Tombulu, yet there is definitely a constraint, a problem, with those who in our opinion have a talent, who have great knowledge and abilities in Tombulu, maybe in their hearts they underestimate us or something, because we receive strong criticism, people humiliate us or accuse us of saying this or that wrong. Yet the principle in our hearts is only to praise god (memuji Tuhan), later if it needs to be examined, there are experts who may edit the data, make it good, make it perfect. So I feel I really want to do this, because it's meaningful, it's valuable for us.

Gertrude: It’s very touching [Tombulu] because sometimes with Indonesian, the language is too formal, and it’s hard to understand.

Annie: Tombulu goes straight to the heart.

Gertrude: So sometimes when we use Tombulu, we don't really know its meaning, because you know its about education, there is further education for those people to translate from Indonesian into Tombulu, and sometimes they translate the songs incorrectly. Those who sing the songs, they don't really get the point of what's being said.

Annie: Yes, that’s the most important part...

\textsuperscript{168} This name is a pseudonym. This informant was born in Lolah and is a housewife who manages her family farm. She was not comfortable stating her age, but is older than the informant identified as “Annie.” She is an active member of the Cultural Commission and regularly performs liturgies in Tombulu language in the Imanuel Church.
Hendrik: Sometimes there is criticism from the audience.

Annie: Even though there is criticism, it won’t become an issue for us.

KAS: According to you, praising God is the most important thing?

Annie: Yes.

Gertrude: Yeah, the main goal is to worship God, even if the words are wrong, God knows what we mean. This is what affects our minds. Those who criticize this and that, please demonstrate for us, don’t just criticize. Those who are performing certainly aren’t perfect. If we can’t hear what’s being said we can’t learn. Tell us what is wrong and later you can correct us (field interview 7/22/2009).

Countering the multi-religious construction of Minahasan *adat* promoted by cultural organizations, the insertion of cultural elements into ritual practice of the church is not sufficient to the negate the possibility that Minahasan identity can exceed its historical association with Christianity. In equating the use of regional language with the kind of cultural intimacy which is usually borne out by lived experience, members of the Imanuel Church of Lolah draw on the pastoral practice of “inculturation,” the same theological approach taken by the first missionaries in the region. Yet the application of a process of translation, the translation of Indonesian hymns and modern Christian ritual into the language of the past, resembles a contemporary inversion of the principles of Ethical Theology, which sought to make Christianity commensurate with local cosmologies. In the Lolah Cultural Commission’s interpretation, it is culture that is made sense of and experienced through Christian faith. Culture is only legible through a Christian experience, one that shares the performative characteristics of prayer and other forms of ritual speech within the church.

Creating authenticity by locating the individual’s interaction with culture in a modernist conception of language that is drawn from Protestant ideas about the relation of the subject to speech, it is clear why members of the Cultural Commission see language as central to both preservation and participation in local culture. By restricting culture to linguistic forms that are relatively neutral – in the sense that they invoke the past without carrying controversial meanings beyond the speaker’s intent – culture can be experienced in the church environment without coming into
conflict with GMIM institutional policies that approve of the use of cultural elements only if they have been evaluated in terms of their appropriateness to Christian belief. This is particularly relevant for those church members who lived through the transitional period as Lolah moved from a society of Christian converts into a people with a Christian history. Wilhelm, a 72 year-old congregation member who has served as an expert reference for the Cultural Commission, makes this kind of moral evaluation process an essential part of Lolah’s historical identity:

Wilhelm: When Christianity arrived, all of that was lost [referring an earlier conversation about headhunting practices]. But the convictions and beliefs regarding custom (adat-istiadat) remained. Eventually as the gospel penetrated, it was lost. The task of the church, according to those from the synod, is to unearth regional language. So our task as the Commission is to use Tombulu language.

KAS: Are there traditions from the past that aren’t appropriate for the church now?

Wilhelm: The goal of the church in creating this Cultural Commission was centered on language. That old culture is not the target. Even though the church still pays attention to what the traditions of the ancestors were like, they already believe in God, they already believe in the Christian religion. The goal now is excavate (menggali) language (field interview 7/23/2009).

Even given the distance that the practice of contextual liturgy puts between these “Christian moderns” and non-modern aspects of their past, the insistence that culture finds its rightful place within the church represents a challenge to GMIM orthodoxy, or at least a challenge to what is considered orthodox in the dialectical process between the practices of church members and the official, centralized policies codified by the GMIM Synod. The debate over how GMIM members should view the role of culture in Christian life is part of the institutional history of the church, and continues to be a point of contention at even the highest levels of synod organization. As an “ethnic” church, GMIM has long presented itself as the steward of Minahasan culture, appropriating cultural symbols and practices as part of the Church’s public representation. This utilization of culture as part of the representational repertoire of GMIM institutions relies heavily on the principle of

169 This name is a pseudonym.
prepatoria evanglica, the idea of Christianity’s (and monotheism’s) presence in the local cosmology before the arrival of missionaries. Proponents of the Contextual Liturgy movement, like Professor Pastor W.A. Roeroe, former head of the GMIM Synod, use this logic to assert that Minahasan culture is essentially Christian. A language ideology that portrays words as transparent and arbitrary vehicles of meaning, specifically in the one-to-one correspondence between indigenous terms and Biblical concepts drawn from Graafland’s translation of the Bible to Tombulu language, is a central element of these theories.

This is evident in the theoretical framework developed by Minahasan theologian Dr. Joseph Saruan, a GMIM member and graduate of the Theological school in Tomohon that produces many of the Church’s leaders. Saruan attempts to mediate the debate over the continued engagement in rituals that conflict with official church doctrine, such as possession by ancestral spirits known locally as ‘Opo’-‘Opo (BT) that continue to be practiced outside the Church environment. In response to the emergence of local organizations that relied heavily on foreign academic texts documenting changes wrought on “authentic” pre-colonial cultures in North Sulawesi, Saruan analyzes evidence against the monotheistic character of

170 An example is the use of the term Opo Wanatas to refer to God in liturgical practice. W.A. RoeRoe uses the term interchangeably with two Indonesian glosses for God in his history of culture and Christianity in Minahasa: “dengan Dia di Tinggi (Opo’ Wana’ an atas) yang sekarang kita gelar Tuhan Allah” (He/she on High, Opo’ Wana’ an atas, who we now give the title Tuhan Allah) (2003:31). Historical analysis of the term from Burghoorn-Lundstrom portrays the term Opo’ as “a reference to any ancestor (of either gender) three generations or more above ego” (1981:158), and MJC Schouten recorded the meaning of the term Opo as “an ancestor with supernatural powers” (1998:xiii) but neither records usage of the term Opo Wanantas. Recognition that the root of the liturgical term, o’po, can indicate ancestors, remaining traditions, stories and landmarks that reference cosmologies, including forms of ancestor worship that may not be considered appropriate for Christians, indicates the work this term does to transform meaning through correspondence with biblical concepts. The term also has become synonymous with regional identity through circulation of the hymn “Opo Wanatas.” Classified as a regional song (lagu daerah) the hymn is part of the collection of cultural objects that identify the Minahasan ethnic group at the national, and even international, scale.

171 Although rituals that fall related to the concept of Opo’ as ancestral spirits are not performed in the Church, they aren’t disconnected from the religious environment. Those practitioners who still perform these rituals in Lolah are also members of the GMIM congregation. Several of the cultural practitioners I interviewed who no longer attend GMIM services insist that members continue to practice “traditional” rituals outside the church such as those related to healing. In Lolah, the use of the Bible figures heavily in some of these rituals, creating an relationship of intertextuality between Christian and “traditional” practice. See Rochelle (2009) Chapter 8 for a description of contemporary practices of Opo’ism in Lolah.
early cosmologies in the frame of post-colonial theory. Arguing that references to ancestral spirits have always been incorporated in a monotheistic belief system,\textsuperscript{172} he draws a distinction between Opology (Opo’ logi) as a “theoretical construction of the West regarding the traditional or conventional religious systems of the Minahasan people” and Opo’ism (Opo’isme) the study of phenomena arising in “culture already long rooted in the life and society of Minahasa long before the Christian faith entered the area” (2002:388). He claims that application of the Opo’ism methodology elucidates the symbolic, metaphoric, and intuitive aspects of pre-colonial religious systems that are ignored by Western scholars, theorizing kinship ties as part of the original Minahasan social structure that serves a contemporary religious function.

The spirits of elders who pass on are transmogrified into another form that expresses the reality and presence of God. The adoption of Christianity was a process of smooth acculturation where the religious system gave institutional shape to an already extant spirituality (Saruan 2002:391).

The ease with which Saruan locates cultural authority in the church minimizes the difficulties facing Christian practitioners in negotiating the moral ambiguity of knowing how to identify the Christian from the non-Christian, and an institutional history through which any application of cultural elements are carefully assessed for their adherence to orthodox interpretations. Given Saruan’s exegesis, those practices that fall outside of GMIM orthodoxy could be reassessed as indigenous forms of worship that are morally equitable with practices undertaken during a typical Sunday service. Traditional practitioners, in fact, espouse their own version of Saruan’s theory, using the Bible as a ritual tool that identifies their ritual

\textsuperscript{172} The division between those who advocate for the cultural practice to remain outside the institution of the church and supporters of “contextual liturgy” cannot always be based on differences in theological orientation. Some proponents of the adat resurgence employ similar arguments about the parallelism between Christian principles and pre-Christian cosmologies as a counterclaim to the church’s prohibition of traditional practices. As Pak Frankie, a former GMIM member, says about his participation in unsanctioned ritual practice, “now people like me are faced with resistance from the church, so I nearly kill myself studying the Bible, especially the Old Testament. There is a phenomenological parallelism between the Old Testament and Minahasan beliefs” (field interview, 05/22/2009). Later, he also espoused a version of preparatoria evangelica based in the translation of local concepts into the Christian lexicon that challenges the authority of contextualization movements: “the terminology was there before Christianity arrived, it’s not just something that was absorbed. If that’s true, why not implement it? After Christianity came we were obliged to perfect it with the power and name of Jesus Christ – but this is something that is returning, not something resulting from contextualization” (ibid., 2009).
practices as something unfolding in a Christian context. The danger of misconstruing these kinds of practices looms large for Lolah’s practitioners, however, and speaks to the heart of the moral concerns that Christianity’s modern perspective on agency (Keane 2007, Robbins 2001) encapsulates. It is this danger that is mitigated by locating culture in the church:

KAS: So according to you, the church can become an appropriate place or method in the preservation of cultural traditions?

Annie: Yes certainly, all of it, it’s important that we engage with culture.

Gertrude: What’s important is that we do it in the framework of praising God, because that’s not a problem.

KAS: So, Christianity and culture can’t be separated then? They are the same?

Gertrude: It’s because at its foundation culture is an offering to the Creator, it has a purpose, it doesn’t belong to those who have other goals, who might take the opportunity for example to worship false idols, or deviate from teachings for example. We truly want to glorify the Creator, we pray to the creator, if we continue to emphasize the Creator, make offerings to him, it’s good, because in our village there maybe are still one or two people who still have adat practices, who admit to having strong culture, in they end their beliefs are really deviant, like those who assent to other gods, calling the spirits (dewa-dewa dan roh-roh) of those who have already died, and worshipping them, paying tribute to them. There are a some left who do this privately, maybe they do the wrong thing, they use culture (kebudayaan) in the wrong way. But what ought to happen with that culture, it really needs to be related with the beliefs of the Christian religion, provided that the goal is venerating the Trinity (tri tunggal), not spirits that are in contradiction to the teachings of Christianity (field interview 7/22/2009).

*Making Lolah Minahasa – the intimacy and particularity of Tombulu language*

Practitioners from Lolah seek an intimate experience of culture through Christianity, authenticating their claims to the past by extending familiar Christian ideas about the nature of language onto constructions of culture in the Indonesian context. Church members understand their rearticulation of local culture as transforming Lolah into a site that possesses the same sort of currency as representations of “local” culture do at famous cultural tourist sites where modern
religious practices are part of the display, like the Hindu temples of Bali where tourists and worshippers mingle, or the raucous funeral rites in Toraja that present animal sacrifice and offerings alongside Christian prayers. Shifting the focus from the mastery of particular cultural markers (such as language ability) to a performance of sincerity bypasses the index of cultural competency that is used to measure authenticity. As a response to current movements in the region to “unearth” a version of culture that is untainted by the influence of the region’s long history of Christianity, it is a technique that is efficacious both in smoothing over differential experiences of culture across generations, as well as in re-imagining the church, particularly the Protestant church in Lolah, as a central site in the production of cultural heritage.

The translation of liturgy to Tombulu language can reference a shared history while sublimating contradictory messages about the past, through a linguistic ideology that prioritizes the intentions of the speaker. If taken to the logical end, Christian worship practices make language choice arbitrary, free from the complications of where a speaker’s authority emanates from, and in essence, who they are socially. As has been demonstrated, the entextualized nature of Christian liturgy that can be used to prioritize the context created by present intentions (Shoaps 2002:35), and the speaker’s biblically rendered authority forms the basis of an alternative authenticity for generations of the church who are not fluent in the language of culture either literally or figuratively. Tombulu language, however, as an alternative to both the regional creole, Bahasa Manado, and the national language, is associated with regional elements in the contemporary context. The language also indexes the sub-ethnic divisions that haunt any representation of an undifferentiated Minahasan identity. Use of the language implies the particularity of Lolah residents in relation to the arbitrary combination of non-specific markers that are usually used to delineate Minahasans from other ethno-regional groups.

If identity negotiation is defined as “social processes whereby various identities are articulated, asserted, challenged, suppressed, realigned, and co-opted” (Adams 2006:26) it is necessary to see how Lolah practitioners use Tombulu as a culturally significant object that can challenge competing ideas of which elements of Minahasanness have contrastive significance – or how Tombulu language constitutes the link between Christianity and cultural identity. In the
representational economy of North Sulawesi, the recent insistence that *adat* can be a
discrete category apart from religion has already sparked debates about who gets to
fix the meaning, and significance, of objects that are considered to be symbolic of
local identity.

The self-consciousness about the role that colonial administration and
Western-imported ideologies like Christianity played in the creation of the concept of
“Minahasa” have posed a challenge for *adat*-based cultural revival movements in
deciding how to represent a number of sub-ethnic languages and practices under the
umbrella of a unified political identity. Like other experts on the region note,
identifying as Minahasan is often a highly contextual process that is situationally
dependent (Kipp (1993) has covered this issue in reference to Batak ethnicity).
Although Minahasan identity might qualify as a valid subject position at the
national level, regionally it easily breaks back down into its constituent parts.
Religious identity has the potential to serve as a unifying force, at least in national
and international settings where sub-regional and sub-ethnic difference is less
significant than contrastive relationships with other ethnic groups.

Focusing on Christianity as the core of an ethno-local identity, however, has
the tendency to prioritize a homogenized religious identity over the kinds of cultural
“objects” that index group identity on the national scale, and also the kind of sellable
aspects of localities that increasingly are drawn into competition for attention in a
market where culture is commodified. Looking for those kinds of practices that can
be encapsulated as marketable representations of a particular culture or region also
represents a strategy for seeking recognition and resources, as the government is
increasingly invested in the protection and promotion of those regions that have
captured international notoriety as cultural tourism sites. Despite the North
Sulawesi Province’s repeated attempts to will the region into becoming a tourist
destination (most recently through efforts at promoting ecotourism such as the
World Ocean Conference and Sail Bunaken), they have failed to draw the kind of
international tourist trade that nearby provinces like Toraja have. A number of
structural factors lend to this failure, but the sense that Minahasa has no “culture”
to market, especially given the region’s association with Christian and colonial
domination, has stymied the efforts of both the *adat* proponents and the local
tourism board in promoting Minahasa as a cultural destination.
The definition of Minahasa is up for grabs. Individual groups and villages have tried to corner the market by promoting handicrafts or sub-regionally specific landscapes as a microcosm of the true Minahasa. Lolah village is no exception, with locals wanting to see their particular landscape, history, and traditions become emblematic of Minahasa at both the national and international scale. Local people’s willingness to host anthropologists is often explicitly related to their excitement at seeing Lolah standing in as an exemplar of Minahasa in authoritative academic texts.

The question turns back again to the original dilemma faced by Protestant practitioners who cannot fulfill the qualifications for an authenticity that is based in a model of cultural continuity. Although the history of Christianity in the region can be formulated as a kind of authentic religious tourism, it is not the kind of association that sells the region as an appealing destination for those looking for the kind of cultural heritage authenticated by the support of international organizations like the UN. Lolah Protestants must find a way to translate the symbolic capital of the cultural tourism market into something that is in line with Christian morality.

As previously discussed, one of the innovations of the Cultural Commission’s program of contextual liturgy is the use of harmonies and rhythms drawn from the ritual practice of maengket, a performance already associated with regional identity and local culture even if it is only referentially connected to its original ritual context. Divorced from its pragmatic ritual functions, maengket has been refashioned as a social activity that inscribes communal identity through nostalgic performance. Many of the members of the Cultural Commission’s only experience of the maengket was through its secularized version in school competitions and governmental events, and institutional celebrations for the GMIM church. This secularized, regional proliferation of maengket is both anathema to the spiritual context of contextual liturgy, and lacking in the kind of intimacy necessary to create spiritual authenticity, and importantly, establish the practice as an aspect of Lolah’s history.

If language is an unreliable vehicle of intention and interiority, intimacy must transcend its arbitrary confines, constructing a circuit of emotion that while invoked by the rote aspects of performance is not contained by it. Christian practice offers a host of worship techniques to facilitate a constructed intimacy, a way of
recognizing the signs of a personal, intimate, incontrovertible relationship with God that is ironically experienced on demand, a scheduled and performative aspect of worship. In her theory on how “the supernatural becomes real, known, experienced and irrefutable,” Tanya Luhrmann (2004) explains one technology by which the rote, textual and performative aspects that are so foundational to participation in Christian communities, especially contemporary evangelical ones, are transformed into experiences of intimacy and particularity. She focuses on the importance of the bodily, emotionally intimate experiences Christian practitioners often describe as central to their experience of lived Christianity. Attempting to prove that the “realness” of Christian belief is centered in the body and is not simply the result of linguistic phenomena, Luhrmann uses the term “metakinesis” to describe when new believers “learn to identify bodily and emotional states as signs of God’s presence in their lives” (2004:519).

Luhrmann recognizes the importance of Christian lexicons in believers’ sense of belonging. Her attention to the productive tensions in Protestant language ideologies leads to a critique of scholars like Susan Harding (2000) who posit that mastery of the Word and the acceptance of the literal truth of the Bible are the main factors for the radical epistemological shift that accompanies conversion to evangelical Christianity. In her terms, cognitive aspects of realizing a relationship with God are both lexical and syntactic: both learning the key phrases that are used to describe life as a Christian and the relationship one is cultivating with God, and learning the narrative and thematic frames in which experiences are to be organized. However, it is the metakinetik aspects, “mind-body states that are both identified in the group as the way of recognizing God’s personal presence in your life that are subjectively and idiosyncratically experienced,” (2004: 522) which Luhrmann sees as central to accepting a radical new world-view. Congregants must not only recognize these bodily experiences as evidence of God’s presence, but interpret them in ways that are congruent with the beliefs of the group about the reality of God’s presence. Congregants “seem to be engaged in a variety of bodily processes that are integrated in new ways and synthesized into a new understanding of their bodies and of the world” (ibid.). Even the text of the Bible is experienced in a personal, intimate, bodily way, such as when a certain text inspires strong bodily sensation, evidence of the way God personally speaks to you through
the generic (and universal) biblical text. These metakinetic experiences, learned and repeated, create an imagined communication between God and the congregant that is real and visceral.

The technique of metakinesis provides an apt technology that translates the performative aspects of culture in the church into both an intimate and communal experience, one that is not dependent on technical mastery or invested with traces of problematic ritual meaning. Practitioners from the Cultural Commission have created a syntactic, instructional frame to organize and index the spiritual quality of participation in the contextual worship services, one that sees the true source of intimacy as contained in the aspect of maengket that transmits an aura of the past. It’s the sounds of maengket, referred to as irama (BI: rhythm, cadence), the non-lexical, metalinguistic cues that practitioners cite as sparking their emotions. In this construction, Lolah’s contextual liturgy positions Lolah Imanuel Church as the pinnacle of local culture’s engagement with Christianity.

Figure 5.2: Maengket as liturgy at the inauguration ceremony for the new Imanuel GMIM Church in Lolah, December 2009

It was Pastor Sinubu who first mentioned the discursive term irama to reference authenticity, emotion, and intimacy with the cultural elements included in services labeled contextual. Throughout the interviews, this emerged as a key
discursive concept that referred to metakinetic experiences, the bodily sensations that bypassed arbitrary language and went straight “inside” practitioners. During one of my first conversations with Pastor Sinubu, it was the irama of maengket that connected him to the culture of Lolah people. For the members of the Cultural Commission, the intimacy affected by the sounds of maengket become the tool for claiming authenticity, and cultural authority as part of Christian practice:

KAS: Pastor,\textsuperscript{173} why did you want to start studying Tombulu language?

Pastor Sinubu: I haven’t really started, I’m just facilitating, because before Tombulu language was almost extinct. If we don’t start to preserve it, that’s the threat. So it’s not necessary to be interested in studying Tombulu language.

KAS: Maybe the Cultural Commission from Lolah will be a model for other GMIM Churches in Minahasa?

Annie: There’s already a congregation from Tomohon that has asked about that, last year.

KAS: So there’s no problem with GMIM Synod now? Using Tombulu or other regional languages aren’t a problem?

Gertrude: There’s no problem.

KAS: Earlier, Pastor you said something about maengket

Gertrude: That’s the original liturgy of Minahasa.

KAS: And all GMIM churches should use maengket?

Pastor Sinubu: Well, there are different kinds, people, especially pastors, translate Minahasan culture into the congregation, like with using maengket, usually it’s mixed with only one of the origins of the liturgy, like maengket about the offering or the confession of sin. It only plays a role in some parts of the liturgy, because these are two different cultures, the culture of Europe and the culture of Minahasan maengket, because these two different cultures are blended, just blended, in the end it’s not really there, the service continues but the exhibit (pameran) is over, so with the maengket display like that the worshipping comes later, or the confession of sin, once the display is over its cut off from the context of the service. Now, the Lolah liturgy includes everything, not just one thing only, one element.

\textsuperscript{173} Pastor Sinubu joined the group in the post-practice interview halfway through our discussion.
Hendrik: We have *maengket* right up until the end of the service...there are other churches who say theirs is contextual, but it’s just a regular service translated by a headman (*penghulu*), there’s no *maengket*.

Pastor Sinubu: Later it’s translated into regional languages.

Gertrude: We use drums, and a big conch shell (*bia*).

Pastor Sinubu: So then what if we want to develop the songs and the rhythms and the culture of Tombulu, if we want to translate it into GMIM liturgy without erasing the values of GMIM liturgy as a part of the church. That’s what we want to develop, what we have now is just one model that needs to be developed, so that we certainly hope this will align the church to church worship that there will be elements of the contextual liturgy, like with the blessing of the church, it should be that the blessing of the church is like when Minahasan people finish building a house, there is a ritual for the house blessing ceremony (*maramba*)\(^{74}\) (BT).

Gertrude: Yeah, there should be *maramba*.

Pastor Sinubu: When the offering for the building being finished is finished outside, yet isn’t this inauguration routine? What if when the doors open and people are coming in, we’ve already started the *maramba*’ verses?

> *Annie and Gertrude begin singing the opening verses of the maramba’*

Hendrik: So the congregation will be out front and when they enter the church we start in with the *maengket* verses.

Gertrude: Yes, this is our adaptation in the church, it’s different than the *maramba*’ performed at individual houses, this is a church.

Pastor Sinubu: That leaves just the lyrics that are changed to accommodate to the context of the service, how do we arrange them, there’s really no authority anymore, so it’s just a process of facilitation. Now we are more affected by, or we consider more, for example, how the GMIM church is positioned in terms of national development, the lyrics and other things are more oriented towards the growth of modern music.

Gertrude: It follows along with the solo, the solo is so penetrating, it’s so different than the former way, there isn’t anything like it, you really absorb it, it’s more intimate and it contains our appeals.

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\(^{74}\) *Maengket Maramba*’ or *Maramba*’ is usually described as a type of *maengket* that is performed for the blessing of new house, particularly a traditional-style home. According to historian Jesse Wenas, the term *maramba*’ comes from the word *rambak* meaning to step on something. In his interpretation, the dance was held to test the strength of the floors in a newly-erected traditional house (2007:104).
Pastor Sinubu: People don’t expect that they are going to be carried away by the rhythm (*irama*).

Gertrude: The *maengket’s rhythm*(*irama*) certainly has the power to make people understand.

Pastor Sinubu: If you want to learn the old songs of Minahasa, you have to be carried away mood in your heart, so that the atmosphere in your heart to glorify God is revealed, the rhythm brings that out, your supplication to God will appear because the rhythm is really affecting, so that anyone would be carried away by the element of emotion (field interview 7/22/2009).

Culture is understood in worship, and projected on the body. The internal, metalinguistic sense of communication with God has the power to unite practitioners in a Christianity of culture, where intra-regional variation loses its meaning:

Pastor Sinubu: So Tombulu language can definitely be inclusive of a number of people, people from Tomohon, people from Lolah, the *adat* verses are in Tombulu so its Tombulu that needs to be studied, really the old Tombulu, it’s the same as Tonsawang...

Gertrude: So if Tombulu is preserved, whether we have different usages than them, we understand their meanings, the intentions in what they say.”

Hendrik: This is all found in the rhythm.

Gertrude: Yeah, the rhythm (ibid.).

Using the music of *maengket* as the syntactic trigger to recognizing God’s presence in the body, this reading of culture is reliant on the church context. The institution of the church has dual significance in societies that adopted Christianity under the aegis of colonial powers, as White notes (1991: 115). It is the site in which the context of the relationships and rituals which establish local identity have been abrogated and replaced, an encapsulation of the very disconnection that Christians in Lolah feel from the past that they long to reclaim. But it also simultaneously has the ability to connect people to “localized conceptions of place and the past” (ibid.) through particular histories of contact with Christianity. The impulse to locate culture in the church is also energized by the Christian institutions’ ability to elevate regional histories into a global narrative of first contact with Christianity. In the Minahasan
case, imbuing a history of first contact with cultural significance, one that distinguishes Lolah both from other GMIM churches in the region and positions it as a site representative of local culture is an aspect of the way in which universal forms can distinguish sub-cultural groups and assure participation in regional identity. The impulse to locate culture in the church cannot be separated from the desire to have individual regional histories authenticated, and particular interpretations of the past recognized as authentic in the construction of a contemporary Minahasan culture.

In this way, Lolah’s institutional history of Christianity is not devalued, but becomes an essential element of their claim to cultural authority. It also engenders institutional support for the congregation’s engagement with cultural revival. As one of the earliest recorded established Protestant congregations in GMIM’s synod, the Cultural Commission saw verifying Lolah’s role in GMIM’s institutional history as part of their efforts to “unearth” culture in the village. In the original phase of research aimed at recording Lolah’s history as part of Cultural Commission’s program, data listing the names of seven individuals baptized indicated that Graafland, on the 20th of October, 1848, was interpreted as the founder of the “injil” or the planting of Christian faith in Lolah. During anthropologist Brian Rochelle’s tenure in the village, GMIM synod Head Pastor Parengkuan traveled to the national archives in Jakarta to verify the date, an anniversary the Commission members hoped to mark by unveiling a new contextual liturgy service in tandem with the consecration of a new church building the congregation had been investing in for over ten years. It would be an event big enough to bring Lolah GMIM members living in countries as far away as the US home to celebrate their church’s story as representative of Lolah village, the GMIM denomination, and being Minahasan. When Pastor Parengkuan discovered that Wilken had been the original missionary to establish a congregation in the village, at a date prior to the conversions recorded by Graafland, the anniversary of the church, and the planned celebration, were changed.

Just like the history of Lolah, a multi-denominational village, is encapsulated in GMIM’s institutional history, the Cultural Commission’s intimacy with Tombulu language, one negotiated by the metakineti process of experiencing the language through the rhythm drawn from the maengket tradition, allows members of the Cultural Commission to ground their authority to represent Minahasan culture nationally. It is a claim to authority that is associated with Lolah’s history of contact.
with Christianity, not in spite of it. Recasting *maengket* as a part of Christian tradition minimizes sub-regional difference. Elevating regional culture becomes part of the moral imperative for Minahasans to be recognized, destabilizing contentious claims of historical difference. The valuation of specific locales through Christianity is one possible interpretation of Christianity's orientation towards questioning the value of the past (Scott 2007:303), especially when the locales or groups in question are displaced from power, or are threatened by the homogenizing forces of modernity. Ethnotheologies of place can provide the “resources to affirm historical and territorial specificity...reasserting rather than superceding emplaced identities” (Scott 2007:325). Ethnotheologies can also project a unified identity onto a fractured past in order to realize contemporary political desires:

KAS: To what degree will it effect traditions or cultures in Tombulu if contextual liturgy becomes an example for the people of North Sulawesi?

Annie: Our experience will have a huge impact.

Gertrude: If it’s linked with our culture, these days *maengket* already is an influence in North Sulawesi, it’s already known as the first dance that was for worship.

Hendrik: If you ask people outside of Sulawesi, like in Java, if you ask them if they know where *maengket* is from, they say North Sulawesi, and the language is Tombulu.

Gertrude: Yeah it’s Tombulu, because there isn’t another language, it’s originally in Tombulu. Even in Jakarta they use Tombulu, even the Tontemboan speaking people who perform *maengket* still use Tombulu, they might be Tontemboan people but they still perform the *maengket* in Tombulu. People in Tondano, they have the regional language Tondano, but if they participate in *maengket* they use Tombulu, there is no *maengket* in Tondano language.

KAS: What about in Tonsea region?

Gertrude: Even Tonsea people, if there is a maengket competition they use Tombulu, there aren’t any in Tonsea.

Annie: So it’s a really significant influence.

Gertrude: There are others, but they haven’t been successfully marketed, it should only be the ones in Tombulu, they are good and the words fit.
KAS: So it’s the source.

Hendrik: We saw this a couple of times at festivals, with people from Sonder, I thought that they were going to use Tondano language.

Gertrude: But ask anywhere, maengket remains in Tombulu language, and Tombulu is only found in three wards: Tombariri, Tomohon and Pineleleng. There are only three Tombulu wards (field interview, 7/22/2009).

One of the cultural forces of Christianity is its ability to provide radical avenues to authority, giving people the agency to attribute their history with divine meaning. Centering the universality of the Christian world within their cultural locale also expands that particularity to encompass others – at least in terms of other co-religionists. However, making culture legible, livable, and intimate through Christianity also imposes some limits on who can share in claim that culture is God-given. It is those limits which brings Protestants in Minahasa back into the heart of the debate about whether cultural elements rightfully belong to the domain of religion, and who can claim the authority to call themselves Minahasan.

Identifying the other: denominational difference and new alliances in the effort to keep culture Christian

Due to the Indonesian government’s involvement in the dissemination of symbols of ethnicity in an attempt to create an “indigenous” national culture, ethnic displays have historically developed as a category of public representation that legitimates ethnic pride as patriotism (Kipp 1993:186). However, as religious practitioners, Christian Minahasans participate in an international public of fellow Christians, one to which they orient their actions and discourse through publications, participation in international networks, and through the circulation and consumption of Christian discourse and texts. The development of theories about the role of culture in the church clearly have the potential to highlight particularity through the common language and lexicon of the Christian commons. The expression of difference through these universalistic forms articulates well with Indonesian national ideologies of how contrastive identities should be exhibited. Making an experience of culture intimate, and authentic, through a Protestant
interpretation and utilizing didactic techniques to register bodily sensations as an aspect of Christian worship make it impossible to experience local culture as a non-Christian. This is a far narrower interpretation of the qualifications for local identity than those promoted by *adat*-based societal organizations.

For Lolah practitioners, to be Minahasan is to have a sincere desire to connect with the past, and is not authenticated by the performance of particular actions or the right display of ethnic characteristics. Anxiety about correct speech is mitigated because God (and perhaps by proxy, other members of the congregation) hears your intention and overlooks omissions or mistakes. The quality of culturalness cannot be distinguished from an unmitigated connection to the divine — without the sense that God understands practitioners’ intentions, failure as cultural beings is imminent because the past is too fractured to be reproduced in repetition. Since Muslims don’t share this kind of interiority in their ritual practice, there is no way for them to overcome their lack of the more objective signifiers of local cultural identity: descent or in-marriage to a Minahasan family line (*marga*), land ownership, or association with the region by birth. Even those local Muslims who fulfill some of these cultural qualities still cannot be considered to be truly Minahasan:

KAS: Earlier you said that there is certainly a connection between culture and religion, so how about Muslims in Minahasa? There are Muslims here, immigrants from Gorontalo or Makassar or elsewhere. There is a family here, a Muslim family, they feel like they are a part of the Minahasan community, if I ask them, they say that they are Minahasan.

Hendrik: But Minahasa is identified with Christians!

KAS: So what do you think about Muslims who say they are Minahasan?

Gertrude: Yeah, maybe they aren’t fully [Minahasan], maybe it’s because they have a husband or a wife from Gorontalo, so they are given a Minahasan *marga* (family name), so in the end if he or she has a spouse from Gorontalo or Makassar, if you ask his or her spouse if they are Minahasan answer “yes, I am Minahasan.” Otherwise usually in Minahasa there are no Muslims, there aren’t any, all of them are Christian. It’s just because they’ve married with a person from Gorontalo or Java, so people will ask and they’ll say oh we’re Minahasan, but then it’s discovered that they are not really tied with Minahasan people, they are just Minhasans through marriage.
KAS: But there is a Muslim family here, they've lived here a long time, maybe they came from Gorontalo about a hundred years ago. Now they feel like Minahasans, they say, “I'm also Minahasa, I use Bahasa Manado, I have family in the mountain villages, but according to you they aren't Minahasan?"

Gertrude: So, according to us they are just immigrants who married here, living by the seaside, so they are “half-blood” Minahasans.

Annie: A lot of them converted to Christianity.

Gertrude: You find Muslims in Tanawangko, they have family in Lolah, in the time they've lived there they haven't married with other Minahasans, they are just merchants, merchants by the seaside, supposedly intermarried. But as for Muslim Minahasan people, there really aren't any, they aren't really, if we investigate those people are really just borgo, they have family in Gorontalo, Makassar, Ternate. They are immigrants. But because their parents were here. Some of them might have been pressured to marry Minahasans, if they have descendents those descendents say they are Minahasan because they were born here.

KAS: So their children can be Minahasan people?

Gertride: Yeah, they were born here.

KAS: So what if they want to participate in Minahasan culture, if culture is preserved in the church? Can they come to Christian services or participate in other activities in the church?

Gertrude: Even if they are Minahasan, because they are Muslim, it's hard from them to participate in Minahasan culture.

Hendrik: Because they practice the culture of Islam, right?

Here Gertrude uses the phrase “dorang so darah Minahasa sentengah," using the exclusive pronoun in Bahasa Manado to describe the itinerant Muslim merchants who settled on the seacoast. The term “half blood Minahasa” refers to Minahasan identity reckoned through the generations that descended from the intermarriage of Muslims with the native people of North Sulawesi.

Borgo is a word adapted from the Dutch term burger, and often used to describe someone of mixed European and Indonesian descent (Menayang 2004:24). Historically, the word Borgo was the term applied to a volunteer civil militia that protected the ports around Manado from piracy. Originally made up of former detainees from India, Malacca and Java and other regions under Portuguese control. In 1605, after being granted freedom, this group joined with former VOC workers who remained in the colony seeking a livelihood as middlemen between the Dutch and native populations. In 1764, their ranks grew to include many Minahasan men, drawn by the exemption from taxes and mandatory labor (Wenas 2007: 23-24). Borgo refers to the descendents of this group, but is often used as it is in the transcript above to reference people whose ancestors came from outside of the Minahasan region.
Gertrude: They are already like that.

Hendrik: Because Muslim culture can’t mix with Minahasan culture!

Gertrude: It’s hard because Islam has a language, Arabic language.

KAS: They can’t use Tombulu language?

Gertrude: Yeah, they are connected to Arabic, unless they convert to Christianity and use the cultural language of Minahasa.

In the eyes of these Christians, the failure of Islam’s linguistic ideology to allow for the immateriality of interior belief is one obstacle in allowing Muslims to become culturally Minahasan. In order to redress the division between Christianity and Minahasan cultural identity, culture must be understood as something inseparable from Christian ideology, extending to the way that language, as an aspect of culture, should be understood. Culture is encapsulated in a language ideology that elevates emotional, sincere participation over mastery and repetition. Cultural authority is located not in invocation of the past through recitation, but in the way that using the language of the ancestors evokes a particular interior state associated with a form of prayer. Members of the Cultural Commission therefore experience *adat* as something that is inseparable from the kind of beliefs about subject and agency that characterize a Christian view of the world. As Keane (2003:684) notes, Calvinist missionaries classified Islamic, Catholic and ritualistic prayer as inauthentic because the practitioner displaces his or her capacity to act onto an external object.

Claiming cultural authority through the principles of liturgical practice does more than converge the categories of “Christian” and “Minahasan,” however. It also reasserts the authority of GMIM as the Christian denomination most emblematic of local culture, a coupling that *adat*-based organizations have tried to minimize or deny, as discussed in Chapter Four. Reclaiming culture as part of GMIM’s institutional and theological practice doesn’t only conform culture to a particular version of Christian theology, but calls into question the relationship other Christian denominations can claim to local identity.
The question of how religion and identity should relate to one another is not restricted to Protestants in the region, but is formulated through the terms of a wider recalibration of the available forms of representation that has spurred similar movements within other Christian denominations. In Lolah, the particularistic tendencies that are fostered by the way Christian practitioners use sub-ethnic elements as representative of Minahasan culture are particularly advantageous in that they both elevate the status of the congregation and help to re-establish GMIM’s now questioned role as the rightful steward of Minahasan culture and identity. By documenting Lolah’s status as the site of some of the earliest Christian conversions in the region, GMIM elites also aim to recast the church’s institutional history as an “indigenous” one that has clear political advantages.

GMIM, however, is not the only denomination that has a long institutional history in the region, or claims on local culture. The Catholic Church’s presence in North Sulawesi rivals GMIM’s in terms of length and the presence of religious institutional forms in the daily life of society. One of the longest, and most vibrant efforts to preserve culture through ecumenical Christian ritual is headed by local anthropologist and head of the Pineleng Catholic Seminary, Father Ricardo Renwarin. Renwarin, who claims Tombulu identity on his mother’s side, has spent much of his religious career documenting and theorizing traditional practices amongst Tombulu speakers, as well as performing ceremonies in traditional style for life-cycle rituals that take place under auspices of the church, such as weddings.

In July of 2009, Pastor Renwarin presided over the third annual ceremony at Watu Pinawetengan as part of his effort to promote a program of what he calls “inculturative liturgy.” Much as the Cultural Commission in Lolah sees cultural events in the church as part of Christian practice, Renwarin describes the annual, inter-denominational ceremony as a new form of Christian worship. Tombulu language was used for the liturgical centerpiece of the event, but instead of relying on a principle of translation, the Pastor set sections of ritual poetry and Tombulu-language myths to a Catholic accompaniment that he wrote himself. This “Song of Karema” (Nyanian Karema) was delivered in a call-and-response style typical of Catholic liturgical performance. Using material from Minahasan legend, and poetry,
he described the parallels between the legend of Karema, an “earth story” in which the evening’s ceremony was based, and the Genesis story.\textsuperscript{177}

The striking dissimilarities between this approach and that employed by the Cultural Commission in Lolah were exemplified by the more ecumenical nature of the Watu Pinawetengan event, in which both Protestant and Catholic practitioners played a role in the ceremonial proceedings. Attendees included local historians, students from Manado’s public university, Sam Ratulangi, and the Christian Theological University, as well as local tourists. Many of the elements of the ritual, such as the use of Indonesian and Bahasa Manado, a mixture of hymns in regional languages that are emblematic of local identity like \textit{Esa Mokan} and \textit{Opo Wananatas}, seemed to underscore the ritual’s non-denominational, inclusive theme, one that was not based in any particular theology. Renwarin confirmed as much in his comments on the purpose of “inculturative” practices. These rituals, in his estimation, are not a question of religion, but of the sameness of ethnicity, a special “adat ritual” that served to “make people fall in love with adat.” He viewed Lolah Cultural Commission’s interpretation of how to contextualize liturgy as “essentially flawed,” in that translation only represents a partial solution to the problem of cultural preservation (Personal Communication, June 2009).

The pastor’s attitude towards translation as something which detracts from the revitalization process hearkens back to the kind of discrepancies in language ideology that Keane (2003) notes Calvinists found so troubling – and what those differences might mean for the resurgence of ritual practice in religious environments around North Sulawesi. Pak Frankie, a self-proclaimed cultural practitioner who continues to practice Minahasan rituals outside of the church environment, found that Catholic ritual observance was much more conducive to traditional spiritual practice than Protestantism, even as he criticizes intercessory ritual requests:

\begin{quote}
Pak Frankie: If we speak honestly, what is so essential to Minahasa is the same as what the followers of \textit{kejawen} in Java do, and we’re sure that there are similar rituals in Toraja. So essentially we cultural practitioners (\textit{pelaku budaya}) often hold rituals at Watu Pinawetengan, but sometimes those who
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{177} See Appendix C for the liturgy used in the evening’s ritual.
hold the rituals just there are just looking for personal gain (*hoki*), and that's damaging. They ask for lottery numbers, they ask the ancestors or spirits of their ancestors to bring them luck in some form. Essentially we just let them do what they want. You know, we just access the spirit through our ancestors. It’s the same with the Catholic house of worship...“St. Maria, Mother of God, pray for us.” Mother Mary isn’t God, but in the era that she lived, the spirit (*roh*) identified her as someone who had been pious her whole life, and that she was going to find a place in heaven. Maybe it’s naïve to think that can directly access, actually, we don't have direct access, although in the New Testament we have the concept of direct prayer to Jesus. But really it’s too low, it lowers our image of God. Nah, we access God through holy spirits. Through them, because they will talk to their boss (field interview 5/22/2009).

The kinds of systems like Catholicism whose theological focus on ritual action can absorb the concept of ancestral intercession are juxtaposed against local Protestantism’s centripetal and exclusivist characteristics, and its inability to serve as a basis for an ethno-regional community:

Pak Frankie: But those things called belief, or religion, believe it or not, if Christians see two kinds of spirit, why do we always give too many parameters or indicators, until the point of creating divisions? While at the same time Allah is one, only his name is different. So I often think that maybe Christians everywhere are cursed by their orientation towards Europe. That’s what I said before about the NZG being rational people. Yeah, while they carried the vision of Christ’s salvation, their rationality was still extraordinary. In Islamic circles this is called a *musyrik* issue. Nah this is what’s bad. Imagine us making all these divisions? The success of the Javanese is that although they are identified with the Sultan’s palace, they are also egalitarian, why? Because they still are oriented to beliefs in the ancestors, so whether they are Christian or Muslim, they are unified. Now when we defend ourselves, for example Protestants, you totally oppose me performing rituals, orienting myself to the cultural teachings of the ancestors in our Minahasan culture. But you as a religious leader squabble with other religious leaders, what can be seen as our principles in that? It’s that spirituality doesn’t represent an important orientation in Protestantism. Not like the Catholics, I have to admit (field interview 5/22/2009).

The ecumenical character of Father Renwarin’s take on culture in the church seems consonant with *adat* practitioners’ insistence on a multi-religious basis for regional identity. In his liturgical practice, the bounds of Minahasan identity are

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178 The term *musyrik* refers to a person who commits the sin of *syrîk*, which is to worship a God other than Allah, or to deify an object other than God.
neither coterminous with Christian denominational divisions or restricted to language groups that missionaries like Graafland labored to unify by reengineering local cosmologies in reference to Biblical text. Father Renwarin referenced the inclusion of the Ponosakan sub-ethnic groups in “inculturated” rituals he held in 2007. The Ponosakan group is usually identified as Muslim and is both geographically, and linguistically, removed from early colonial constructions of the Minhasan landscape. Unlike Lolah’s Cultural Commission, Father Renwarin is not overly concerned about the dangers of language and agency, perhaps resulting both from the legacy of cultural preservation in Indonesian Catholicism, as well as his education in cultural anthropology. He does, however, see the benefits of more ecumenical collaboration between Protestant and Catholic groups, especially given that their historical segregation has also limited the circulation of cultural knowledge. “The Protestants preserved the songs,” he said “and we preserved the dances.”

Theological details and historical divisions aside, there are other compelling reasons why Protestants in North Sulawesi might seek to ally with Catholics in ecumenical efforts to keep culture located in the church. Complicating the relationship (and competition) between denominational divisions is the recent phenomenal growth of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Indonesia – a group that threatens more established church’s political and social domination. Although subsumed under the heading of Protestantism in a national sense, their focus on fundamentalist theology (Adiprasetya 2010:4) and a re-pietization of contemporary Protestantism (ibid., 8), the relative independence of their congregational structure, as well as the exclusivist tendencies of the religious group (ibid., 4) positions them as “religious others” for most mainstream Christian organizations. These significant theoretical and institutional differences are amplified by the practical concerns about Pentecostalism’s tendency to draw converts from other Christian denominations (Andaya 2009:1), a major concern in Lolah, where newly established Pentecostal congregations have tempted members to leave the denominations of their birth. Considered to be a “conversion” because many Pentecostal churches see themselves as more morally oriented than traditional Protestant denominations, and insist on the re-baptism of new members, becoming Pentecostal can have serious impact on an individual’s social identity. Although some
Pentecostal/charismatic denominations are imbued with ethnic associations in other regions of Indonesia, Pentecostal theology has little room for the reproduction of cultural elements, and even less so in North Sulawesi, where the Pentecostal denominations emphasize their independence and difference from the monolithic GMIM institution. In short, Pentecostal/charismatic churches in the region have little difficulty with the concept of separating religion from culture, which strangely allies them with those adat activists who look to delineate culture from adat in the public space and in regional governance.

The vision that Protestant practitioners in Lolah have of unearthing local culture might be conceived through a very different process than those used by other denominations, but the goal of creating a basis for a stronger Minahasan political community is the same. For Lolah practitioners, it is an identity based in and expanded through Christianity that has the most world-changing potential. Christianity’s ability to both enshrine particularity while flattening theological differences on a larger scale expands the possibilities for new alliances. Combined with the threat of the new “religious others” in the form of Pentecostal/charismatic congregations, Catholics can be seen as co-religionists, and cultural allies:

KAS: Pastor, I’d like to ask if there is any plan to give an opportunity to other denominations, like Catholics and Pentecostals, to participate in the worship service at the GMIM church?

Pastor Sinubu: If there is an event we’ll usually invite them too.

Hendrik: But there hasn’t been one yet.

Pastor Sinubu: Usually the services are on the same day, maybe if it’s a day other than that we could do it.

Hendrik: When we had that one ceremony, some Catholics attended, right?

Pastor Sinubu: So, this is one of our goals, the reason why we have to develop our contextual team, to re-embrace the Minahasan people, according to me, at this time church attendance in Minahasa has experienced a failure, or has been transformed. Churchgoers attend to unite, not to live divided like we do now for instance in Minahasa and North Sulawesi, across a number of church denominations.”

Gertrude: Lolah has three major denominations...
Pastor Sinubu: So this can embrace, reunify, and perhaps one day one “Minahasan church” will emerge, not a Christian or a Catholic one. It will consist of a liturgical guide that will embrace everyone, all denominations of all ages (field interview 7/22/2009).

On the surface, what the Lolah Cultural Commission is trying to achieve with their project of contextual liturgy seems in contradiction with the efforts of adat organizations like Brigade Manguni Indonesia, who are trying to redefine local identity to project an ethnolocal identity. Promotion of a multi-religious cultural identity does not preclude the inclusion of Christianity as one the defining characteristics of regional identity, but extracts religious meaning in favor of a looser interpretation of the values of fraternity, kasih (love) and peaceful relations amongst local inhabitants. For the adat contingency, the religious ritualization of cultural practices not only underlines the crisis of authenticity that faces those who seek to undue the “double blindfold” (Jacobsen 2002:46) of Minahasa’s Christian history, it also disrupts alliances with non-Christians who respond to the public separation of religion and adat as part of their identification with a local identity. On closer examination, however, both movements have similar goals: to overcome Minahasa’s lack of a primordial basis by invigorating contemporary practices and social relations with cultural meaning, and seeking recognition and definition for particularistic identities through the authority of universal forms.

The conflation of cultural and religious identity is also nothing new in Indonesia, as the construction of adat law was one technique, among many, to count and codify the population of the Indies territory. Political changes under the processes of decentralization, particularly the legislation regarding the legalization of adat and the introduction of regional regulations (peraturan daerah · perda) that allow the creation of district-level law without consultation with the central government, has opened previously unavailable avenues of political authority in the realm of both culture and religion. Mobilizing the authority to claim the authenticity of a certain relationship between local culture and religion has renewed the debate’s political import and tangible connection to the control of political and economic resources. Conflict over authority is inevitable, as decentralization legislation operates through political borders from an earlier era that don’t correspond to constellations of ethnic and religious homogeneity. The process of deciding whose
version of culture can be authorized, and therefore legalized, is not addressed in the legislation regarding the role of local custom (Acciaioli 2001:88). Who can claim the right to identify cultural authenticity, then, is uncertain.

In several regions, politicians have maneuvered religious authority into the field of culture, taking advantage of decentralization legislation's aim to “protect” and codify local expressions of culture. The motivations for this are manifold: aligning religion and culture may serve as a method to legalize particular religious interpretations, or to maintain the political power of a religious majority that is threatened by the dismantling of previous regimes under a less centralized government. Conversely, religious values can be highlighted to counter political deployments of adat by indigenous groups who have been displaced or disadvantaged by immigrants under the government’s transmigration program, as Acciaioli describes in the case of the people of the Lindu Plain in Central Sulawesi (2001). In Manokwari, adat organizations and religious practitioners have allied to support turning the city into a “Kota Injil” (City of Gospel) that marginalizes the minority Muslim population – a small-scale inversion of the national state of religious relations. Noting Manokwari’s long Christian history, a representative from the Adat Board for Manokwari Papua threw his support behind policies limiting Muslim religious activity in the city, saying that “tradition, religion and the government have to move in step.” (Tempo 29 August – 4 September 2011:63).

Over fifteen years ago, Lorraine Aragon wrote that much of the scholarship on religious transition in Indonesia described how minority groups oriented, and assessed, their particular belief systems in relation to the national concepts of world religion. This demonstrated how “Indonesian ethnic minorities often evaluate the extent to which aspects of their ancestral traditions parallel features of Christianity or Islam, and draw on the rhetoric of world religions to justify and expand their own cosmological ideas” (1996:350-351). World religions continue to provide technologies and techniques to maintain particularistic identities. In the final ethnographic chapter of this dissertation, I'll address the effects of the contemporary religious demography of North Sulawesi, and how the concept of place-based belonging or ethnolocality, can be used to contradict the alignment of Christianity and culture, making space for Muslim communities to claim that they too can be called Minahasan
CHAPTER 6

MUSLIM BELONGING IN A CHRISTIAN PLACE: RELIGION, CONSOCIAL RELATIONS AND HISTORIES OF RELIGIOUS HARMONY

For all the exhortations about religious harmony, North Sulawesi is a place that overflows with visible, and visceral, reminders of the primacy of Christianity in the social landscape. Calls to prayer emanating from the few mosques in the capital city of Manado are matched by regular announcements from church loudspeakers, detailing the schedules for the individual koloms that organize neighborhood congregations for participation in social activities outside of regular religious services. Towering over the city from the nearby hills is the Tuhan Memberkati or “God Bless” monument, a concrete statue of Jesus Christ with his arms outstretched towards the population below, locally rumored to be even taller than the Christ The Redeemer statue in Rio De Janeiro. Beyond these symbols of Christian faith that remind any who walk through it that North Sulawesi is, above all, a Christian place, another place is mapped onto the awareness of local inhabitants. Geographic references appear both on religious and secular features of landscape: churches, street signs, business names, and even local public buses are christened with names like Getsemani, Zion, Bethlehem, Bethany, Bethesda, Nazareth, Galilea - names that transform the holy landscape of the Minahasan people – the dominant ethnic group in the region - into a simulacrum of the Holy Land (Tanah Suci). Many Christian residents refer to their region as the second Israel (Israel kedua).

Throughout this dissertation, I have demonstrated that the religious exclusivity implied by the historical association between Christianity and Minahasa fails to fully articulate with common constructions of categorical identities in Indonesia. Using Christianity as the defining characteristic that differentiates Minahasa from other ethnicities contradicts the dissociation of those things labeled “cultural” from the realm of religion. This echoes not only the concerns of the state in transecting possible political alliances based in religious or ethnic association, but is also of theological import to Christian practitioners who labor to ensure that those emblems chosen to represent cultural continuity are primarily elements that can be
contextualized in theological terms. Those practices deemed “too cultural” that cannot be reconciled with Protestant beliefs should be relegated to the dead annals of history. Trust in this continual process of evaluation about the appropriateness of cultural practices in existence before contact with Christianity is being challenged by alternative frameworks of definition based in regionally-specific cultural attributes that can be displayed in inter-ethnic interaction.

As those interested in seeing the region of Minahasa (and by default, North Sulawesi) differentiated as an ethnolocality try to unearth cultural objects and performances that can flesh out and define a regionally specific identity based in adat, religion’s role becomes increasingly problematic. This is what Jacobsen (2002:55) refers to as the double-blindfold of Christianity in Minahasa: without Christianity as a basis to contain the various practices and codes of social interaction that were transformed into a shared territorial affiliation, the question of whose adat should represent Minahasa threatens to dissolve their overarching identity at the point of its historical origins. Re-presenting Minahasa through the filter of Christian theology, however, makes the qualifications of belonging so exclusive that it severely limits the scope of those who can participate, exposing internal rivalries that do little to advance the project of promoting the region.

The Christianization of Minahasan culture distinguishes the colonial period as the most important epoch in defining the region, making Minahasa seem an exclusively Christian place. Given the national preoccupation with categorizations of identity that rely on the “spatial segmentation of people and cultures” (Malkii 1992:61), place has unprecedented power to act (Brown 2005:10) on subjects in the Indonesian nation. Place can define the self to such a degree that association with particular places is akin to a biological category, something that can be carried elsewhere and passed down through generations. This also lends to the idea that some people belong to places more than others, and the hierarchy of insiders and outsiders is often configured according to these ethnolocal categories. That places of origin can double as a racial categories is clearly demonstrated in various migration histories of the archipelago, where the difference between those claiming to be indigenes and those who remain migrants is linked to the inheritance of place-based identities that persist through generations, even for descendents who may have never set foot in the ethnic homeland. If place serves as an “axis of power in its own
right, a basis for the construction of differences, hierarchy and identity” (ibid., 8) that locates its authority to determine who people are “not in its physical, visible form but in its identity as something,” (ibid., 9) then Minahasa’s history as a Christian place acts to reinforce the idea that all Minahasans are Christian.

This principle is demonstrated by the most famous Muslim “migrants” to Minahasa – a group of Muslims known as the Jawa Tondano or “Jaton” people. This community traces its origins to Kyai Modjo and an estimated forty-five male followers, who were exiled to Sulawesi in 1830 (Babcock 1989:31). Kyai Modjo’s association with Prince Diponegoro’s rebellion during the Java War made him and his followers a target of the Dutch, and ensured him a place in the contemporary pantheon of Indonesian heroes of Independence. The Java Village (Kampung Jawa) that still exists near Kyai Modjo’s burial site in the highlands of the Minahasan area known as Tondano refers both to a residence and a place of internment, but also to a distinctive identity that distinguishes these Muslims as having unique traditions rooted in their Javanese heritage (ibid., 214). Several factors contributed to the development of a distinct identity for this particular Muslim settlement, including restrictive surveillance by the Dutch residency in Manado, later influxes of additional Javanese exiles to the settlement, knowledge of wet-rice agricultural practices, and their origins in relation to a historical event that ties them directly to the national narrative of Indonesian independence (ibid., 200). Their “Javanese” identity, however, is not indicative of active ties with the island of Java or its traditions, but a method of maintaining a distinct identity in relation to their Christian neighbors and other Muslims in the region.

As Tim Babcock’s ethnographic monograph describes, “Kampung Jawa traditions of origin serve to state villagers’ distinctiveness from their neighbors, yet also allow the possibility of not identifying as Javanese” (1989:200). Socially and in some aspects culturally, the village and its inhabitants are highly assimilated to the surrounding Minahasan society, and in some instances will refer to themselves as Minahasan, citing genealogical connections through marriage and more generally a regional affiliation that distinguishes them from Muslim Javanese (ibid., 201). Members of the community have cultivated differences in dress, speech, food, and ritual that they identify as stemming from their Javanese heritage, as well as a focus on intense Islamic practice, as markers of their continued distinction. Their
origins also led to them being identified as enemies during the Permesta Rebellion in the 1950s, when the region was pitted against central powers emanating from Java (Babcock 1989:217). Babcock sites all of these factors as explaining the development of villagers’ identity as distinct from Java, but also one that maintained its unique status in contrast with the Christian Minahasans surrounding them.

In her examination of another group of people on the margins in Indonesia who identify themselves as somewhere between “here” and “there” Patricia Spyer (2000:6) sees these kinds of hybrid identities as the result of the politics of difference characteristic of modernity, as well as an effect of colonialism that brought capitalism’s hierarchical valuation of places to bear on the peoples who inhabit them. The displacements of modernity in the post-colonial world rely on fluctuating borders that separate the center from the periphery, and it is in this asymmetrical division that Spyer sees hybridity developing, a perception created by a system that makes it seem “the world in certain crucial aspects resides in another place, more often than not, across the sea” (ibid., 4). Like the people of the Aru islands that serve as her case study, the inhabitants of the Kampung Jawa define themselves in terms of an asymmetrical relationship not only between the Javanese center of power and the outskirts of the archipelago, but also through how those valuations align with the binary of the Muslim majority and the Christian minority. Like the Aru, their (dis)placement is also created by the instability of their link to Java, where they are never really admitted as full cultural citizens. Although the Jaton people do not “forget” their past, as Spyer describes the Aru do in order to distance themselves from their devalued indigenous incarnations (ibid., 37), their Javanese history has similarly become “a repository for adat discursively cordoned off and localized” (Spyer 2000:34). The traditions they carried with them from Java are both a relic of the past but also curiously contemporary, taking precedence over contemporary relations in defining how the people in this village see themselves. Like other Muslim groups in the province that use ties to elsewhere (the Arab world, for instance) to refute both the periphery of their place and their peripheral place in it, adat comes to refer to symbolic practices and markers that invoke these group’s ties to networks other than those found in daily interaction.
Scholars of ethnicity have long pointed to the nation-state’s role in the definition of difference, a framework that relies on positioning as part of the logic of expressing that difference in increasingly homogenizing societies (Calhoun 2007; Eriksen 1994; Linnekin and Poyer 1990). The concept of place functions as an extension of these processes of positionality, as it reflects both how space is divided and evaluated through political and economic systems, as well as the human relationships that are assumed to unproblematically fall within those boundaries. As Stuart Hall (1991:19) writes, where we are positioned is central to the expression of identity and difference that we call ethnicity, a way of utilizing the conditions of identity that we ourselves cannot construct to create a place to speak from:

I want to argue that ethnicity is what we all require to think the relationship between identity and difference. There is no way, it seems to me, in which people in the world can act, can speak, can create, can come in from the margins and talk, unless they come from some place, they come from history, they inherit certain cultural traditions. What we’ve learned about the theory of enunciation is that there’s no enunciation without positionality. This we cannot do without that sense of positioning that is connoted by the term ethnicity (1989:18).

Place, and the construction of identity in relation to a place of origin, has always been central to positioning in Indonesia’s multi-cultural state, where like many plural societies, ethnicity is articulated through group competition (Eriksen 2002:15). The state both “systematically underplays” ethnic difference while recognizing those differences by acting as an arbiter between distinctive, self-ascribed groups for whom they guarantee cultural rights (Eriksen 1994: 550). This “mosaic” approach relies on imagining the whole of the nation as qualitatively different from its parts (ibid., 557), while strengthening the categorical identities of which difference is composed. Calhoun (2007:111) points out that the similarities between nationalism and the categorical identities it produces are based in the same ideas about the ability to divide the world into neat categories that are defined internally by shared identifying traits, and externally by consistent differences between categories.

Like nationalism, ethnicity in the state-promoted form of sovereign, bounded cultural identities is less about interpersonal relationships and more a process of identification with an abstract category (ibid., 171). This can be analytically
distinguished from *consocial* or Lamarckian forms of identity that “privilege environment, behavior, and situational flexibility over descent and innate characteristics” (Linnekin and Poyer 1990:6). An alternative epistemology of human identity (ibid., 7), this method of reckoning membership or understanding the self in relation to others stresses context, situation, performance and place over biological descent (ibid., 9) and differs from categorical identities like state-managed ethnicity (ibid., 12). In this alternative understanding of personhood, behavioral attributes are important in that they are constitutive of identity, in that how you behave socially is part of what determines who you are (ibid., 8).

Since consocial personhood is more performative, flexible, and rooted in social interaction, it corresponds to Appadurai’s social-geographical concept of *neighborhoods* (1996:179) that rely on proximity and interaction. Yet neighborhoods and ethnoscpes inform each other, especially in Indonesia, where place is a material embodiment of those parts that make up the nation’s whole. With the movement towards regional autonomy that gives regions new political weight, places are being reborn as a more powerful category that aligns specific constellations of other categorical identities into new contrastive and competitive relationships. These kinds of political shifts are an opportunity to observe how consocial forms of personhood are finding space for expression, as the ethnoslocal frame evolves into new types of categorical identities in the nation. This chapter will focus on how histories of interaction heretofore minimized are abstracted into identifying traits that include people in the same category by virtue of the difference between them and others.

To put it more concretely, I am not investigating how Muslims in Minahasa are or are not rightfully ascribing themselves to a particular name or category. Following Brubaker’s (2002) line of argument of thinking about ethnicity without groups, I make a distinction here between categories and groups, seeing categories as something people use to make groups appear real, unquestionable and *sui generis*. Brubaker argues that groupness itself is a fluctuating phenomena, one that is dynamic and processual. I’m interested in how some Muslims in Minahasa are picking up on categorical definitions and using them to demonstrate membership in a particular group, using new interpretive frames to define that group. Muslims who claim that Minahasa is a group they belong to are interpreting and performing
group identity through discursive and other public events that use the categories of Muslim and Christian in Indonesia to remake interactions between these two categories into cultural traits. It is not that these interactional frameworks are new. Even the Jaton people recognize them as part of the social reality of the region. What has changed is that the shift to more decentralized, regionally-based governance in Indonesia has opened space for novel constructions of categorical identity, or perhaps more accurately, adat as a frame for cultural relations is being remade into an abstract contrastive category that displays difference between places, as who can belong and how that is measured is being redefined in the wake of the repoliticization of regional borders.

Given the powerful role that Christianity played in the development of Minahasa as an ethnolocale, and the way that identities based in the metaphor of persons as the extension of certain places tends to elide the cosmopolitan realities of various territories in favor of exclusivist hierarchies of belonging, it is unsurprising that Muslim communities in North Sulawesi are conceptually understood as “out of place.” Consocial forms of identity that figure inclusion based on observable social relationships and communal behavior seem unable to overcome the common-sense idea that place-based histories and ties of descent have a biological imperative that is expressed in cultural difference. Yet as descriptions of the Jawa Tondano community will demonstrate, generations of participation in the “neighborhoods” of social life around Tondano lake makes these Muslims both socially and culturally recognizable as belonging to Minahasa.

For groups of regional Muslims who see Minahasa as their place, the propensity of the region’s association with Christianity to persist in constructions of difference can be particularly fraught when carrying that identification outside of the region. In everyday interaction amongst Indonesians in urban or inter-ethnic spaces, religion can be generally indexical of identity categories where ethnicity and locality are merged into a single concept (Boellstorff 2002:25). Fera, a Muslim from Manado whose family has lived for generations in a village near Lake Tondano, recounts being physically attacked while attending school in South Sulawesi by Muslim students who were dubious of her claim of being a Minahasan Muslim. They

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179 This name is a pseudonym.
threw rocks at her, insisting that her claim of being from Minahasa was tantamount to apostasy. Either she was Muslim, or she was Minahasan – but they would not accept her claim of being both. These accusations also had racial overtones, as Fera’s dark skin is incongruent with the common stereotype that Minahasan/Manadonese women are attractive because they have whiter skin than other ethnic groups in the archipelago.

That the concept of Minahasa as a Christian place extends to an assumption about its inhabitants being Christian people makes the claims of Minahasan Muslims contestable, especially when juxtaposed with the common-sense interactional shorthand that positions religion as a defining ethnic characteristic. Yet what I encountered in the field are Muslims who argue that it is not the locality from which their ancestors emigrated that determines their ethnic identity in Indonesia, or their religion, but their consocial ties with particular Minahasan neighborhoods of spatial and social interaction. Relations of marriage, the use of local languages, participation in practices deemed culturally Minahasan, and shared memories of defining events in the region’s history were the major themes by which these individuals narrated the terms of their identification, and anchored themselves to particular locales in the Minahasan landscape. This was especially true for two the Muslim informants I interviewed whose great-grandparents were the first generation of their families to settle in the North Sulawesi region. Why these Muslims identify as Minahasan when the Muslim community on the edge of Lake Tondano continue to see themselves as people from another shore returns to questions about what kind of changes decentralization and regional autonomy have wrought on the relationship between religion and culture, the construction of local identities, and how ethnolocal publics shape the terms of belonging and the imagination of places as physical containers of ethnic identity within the state.

180This same sort of conflation between Christianity and an ethnolocality recently came up in training I conducted on methodology of religious studies for teachers from State Islamic Schools (STAIN). One of the participants, a Muslim teacher from Papua, carefully explained to the class that he was indeed a Muslim, from a Muslim family, not a convert from a Christian family. For many attending the training, he was first and only Muslim Papuan they had ever met – and during the course of class discussions many of them admitted they had previously been under the impression that Papuans could not be Muslims and retain their cultural identity.
I would argue that the process of questioning the relationship between culture and religion that has spurred these political changes has also opened a space for consocial forms of identity to become characteristics of categorical belonging. The reality of the long-term processes of mixing, adaptation, and interreligious relationships that played a part in delineating Minahasa’s boundaries, both geographically and abstractly, have been minimized by the exclusivist alignment of Minahasa with the Christian religion. The resurgence of the concept of adat as a political resource for calculating identity elevates social relationships in a shared territory as one of its core principles, even if these relationships are in reality much more deterritorialized and abstract than they are presented to be. Ironically, the presentation and performance of Minahasan identity in the kinds of standardized public displays that present cultural identity as immutable, timeless, and primordial are the very same events that are increasingly inclusive of the diverse regional population, and sensitive to the increasing tensions around religious tolerance and cooperation at the national level. As Frederik Barth noted in his foundational theory on ethnicity, successful ethnic identity is dependent on the outcome of interaction: “the performance of others (in response to you) and the alternatives open to oneself” (1969:25). As the transformation of ethnoregional frames provide new ways of organizing under regional or cultural identity, Christian Minahasans have been debating the possibility of culture without Christianity. In doing so, they have opened new alternatives for belonging, perhaps unwittingly.

Migrant Muslims with local histories

In this chapter, I will use ethnographic examples drawn from fieldwork with Muslims from the village of Remboken, located in the District of Minahasa, in the highland area of North Sulawesi that is identified as the heartland of Minahasan culture. Unlike the Jawa Tondano people, the Muslims from Remboken have no history of exile that informs their expressions of being a distinct group. Most of the roughly 450 Muslim members of the village trace their point of origin to the region of Gorontalo that lies south of the southernmost district of North Sulawesi. Interviews were conducted with two village elders at the request of the families that I worked with, since these elders were considered repositories of Muslim histories for this
village. My introduction to Fera, a teacher at the State Islamic School (STAIN) in Manado, led to some animated discussions about her family's identification as Minahasans, and it was her extended family that felt in order to understand what being Minahasan meant, that I should learn about the Muslim community in Remboken. They were keen to share their histories as part of the larger history of Minahasa, although I originally approached them for information about the patriarch of the family's role as a Muslim leader in local institutions working on issues of religious harmony. Members of their extended family in Remboken wanted me to record the history of their ancestors' emigration to Minahasa and the story of their role in village history, including their ties through marriage with Christian Minahasan family lines (marga). My position as an anthropologist studying Minahasan identity, as well as my social ties with a prominent government official in Manado whose family also hailed from Remboken, presented me as an advocate for promoting Muslim histories as part of the representation of Minahasan culture. Both my interview with Haji Budi, an 81-year-old former village head (kepala desa) for Remboken, and Oma S, Fera's 83-year-old grandmother, a native of the village who now lives with her daughter's family in Manado, were group interviews attended by several generations of village members who contributed questions to the elders' narration of the story of Remboken Muslims. It was their questions which helped to shape the narrative that was intended to recount this people's history.

No apocryphal event punctuates the appearance of Muslims in Remboken during the two decades following the arrival of Johan Gottlob Schwarz from the Netherlands Missionary Society in the neighboring area of Kakas and Langoan in 1831. Their arrival did coincide, however, with the inception of a period of intensifying intervention from colonial institutions, and the development of a territorial identity in the region. The establishment of a Muslim community in Minahasa is historically associated with the exile of Kyai Modjo's men, some of whom relocated to the villages of their Christian wives' families. Haji Budi's father

181 This name is a pseudonym. The term haji designates a person who has completed pilgrimage to Mecca.
182 This name is a pseudonym. Oma is a Dutch term used in Minahasa to refer to elders, roughly akin to "grandmother."
183 Schwarz reportedly baptized 9,652 people in the period between 1834-1852, although not all those baptisms resulted in the establishment of Christian congregations. He established the original Reform Church congregation in Remboken in 1850 (Jongeneel 1999:607).
was a descendent of the Jaton community, who relocated to his wife’s natal home in Remboken. According to his account, Islam and Christianity developed in tandem in this particular highland village:

Haji Budi: Muslims have been in Remboken for about 160 years, meaning if we subtract from now [2009] it means that Muslims entered Remboken around 1840 or 1850. Christianity had just begun to grow at that time, around 1831. So Christianity had just begun to be established when Islam arrived, almost at the same time (field interview 10/17/2009).

It was at this time that a historical precedent was set that would support the development of what Ehito Kimura (2007:2) calls “marginality in the periphery,” where administrative divisions compartmentalized and territorialized diverse groups in the area (ibid., 6). Dutch and later Indonesian state policy in the region promoted certain groups over others, intensifying competition and the perception of difference between them. Religion was an important factor in the promotion of the Minahasan groups over other territorially-compartmentalized sections of the population, including Gorontalo, which was separated from the Ternate regency and added to the Manado regency in 1824. Kimura (2007:9) cites mission efforts that brought not only Christianity but an unmatched level of education to Minahasa as one of the early signifiers of Minahasan difference and privilege in the region. Better access to education and Christianity fostered a system of favoritism in which Minahasans were promoted over other groups in the region (and the nation) for positions in the colonial military and administration. Ethnic Gorontalese had a much less fraught engagement with the national independence movement than the Minahasan elites who hoped that their colonial privilege would be transmuted into regional autonomy or inclusion in the Dutch Republic. The Permesta conflict (1958–1961) was another historical development in the region that marked the divergence between Gorontalo and their neighbors to the North. The continuation of the Permesta conflict in the regions of Manado and Minahasa after the coalition members in South Sulawesi came to terms with the central government added, according to Kimura, to regional resentment against the advantaged and militarily trained group. Not only did Gorontalo leaders not come to the aid of the Minahasans, they saw them as a threat greater than the Java-focused centrist policies. Kimura (2007:12) notes that today, where Minahasans tend to characterize Permesta as a
pro-national or anti-communist affair, people from Gorontalo have a very different historical memory of the Permesta events and highlight their opposition to them.

Minahasan political dominance in the region was reestablished (or continued) at the inception of the New Order period when the large numbers of military men in region who had fought in Permesta were utilized to support the New Order’s ideological battle against communism. Kimura notes while other provinces were saddled with rotating Javanese governors, ethnic Minahasans held the governorship in North Sulawesi from 1967 on. People in Gorontalo were increasingly unsatisfied with the Minahasan dominance over the province, that marginalized the Gorontalo region both politically and economically (Kimura 2007:14-15). The resentment and sense of difference borne of Gorontalo’s historical marginalization combined with political opportunities under decentralization law that aligned with the interests of local elites led to the separation of North Sulawesi into two separate provinces in February of 2001 (Kimura 2007:23). Although highlighting the political nature of the new province’s creation, he notes that the involvement of Islamic organizations attested to religious tensions that manifested themselves not in anti-Christian rhetoric, but in support for separatism from the Christian-dominant North Sulawesi province (ibid., 19). Contrastive ethnic frameworks that highlighted the fictive kinship of the sub-ethnic groups of Gorontalo against other regional groups were invoked by student movements in the late 90s (ibid., 17), references that were entangled with Islamic heritage and history.

The historical marginalization of Muslim Gorontalese was an omnipresent theme in my interviews with local Muslim scholars and members of the Remboken community whose ancestral ties traced back to Gorontalo. Instead of using these elements to highlight their (dis)placement from Minahasa, these informants constructed a narrative of how these disadvantages were mitigated by particular histories of social interaction that rendered them consocially Minahasan, as well as the cultural character of Muslim-Christian interaction that positively assesses the influence of Christian values on local culture. Memories of marginalization and the differentiation of Gorontalese immigrants on the basis of their origins and religion during the colonial period are interpreted as the result of colonial intervention. They refuted the efficacy of these interventions in explaining how Muslims in Remboken were able to partake of the advantages possessed by their Christian
neighbors. The events surrounding Permesta are also recalled to support their claims for belonging, despite the fact that it was a historical period in which their religion and roots threatened to undermine the strength of their local social ties.

The religious composition of North Sulawesi cannot be left out of the explanation of the “emergence” of Muslims who identify themselves as Minahasan. As a region that holds one of the few Christian majorities in a Muslim majority country, the national tenor of majority-minority relations structures the approach of the Christian-dominant regional government to managing religious relations in the microcosm. Christians are increasingly cautious not to offend the Muslim mainstream in an environment where attacks on religious minorities are on the rise, especially against Christian behavior that is seen to threaten the religious sensibilities of the Muslim majority (Adeney-Risakotta 2008:9). However, given that the Christian population’s numerical majority in the region is slight, it is equally important to consider how Christian social and political identity in Indonesia is drawn in large part through contrast with Muslim majority.

The argument can also be made that political dominance effects social relations. More accommodation between groups in settings where one group is clearly dominant has been described in other cases in Indonesia, such as Bruner’s (1974) comparative study of ethnic relations in the Indonesian cities of Bandung and Medan. In Medan, where there is no definable majority population, tense ethnic relations limited inter-group interactions. In Bandung, where the Sundanese ethnic group dominated the region both in terms of population and political representation, relations between groups were more collegial as well as more open to social mixing, including intermarriage (Bruner 1974:269). Bruner attributes the increased degree of ethnic mixing in Bandung to the adoption of Sundanese rules for interaction, creating a common cultural code that lends predictability to interethnic relations there (Bruner 1974:269). In this case, however, religion is a key marker of ethnic boundaries, as Sundanese wives who are adopted into their husband’s clan and convert to Christianity are considered to become ethnically Batak (ibid., 271). In Minahasa, marriage is also key to cultural assimilation, but religious conversion through marriage is not understood as ethnic transformation, even though under interpretations of national law it is often practically necessary for both marriage partners to be members of the same religious group in order to legally marry, a
concession to the interpretation of Islamic edicts on the process for mixed-religious partnerships.

Pak Kridosono, a Muslim scholar of Javanese and Minahasan descent who has lived and worked with Muslim groups in North Sulawesi for a number of years, attributes the harmonious character of Muslim-Christian relations in North Sulawesi to the presence of a Christian majority. More to the point, he sees Christianity as a main influence on Minahasan culture:

Pak Kridosono: I can say, just to simplify things, we can discuss this further later...if the majority of inhabitants in North Sulawesi weren't Christian, I think things wouldn't be like this. I'm a Muslim, but if the majority of people in Minahasa weren't Christians, it wouldn't be like it is now.

KAS: Can you explain what you mean?

Pak Kridosono: To explain this, I have to use a cultural approach. The people of North Sulawesi, especially the Minahasans, don’t possess the burdens of history that would cause them to possess concrete traditions. Why? I think you have also seen this while doing your MA research, and you already understand the tendencies of the the Minahasan, their behavior, and Minahasan’s behavior is not like the behavior usually possessed by other ethnic groups in Indonesia. Minahasans can be explored from their genetic process. Minahasan people are not people born of a culture of monarchy, and Minahasans are also not born from a cultural process that claims a set of standardized rules. No, not Minahasan people. Minahasan people are born without really knowing what was standardized by their ancestors. No. The Minahasan is open from birth. From the time that they are born, Minahasans are like a people without rules, without a strict cultural system (adat-istidiat). So from birth they are open. While there are people that say that the Minahasans are an ethnic group that don’t have any basic norms or principles (kaidah), like the Javanese who have cultural committees (Bakem) and cultural rules that are very strict, but in my opinion this is their strength. He [the Minahasan] is already democratic from the beginning of his existence. So, the first factor is religion, and the second deeper factor is the cultural factor. The religion that birthed this, that is followed by the Minahasan people, is Christianity. It’s a kind of ... it’s a religion that has a tendency, in my opinion, to be part of modern Minahasans at the level of their awareness. Modern here means knowing or being aware that equality means equal rights. That it’s a necessity (field interview 12/12/2009).

Christianity makes “Christian moderns,” freeing Minahasans from the burdens of culture that bind other groups. Such a modernist interpretation dovetails neatly

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184 This name is a pseudonym.
with both the promise of Protestantism to liberate the individual, and the ideals of national development that use membership in an official religion as the marker of modern citizenship. Pak Kridosono theorizes that the Minahasan individual is born from a cultural milieu that takes the modernist values contained in Christianity as its organizing principle. It is those values that distinguish Minahasans from other groups in the archipelago and therefore imbues them with cultural import. It is as though to have *a culture* in the objective sense, then it must first be admitted that Minahasans have no culture at all, not if a strict line between religion and culture is adhered to. This is a point where the dilemmas of cultural practitioners in the *adat* resurgence and non-Christian residents of the region align. If Christian attributes and orientations can’t be received as part of traditions belonging to place, than both Christian Minahasans and local Muslims will have to choose between religion and culture. If, however, Christian principles can be seen as a set of rules for local interaction that are particular to the region, than religion is no longer a limiting factor to who can belong to community, and Protestants can define the cultural without cordon it off from religious life. This explains why patterns of social interaction and consocial relationships have increasingly taken center stage in performances of regional culture, such as the performance of religious harmony as an aspect of regional culture as described in Chapter Three. A shared regional history and patterns of social interaction can be given a cultural attribution, to the point that the Jawa Tondano people can be thought of as practically Minahasan even though they continue to perform their Javanese identity through ritual, as evidenced in this article in the Jakarta Press on the “Ketupat Festival of the Java-Minahasa People”:

The principle of intermingling and appropriate behavior of the Tondano (Minahasa) people means the 1,829 members of this community no longer give the impression of being “immigrant residents”. Even when celebrating the fasting month of Ramadan like they are now, they live in peace with the surrounding residents, even though they are a small minority in an

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185 Ketupat refers to rice cooked in small woven containers made from young coconut leaf. It is a food associated with Java, but also symbolic of the Idul Fitri celebration at the end of Ramadan, when ketupat is part of the special menu for the meal eaten at the end of the fasting month. As Babcock notes, these selective food traditions that are emblematic of both Islam and Java are central symbols that display the Jaton people’s culturally distinct historical tie to Java.
environment of Christians. Now as the Jaton community has entered its eighth generation, the people of Jaton are part of the larger family of the descendents of Toar – Lumimuut, another name for the land of Minahasa.

“We are Minahasans, not another kind of people” said Suryanto, a statement a number of others in the community agreed with.

Unlike the rather well-known history of the Jawa Tondano settlement, Muslims whose ancestors originally settled in the highland village of Remboken don’t loom large in the collective consciousness of the region. They do not embody a historical event that links regional histories to the larger narrative of national history as the Jaton settlement does. When I asked Pak Kridosono why he thought the Muslims of Remboken were identifying themselves exclusively as Minahasan, despite ancestral ties to elsewhere, he shifted the analysis to focus on political and economic factors related to Minahasan ethnic dominance in the province. Note that he perceives this dominance to be a phenomena related to national government intervention:

Pak Kridosono: It’s interesting ...although I haven’t researched this, it’s a tendency I can understand. In North Sulawesi usually there weren’t any social classes, there was no ruling class, there’s no aristocracy (ningrat), there’s no commoners, but in North Sulawesi since the Indonesian era, in the understanding of the modern era when Indonesia came into being, and the processes of division, government administration was based on the national policies of Indonesianness. In a number of areas, especially in North Sulawesi, usually it wasn’t class but a strategy to make social classes based in power, first political power and second economic power. So what seems natural is actually by design, but it is classified as natural. In North Sulawesi there is class one, class two, class three, actually what is natural is based on political rule, the political majority, you can add economy and educational level into that mix. The first class is the Minahasans. In North Sulawesi, it’s the Minahasans. Secondly, the Gorontalo class, and the third, Bolaang Mongondow...well, when Gorontalo was still part of the Sulawesi Utara [province] anyway. Below that is the people of Sangir. So there is a certain pride usually for Gorontalo people in Manado, Sangir people in Manado, they say they are Minahasan. That’s how I would explain it. You can prove this by seeing that if they are in Java or in America even, they say

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186 In the article, the statement is written in Bahasa Manado (Torang orang Minahasa, Bukan laeng-laeng), and translated into Indonesian by the author.
they are Minahasan, even though they are Gorontalese. You’ve already seen this (field interview 12/12/2009).

Lacking a historical framework in which to understand this Muslim community’s shared history with their Christian counterparts, Kridosono relies on a very instrumentalist account of Minahasan ethnicity as a symbolic resource to explain why other groups identify under this term. Minahasan dominance of regional government and economic resources necessarily are factors that need to be considered in any analysis of the dialectic of regional identity and the construction of ethnicity, as it means they can dominate both the access to and means of defining the symbols of group identity. As early theorists of ethnicity like Abner Cohen (1974:xxii) theorized, ethnicity’s interconnection with both economic and political relationships may be one of the most significant variables in defining it, especially in urban areas and the context of the national state. Differential economic access, he proposed, could intensify “tribal” divisions, especially if the system where the two groups were brought into a sphere of interaction privileged one group over the other. Others theorize that “outsider” groups may identify with the dominant culture for the purposes of securing social capital or affiliating with a more privileged class. This has been one of the main arguments of instrumentalist theories of ethnicity. Barth (1969) argues for a partially instrumentalist approach in that ethnic categorizations are a universal cognitive function of humans that nevertheless depend on certain conditions for expression. Assimilation occurs not simply because economic/political conditions favor the development of a new social class that minimizes tribal differences, but in instances when the symbolic public expression of ethnic identity is blocked or loses meaning in a new system of contrastive relations. As he describes in the case of Pathan identity that encompasses diverse people and practices across a number of contexts, identity is expressed in public and according to context with reference to available ethnic alternatives (1969:132).

Although both of these perspectives point out important elements of how identity is a social fact produced both in contextual interaction and through the constraints of the social and political systems in which actors are embedded, these structural facts alone present a reductive picture of ethnicity as a rational choice. As
Levine (1999:167) notes, rational-actor theories demonstrate how goals and political structure influence the development of ethnicity, but only when those ethnic categories already have some social salience. It does less to explain the relation between groups and categories, and the process by which schemes of classification become salient components of social and cultural action that we call ethnicity (ibid., 168). Classification can be based on or influenced by already extant categories (administrative, historical, religious, regional) that are used in interaction but don't have an institutional reality as groups, or relations that don't fit into correspondent categories may become a means of social classification.

Levine theorizes ethnicity as something that uses a socially constructed idea of origins as the most salient element in the classification of others (1999:168). As we have seen, origin is an ideal that has a correspondent category in Indonesian national classification, where people are a product of the places they come from and culture belongs to place. “Origin” is always a relatively unstable category, dependent on combinations of real social interaction, concepts of place and its ability to act on culture, administrative and political classifications, historical development, concepts of descent, and a national culture of displaying this amalgamation of characteristics in public events that seek to contain human dynamics under a territorial rubric. At times, categories that should counteract the construction of identity based in origins, like religion, instead become tangled up with characteristics used to determine origins. When religion belongs to certain places, it does so in a way that exists in tension with the national ideal of religion as a universal category of modern citizenship. Religion can be both an aspect of social interaction that is important in classification according to context, and a more rigid category that is defined by forces beyond particular social worlds.

For Oma S, religious categories were salient in the political and social differentiation of Gorontalo people in the colonial North Sulawesi territory. She describes the effect of systems that promoted Christians over Muslims:

Fera: Oma, do you mean that for relations between Muslims and Christians, that it’s better here, or in another place?

Oma S: Manado is good, Remboken is better, in other places its not as good, but here in this region, Christians and Muslims work together. In the past,
In her narrative, social and economic difference between Muslims and Christians was enforced by colonial powers, a situation that would take a dramatic turn when the national revolution came ashore on the far reaches of the archipelago. Colonial favor for particular religious groups mattered little when Japanese soldiers brutally took control of the area during WWII. The North Sulawesi region was a particular target of Japanese efforts to erase the colonial influences from the population.

Between the Japanese occupation and the lead-up to Indonesian Independence, people in the North Sulawesi region grappled with the implications of their position as subaltern colonial elites. With the Japanese ousted by the Allies, the Dutch attempted to reestablish their authority by requiring the large number of Minahasan men formerly part of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL) to reenlist, and returning positions to those families who formed the indigenous bureaucratic class through employment in the Netherlands Indies Civil Organization (Nederlandsch Indie Civil Administratie or NICA). The nationalist ideal had already reached some local elites with ties to the youth nationalist movement in Java, and was taking hold within the ranks of KNIL soldiers who had been stationed in there. Education was one factor that supported a growing dissatisfaction with the racially and economically segregated colonial regime. Japanese schools in North Sulawesi had been open to all sectors of the population, but the NICA administration re-instituted Dutch preference schools that required at minimum money and fluency in the language of the colonizers (Palar 2007c:14).

Although rarely marked in national histories of the independence movement, an attempted coup was undertaken by a section of the privileged core of KNIL and
NICA members in 1946 in Manado and Tomohon. On the 14th of February, 1946, members of the KNIL Kompi 7 captured the Manado Resident Coomans (Palar2007c:22) and the entirety of the Dutch officials in the region, incarcerating them in police headquarters in Tomohon (ibid., 30). Coup instigators removed the Dutch flag in front of the NICA offices in Tomohon and raised the red and white flag of the Republic (ibid., 23), and the event is remembered to this day as the “Red and White Incident” (Peristiwa Merah-Putih). According to local historians, this incident united regional leaders such as Raja Manoppo of Bolaang Mongondow and Nani Wartabone from Gorontalo in a regional effort to take part in the nascent national movement (ibid., 19). The Merah-Putih government declared in February 22nd in Manado was destined to be short-lived, however. Allied forces feared the possible release of the 8,000 Japanese prisoners still interned in the region, and by March 11th, their ships arrived on Manado’s shore. Not entirely armed or fully organized, the coup’s forces were quickly pacificied and Dutch rule restored (ibid., 36).

Both the Merah Putih event and the Permesta conflict are points of regional historical consciousness that distinguish and define membership in a provincial community that has a distinct history. It is significant that those in the village of Remboken recall both of these events, because it includes them in a common regional narrative. As Kimura (2007:12) has noted, the historical trajectories of Gorontalo and the northern regions of North Sulawesi diverged during the Permesta conflict, when leaders in Gorontalo accepted the central government’s overtures to resolve the PRRI/DIR rebellion which involved the outer islands of Sumatra and Sulawesi.

For both of the elderly Remboken informants, Permesta was another period in which they suffered the same fate as their neighbors, and likely a moment when local social networks were more salient than connections with their past in Gorontalo. As part of the collective memory of the region, these events punctuate the life-histories of Muslims in Remboken, signifying both upheaval from their village, but also a shift from the colonial intervention that created institutional and social boundaries between Muslims and Protestants:

188 This acronym stands for the Permerintahan Revolusioner Republic Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)/Darul Islam.
Oma S: “Oma [referring to self] went to the Dutch school for six months, but it was shortly thereafter that the Merah Putih Incident happened in Remboken. We had already been there so long, and my father was involved, so I still receive a veteran’s pension, up there in Remboken there were so many Muslims before, Gorontalo people. After the Merah Putih incident, many people fled here to Manado, so there were less of them who lived in the village, in the village house in the mountains. The women followed their husbands, three of them came here. We can’t go anywhere anymore, with all the grandchildren. Remboken was very busy then, many Muslims, after the Merah Putih incident, they were starting to come back to the village. Then Permesta came, and people fled here to Manado. People were getting attacked Permesta, during the day the men couldn’t be in the house. All the women stayed at home. So I have had enough of war, not so long after the Merah Putih, another conflict replaced it. I only have a junior high education, because we had to flee the conflict. In the past in Remboken, the school was a Catholic school. Muslims went to school with the Catholics. Now the Muslims go to school with the Christians [Protestants] (field interview 8/06/2009).

Permesta also resembles an important historical moment in the narration of the history of the Muslim community in Remboken for Haji Budi, who describes how the event as the catalyst for migration:

Haji Budi: So, those of us who live here [Remboken], there’s about 400-500 people remaining, that’s about the situation now. Before, during the era of Permesta, do you know Permesta? Many of my friends were looking for food, you can say looking for safety, protection outside the village, to the point that many of them did not return to Remboken and they stayed in the places that they fled (mengungsi)\textsuperscript{189} to (field interview 10/17/2009).

The period of 1945 – 1965 would have marked a time when Minahasan participation in the national revolution evolved differently from the involvement of the predominantly Muslim regions to the south like Gorontalo, who had historically not shared in the privileged relationship between the Dutch administration and the non-Muslim inhabitants of Manado and upland Minahasa. Prior to Permesta, there is evidence that nationalist leaders from Gorontalo worked in loose cooperation with Minahasan rebels (Palar 2007c:137). A Muslim youth group called GEPMI (Gerakan Pemuda Muslim Indonesia) was allied with the Persatuan Pemuda-Pemudi Indonesia in the highland town of Langowan, who were incorporated with the pan-

\textsuperscript{189} Haji Budi uses the Indonesian word *mengungsi* here, which has political overtones, often meaning people who have fled from their places of origin. Another derivative of the root ‘pengungsi’, implies someone who is displaced or is a refugee.
nationalist group Barisan Nasional Indonesia (ibid., 134). While the involvement of soldiers from Gorontalo and Bolaang Mongodow who volunteered with the national military force (TNI)\textsuperscript{190} to put end the Permesta conflict may have further defined Minahasans from Gorontalese, it did not necessarily do so on the basis of religion. Permesta was a time when Minahasan society itself was divided by suspicion between insiders and outsiders, with the “outsiders” clearly associated with national forces and the Javanese center of power. The local populace was caught in the middle. In the midst of widespread migration and upheaval of village communities in the highlands, religious alliances emerged between Catholics and Protestants who had previously also been institutionally and socially opposed to a model resembling Dutch society in the metropole. It is not hard to imagine that Muslims who were already integrated into these highland societies were included in these contingent eucumenical alliances. Perhaps more significantly, Permesta and the early nationalist movements are not remembered by these members of the Remboken community as a time when they were excluded by their neighbors on the basis of their origins elsewhere, but as a moment when their lives, like the lives of other Minahasans, were shaped by an event that would be emblematic of North Sulawesi’s difference from other regions in the Indonesian nation.

The question remains, however, why the political cleavage between the Muslim-dominant areas to the south and the Dutch stronghold that included Manado and Minahasa did not result in a process of ethnic differentiation, or an expulsion of those living in Remboken whose ancestors originally migrated from Gorontalo. Although two leaders of the Jawa Tondano community were killed resisting the Japanese, a little over twenty-five years later, the Jaton community’s ties to Java led them to be associated with the the national military and central powers (Babcock 1989:50). How the Remboken Muslims saw themselves as Muslims of Minahasa instead of Muslims living in Minahasa can be traced through the narratives of these informants who highlight three important consocial modes: marriage, participation in social ritual, and language.

\textsuperscript{190} Palar (2009c:145) notes that many of these volunteers stayed in Minahasa after Permesta and intermarried, constituting another ‘wave’ of Muslim migration into the region.
Cultural assimilation and intermarriage: the tradition of “kawin-mawin” in North Sulawesi

It is rare to meet a Christian in North Sulawesi who does not have Muslim relatives. Whenever I asked people about the relationship between Muslims and Christians, they would mention their personal family ties with Muslims. This common social reality, referred to in Bahasa Manado as the practice of kawin-mawin (intermarrying), was presented as concrete evidence of the ideological principle of regional brotherhood. Although Muslims and Christians may not be brothers in a biological sense, mixed religious families meant that they often have kin relations traced through a shared family name (fam or marga). As with other markers of identity associated with Minahasa, certain family names are identified as Minahasan lineages and infer that the bearer is Christian. It seemed for every time the rule of Minahasan lineage names being restricted to Christians was invoked, it had an exception. Everyone seemed to have a story of the family member who is Pastor named Mohammed or Abdul, the fruit of a mixed-religious family. These exceptions actually represented a cultural system for the integration of these religious groups. The term kawin-mawin glossed a social reality of Muslim-Christian intermarriage, a flexible system of reckoning kinship that is able to absorb religious difference, and a discourse about North Sulawesi, religious relations, and Minahasan cultural practices.

When I came into contact with Fera’s family in Manado who became interested in my work because of their own history of interreligious marriage, I had no idea just how close these relations of kinship through marriage would come to me. As it turned out, my host father, a prominent politician in Manado and active leader in the GMIM church, is from the village of Remboken, the very same village my Muslim informants in Manado were from. My last night in Manado, I hosted a dinner for my host family and one of the Remboken Muslim families, bringing them together to eat in a modern incarnation of the what turned out to be some very old traditions of ritual feasting between Muslims and Christians in region. Unsurprisingly, the two families were able to find several common relatives, proving that they are, after all, not so far from being brothers.
That marriage between Muslims and Christians provided a frame in which members of the two religious groups could recognize each other as “kin” was not just socially significant. Muslims from Remboken also perceived relations through marriage as the historical foundation of their inclusion in the Minahasan community. What follows is Haji Budi’s narration of the history of Muslims in Minahasa becoming Muslim Minahasans through the institution of marriage:

KAS: Sometimes in other parts of Indonesia, when I speak with Indonesians from other places, they say “oh, there are no Muslim Minahasans, all Minahasan people are Christian.” I try and disagree and say that now there are Minahasan Muslims...

Haji Budi: Certainly, ya, in the past there weren't any Minahasan Muslims. Especially during the colonial era, in Minahasan history. The Portuguese came, the Spanish came, the Dutch came, and then the English, and during

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191 My interview with Haji Budi was conducted in Remboken 10/17/2009, the same day that I attended a ceremony for the release of candidates departing for the Haj pilgrimage. My visit with him was facilitated by Fera’s family, who wanted my presence both at the event and the conversation with Haji Budi so that I could document the community’s history as part of my research on Minahasan identity. It was clear in my group interview with him that Haji Budi is both respected as a repository of community history, and for his ability to speak to the unique situation of the Remboken Muslims, something he clearly has a very developed and well-articulated theory about.
that time, there maybe were Muslims, because there was cooperation between the Sultanate of Ternate and the Dutch government, so there were people from Ternate that were taken by the Dutch as laborers, as Dutch laborers in the past. That’s why there is a Ternate Village (Kampung Ternate) in Manado, which was formed around the 17th century. Later the islands of Ternate were lost, and it was in the 18th century, the beginning of the 18th century, there were Muslims that were brought here by the Dutch as exiles. There were others, people from Banten who live in Sorongsong, Tomohon, they were from Banten. They were led by Ki Bagus Buang,' but they feel like Tomohon people, not Banten people, like us here in Remboken. Then came Kyai Modjo, in 1830, originally from Solo, and it was in Solo that he supported the struggle of Diponegoro. The first of those who were exiled here were with Kyai Modjo, a group of his fighters, 21 people. After that, Diponegoro was captured in Magelang, and then he was exiled here with 23 people. Then the Dutch were worried that he and Kyai Modjo would work together, and they sent him [Diponegoro] to Ujung Pandang, and he died there. But Diponegoro’s followers, they were returned [to Java] and they joined together in Kanung. Now in Kanung there is an organization in Kanung called Dikih, which stands for “Diponegoro Kyai Modjo”. I believe it still exists now, is still preserved it’s said, already many years now, and this is an organization that’s outside Minahasa. There are many Jaton people in Minahasa, in Ujung Pandang, in Ternate, in Sumatra, in Kalimantan, because people are always searching for a good life. So it started from there, the Minahasan people knew there were already Muslims, in 1830-1831 Diponegoro and then his soldiers, and later Kyai Modjo, because they didn’t bring women from Java, they married with the indigenous people here, the Christians, and all those Christians converted to Islam. So our ancestors, the men were exiles, and the women were Christians from Minahasa, from Tondano” (field interview 10/17/2009).

These narratives of intermarriage and assimilation set a historical precedent for contemporary relations that complicates the picture of Muslim “migrants” and Christian “natives.” They also display a local practice that falls markedly outside official attitudes regarding interreligious marriage. Interreligious marriage in Indonesia is a critical point where state policies that define categorical identities,

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192 Haji Budi is likely referring to four members of a group of men exiled from Cilegon (Banten, Central Java), in 1889. In 1888, Haji Tubagus Ismail killed the secretary of the Assistant Resident’s Office during an uprising of ulama and religious students in the region. Of the 94 men captured and exiled, four were sent to enclaves on Lake Tondano. There were Haji Abdul Karim, Haji Muhammed Asnawi, Haji Jafar and Haji Mardjaya. They intermarried with Jaton families, but their descendents were distinguished by the family name Tubagus. Gun Aslah, N.D., “Pejuang Islam yg terasing di tanah minahasa” Masjid Raya Vila Inti Persada.
especially religious identities, often poorly articulate with the realities of everyday
interaction. Marriage between individuals of different origins and religions has been
a strategy of migration and a characteristic of relations of trade since the arrival of
Muslim traders to the Indonesian archipelago. As a religious institution related to
inheritance and patterns of descent, marriage has historically been central to
processes of maintaining boundaries of identity. Marriage can serve as a vehicle for
ethnic transformation through conversion, such as in the case of the male Jawa
Tondano settlers whose Minahasan wives converted to Islam and helped to establish
a group whose identity was based in lines of descent hearkening back to the island of
Java. Seen from another perspective, the adoption of local wives is a strategy for
establishing social capital by strengthening ties to local networks and/or
assimilation. In some cases it is even a method of establishing dominance over other
communities in migratory settings, such as Bugis immigrants who include the “tip of
the penis” in the narration of their strategies for establishing frontier Bugis
kingdoms, and trade networks, outside of their South Sulawesi homeland (Ammarell
2002:57).

During the years of accelerated development and nation building that
characterized the New Order, the bureaucratic management of the legal institution
of marriage shifted from its practical significance as a strategy of social interaction
towards a legalistic form of boundary maintenance between religious groups. The
introduction of the Marriage Law in 1974 unfolded in an environment of increased
efforts to control Islam in the political sphere. The Marriage Law Bill, drafted in
1973, made marriage a monogamous institution managed by the state and removed

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193 Ammarell records this from personal communication with a Bugis scholar who relays the
folk theory the ‘three tips’ that facilitated Bugis success in assimilating to other polities: the
tip of the tongue (diplomacy), the tip of the penis (marriage) and the tip of the knife in battle
(2009:57). Marriage is a strategy of maintaining Bugis identity through the conversion of
local wives, but also represents integration into local systems of rule.
194 I do not mean to imply that marriage did not fall under other legal regimes prior to
independence. Bedner and Huis point out that there were three major regimes of
intervention in marriage practice in the colonial Indies: a civil code for members of the
colonial population labeled European (including Chinese and Japanese residents); a 1933
Ordinance for Christian Indonesians; and adat or Islamic law that applied to the majority of
Indonesians and non-Chinese foreign Orientals. There were also provisions for those who fell
under the rule of different regimes (2010:177). They characterize marriage practices at the
grassroots level as being highly diverse, and the most of these colonial policies changed little
on the advent of Indonesian Independence. They concur that major changes in the tenor of
the law occurred under Suharto’s rule (2010:178).
authority from the Islamic courts to the civil court (Bedner and Huis 2010:179). The unprecedented protests of Muslim politicians to this move neutralizing the Islamic courts led the law to be redrafted, producing a version that not only restored but increased the power of the Islamic legal system in the management of marital affairs. The second version of the law also conspicuously eliminated the clause that gave legal recognition to mixed marriages (Connolly 2009:495). Article 2 of the law stipulated that marriages are civilly recognized in tandem with religious authority, since a religious ceremony is a requirement for civil registration. For Christians and other recognized religions, this registration takes place at a civil office, where Muslim marriage is handled entirely under the jurisdiction of the Islamic court system (Bedner and Huis 2010:179).

Subsequent legislation that catered to the Islamic majority, and a 1989 Supreme Court ruling that struck down the long-standing colonial legislation used to civilly register mixed religious marriages has made it practically difficult for mixed-religious couples to register their marriages and retain their individual religious identities (Bedner and Huis 2010:189; Connolly 2009:496; Bowen 2003:244). The conversion of one partner into the other’s religion is commonly employed to facilitate legal marriage. Interreligious relationships therefore play into anxieties over both “Christianization” and “Islamicization,” as marriage can be seen as a vector for conversion and religious expansionism. Marriage represents a symbolic ground where fears of identity loss are played out, and religious intermarriage is a realm where boundaries can be reinforced and transgressed (Bowen 2003:240).

In situations where religious and ethnic identity are aligned, marriage to a partner of another religion can be equated to ethnic transformation and/or represent a kind of cultural loss. Cases detailing the role of religious conversion in ethnic transformation or ethnic differentiation have been documented throughout Southeast Asia (Hefner 1993; Kammerer 1990; Kipp 1993; Leach 1954; Siddique 1981). Anxieties over intermarriage, however, aren’t always restricted to the specter of conversion, but also on the loss of community. In her analysis of the anxieties expressed by Dayak Christians in Kalimantan about interreligious marriages, Jennifer Connolly (2009:493) criticizes overly sociological analyses of the role of interreligious marriage in the processes of group boundary maintenance. She focuses
on the threat that these relationships represent both to Christian concepts of personal salvation and to the sanctity of the family. As Christianity has been instrumental as a point of unification for the various groups that organize under the Dayak ethnic moniker, marrying interreligiously is often understood as a decision to exit the community and cut oneself off from family ties. The social and familial difficulty of mixed-religious marriages is part of the public discourse that supports the government’s continued intervention in the realm of family law (Bowen 2003:246). That this idea has become part of pop-culture consciousness is reflected by the recent spate of religiously themed films like Cin(T)a (Love) and Tiga Hati, Dua Dunia, Satu Cinta (Three Hearts, Two Worlds, One Love) that while portraying the reality of the existence of interreligious relationships in Indonesia, both conclude that marriage between the Muslim and Christian protagonists in the film will result in social upheaval. The characters are also portrayed as exhibiting a lack of concern for the effect their union will have on the institution of the family.

Connolly focuses on how interreligious marriage and conversion in Kalimantan rarely results in a loss of ethnic identity, but nevertheless excludes individuals from participating in activities and organizations that express communal belonging. These difficulties are epitomized by an inability to participate in cultural practices that double as indicators of religious identity, such as eating pork at family gatherings. She describes that her informants who converted to another religion are still generally identified with their family’s ethnicity, but that they rarely participate in cultural organizations and are increasingly distanced from family ties. Theological concerns about the state of a convert’s soul, and more importantly, the souls of the fruit of interreligious unions, are of more pressing concern to the families of these boundary transgressors. In some part this reflects Dayak people’s unstable position as disadvantaged minorities not only nationally, but also in their ethnic homeland, where Malay Muslims have long been dominant (Connolly 2009:497). This threat is tempered to some degree by the recognition that ethnic identity can be dissociated from religious identity. In the cases that Connolly describes from Kalimantan, the separation of religion and ethnicity seems to fail when cultural frameworks determine the rules for social interaction.

I outline this case to contrast it with a somewhat different picture in North Sulawesi, where interreligious marriage not only has a more positive connotation,
but is interpreted by some Muslim groups as grounds for inclusion in Minahasan lines of descent. In Haji Budi’s life-history, intermarriage and religious conversion are important points in the narration of his ties to the village of Remboken. He interprets the conversion of his mother, the daughter of a Minahasan pastor, as extending membership in the Minahasan community to his father and their descendents. This kinship reckoned through uxorilocal\textsuperscript{195} residence also reflects regional cultural values of a specific relationship between Muslims and Christians:

Haji Budi: Jaton is the village of Java Tondano, where my father originates from. His father, my grandfather, married here [in Remboken] into my mother’s extended family, and they had my father. My father was the only child, and he married here too, and had me. My father married the daughter of a pastor, my mother, who was a convert (muallaf). My mother followed my father and changed religions. Then I was raised here. So that’s my background. I was once the Village Head (Kepala Desa) here. I helped my child become the village head. My wife is also a convert, among my sons and daughters in law there are many converts as well, both male and female. So the name of Muslims in Remboken, certainly sometimes there are people that say, “really, there are Muslims in Remboken?” In reality Muslims have already been living in Remboken for hundreds of years, already for hundreds of years. Already around 160-170 years ago here, religious harmony was already established. Usually in Minahasa, even more so here in Remboken, because everyone is already related by family ties, tied by blood, Muslims, non-Muslim or Christians, Kristiani, Nasrani, it’s all the same if there is already a blood tie, so there’s no problem.

The relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim, including Christians here, is good. There is cooperation, there is mutual working together (gotong royong), and furthermore there is direct participation in events, meaning there is participation in all events. Religious groups don’t know difference between them, for example if there is a church being built, the Muslims also help, and the like. That’s how it is, here in Remboken, it means harmony and security between Muslims and Christians here are still seen as good, that’s how it is here. The first Muslims to come to Remboken originated from Gorontalo, the first to come here, then later there were other ethnic groups that came because they intermarried here. For example, there were other ethnic groups that liked to marry here with Muslim women. But in the

\textsuperscript{195} I’m labeling the descent that is imagined here to exist between marrying Muslim males and Minahasan females as based on uxorilocal residence because the focus is on adapting to the territorial identity of the female. Kinship in Minahasa is reckoned bilaterally, but since the children of these unions were raised in the Muslim faith, they would have taken on the father’s Muslim family name, not their mother’s Minahasan family name. In this case, residence in the mother’s village trumped Pak Budi’s father’s ties to Java by kinship reckoned through descent from the exiled Javanese revolutionary Kyai Modjo.
beginning, those who were in Remboken were from Gorontalo. Like me too, my father's father was from Jaton (Jawa Tondano), who only came here because he married (field interview 10/17/2009).

Pak Kridosono also points to importance of religious intermarriage as a flexible method of ‘assimilation’ to Minahasan identity, although in this case, assimilation is indicated by practice and social relations, not self-ascription. He characterizes intermarriage as the basis for the development of strong social relations between Christian Minahasans and the Javanese Muslims exiled with Kyai Modjo in the Minahasan highlands. Here he presents the Jawa Tondano case to historicize the contemporary social patterns of Muslim-Christian interaction, identifying those patterns as part of a shared cultural inheritance. Similarly, the “openness” of Minahasan Christian leaders is an underlying concept invoked in narrative that abstracts these historical relations into a more general cultural pattern. Ironically, the colonial concept of marriage as a limiting factor in identity maintenance (both religious and ethnic) worked in the opposite direction in Minahasa, essentially facilitating the survival of the group that Dutch authorities were trying to eradicate:

Pak Kridosono: You can see that here if its Idul Fitri, Christians attend the celebrations. At Christmastime events, Muslims also go. So we are pulled back or return to again to the case of Jawa Tondano or the Jawa Tondano community. There’s a history, since the 19th century we've been like this. I have researched how a number of the Christian leaders in Tondano at that time accepted the Muslim community, even though the target of the Dutch at that time was to isolate, to isolate them [the Muslims], because they arrived without marriage partners. Because there were no women with them at that time, they were going to go extinct. Or what would happen was that they would become Christians. But what happened was that there wasn't any conflict, there was no significant antagonism, actually there was cultural cooperation. It was how the Javanese people who had agrarian traditions for managing crops and rice fields transferred their knowledge to the Minahasans. It was our understanding that this is how they were isolated. They would become extinct or weakened. But really they were strengthened, not just strengthened but they also became part of the Minahasan people. Jawa Tondano is a nomenclature, giving a name that indicates if you come to Minahasa, with whatever culture, that culture becomes a part of Minahasan culture. That’s what happened with Jawa Tondano. They're not Javanese people, they are Jawa Tondano (field interview 12/12/2009).
Interracial and mixed families are a sign of the relative equality of Christians and Muslims in Pak Kridosono’s personal history. Although his father is Minahasan and Christian, he chose to follow his mother’s Islamic heritage from Java:

Pak Kridosono: My family is also Christian. My father is Christian, from here, from Minahasa, but I have also been accepted here. When I became a Muslim as an adult, it was absolutely no problem. That’s my experience. I feel it’s proof, for example, as a Muslim I’ve become part of teams of experts here with Christian leaders, or Christian regional heads, and it’s never been a problem, I’ve always been accepted. This is what causes to me say that there is no concept of “difference” here, and if there is, its from the political domain, people who fan the flames. They do this on the surface level, it has characteristics of being both superficial and artificial, it’s just manipulation by people with certain interests but not something based in a deeper level, it’s the interests of small group, of elite politics (field interview 12/12/2009).

Again, intermarriage is a practice that embodies a core of cultural values. Instead of viewing Christianity as a Western veneer over older cultural models, it is a value system that in the Muslim view orients social interaction. Muslim-Christian relations reflect a cultural order that stems from the particularities of Minahasa’s regional history, including the influence of Christianity. Again returning to the example of the Jawa Tondano community, Pak Kridisono elaborates:

Pak Kridisono: There has never been a religious conflict undertaken by the native inhabitants here, even though it can happen in other places. Not in Minahasa. Although this is a Christian majority, they have never criticized or run anyone out, actually they’ve intermarried (kawin-mawin). We can see this as an indicator of why people…it’s already proven, see, that Christian people in Minahasa tend to be open. Although they are Christians, Christianity isn’t made into a tool for conflict, to use Christianity as an excuse because there is a different religion, there’s a different understanding. Relatively, there isn’t anything like that, so basically inside religion there is culture. Minahasans don’t have a history of conflict like in other regions where there is a history of war, or the transfer of leaders, or kings, Minahasa didn’t have this. Here there are just tribal groups (suku-suku), or a gathering of tribal groups, or sub-ethnic groups that have no history of war. There isn’t any conflict among the sub-ethnic groups here. Really according to what we know of Minahasa through history, part of their democratic history is the Batu Pinawetengan [the Stone of Division] its where when they met, it wasn’t conflict they discussed, but division, “you go there, and you over there,” like that (field interview 12/12/09).
Oma S also describes how marriage patterns changed with the cessation of Dutch intervention. She also notes how it affected Muslim-Christian relations in the village during the historically significant moments of the national revolution and Permesta. Here she notes that her Gorontalo relatives already had ties to the Minahasan ‘Supit’ lineage:

Questioner: When the first Gorontalo people arrived and married Minahasans, did they all convert to Christianity, or how was it with the religious issue?

Oma S: The Gorontalo people, if in Minahasa, it was the [Minahasan] women who became Muslim, not women converting to Christianity. Now there are women who convert to Christianity. There are some that like that religion. But they couldn’t… the Catholics and the Protestants couldn’t marry each other…. see, in the past there were only three religions. Protestantism, Catholicism, and Islam. Now there are Pentecostals, many of them now! Many kinds of religion now. In the past it wasn’t like that, only three religions, and the ones that could marry were the Protestants and the Muslims. By the time of the national revolution, we were all intermarried, many of our children-in-law were from the Supit family.

Questioner: When the first people from Gorontalo came and married Minahasan people, did they all become Christian, or what was the situation with religion?

Oma S: In the past Christians couldn’t marry Muslims [meaning they had to convert]. But by the time of Permesta, we were all intermarried, many of our children in law were from the Christian fam (family name) Supit, they were Supit.

Questioner: But in the past, your male ancestors in the past, did your grandmother convert to Islam? Was she allowed to?

Oma S: Yes, it was allowed. With the Gorontalo people, it seems that my grandmother [or great grandmother] had to convert to Islam. Our Gorontalo people couldn’t convert to Christianity.

Questioner: What about your Christian family? Can the Christians give their children in marriage to Muslims?

Oma S: Those from the Christian families could give permission, they could marry, but the men couldn’t convert to Christianity.”

196 At this point in the interview, several family members were sitting with us an leading the interview with their questions. It was difficult to tell from the recording who the individual question were asked by.
Questioner: No, what I mean is, their Christian families, when they gave their children in marriage, did the children of that marriage become Christian?

KAS: No one was angry?

Oma S: No.

Questioner: Did the families still socialize between the villages?

Oma S: Yes, while we had events where we ate together. In the past in Parepe, there would be fish and pigs on a long table, the food was not separated. We carried plates and bowls, and silverware, ate together, ate rice together. It would get very busy and crowded as we ate, but we knew where to take food from and where not to take food [because of Muslim prohibition against pork]. We had to bring drinks: that was the adat back then” (field interview 8/06/2009).

The significance of mixed-religious families and the flexibility of bilateral kinship that unites Christian and Muslim families through common ancestors can be contrasted with the marriage practices of Jawa Tondano that utilize Islamic identity as an in-group characteristic. Village in-marriage is common amongst the Jaton people, and any prospective bride or groom must convert to Islam before being allowed to marry into the village. Marriage with outsiders tends to occur with Muslims from other regions (Babcock 1989:83). Furthermore, men who convert to Islam from Christianity to marry a woman from the Jawa Tondano region are required to undergo a public circumcision ritual, a particularly indelible signal that Islam is a major distinguishing factor for the community (ibid., 210). In Minahasa, inter-marriage and conversion link people together, including lineages historically associated with Minahasa (and Christianity):

Questioner: Oma, after people get married and we go to visit them, is there a feeling that “Oh, they are Christian, and we are Muslim?” Do people still mix nowadays?

Oma S: We are already intermingled, because there is an arisan197 for the Supit family that is Muslim-Christian. Our family is mixed, there are Christians and there are Muslims, there are families with male heads that are Christian with Muslim wives, and their children become Muslim. There was a girl in Remboken named Ita who married a Muslim man...another example, we had some children in the family who said to me “Grandma, we want to become Muslim!”.

197 Arisan is a term that informal money lending organizations that have regular social meetings.
but their parents didn’t know they wanted to become Muslim, so I asked “why do you want to become Muslim, have your parents given you permission?” They replied “just let us become Muslim!” It’s not a big deal, because we have this Supit family network, as Christian families meet with Muslim ones, no one gets angry with each other, everything is ok. I don’t know how it is with other families, but for us it’s ok (field interview 8/06/2009).

Religious intermarriage is a social fact that supports the regional exhortations of fictive kinship inclusive of the various groups within North Sulawesi’s borders, and the attribution of a distinct relationship between Muslims and Christians that is qualitatively different than the way Muslims and Christians interact in other places with mixed religious populations:

Oma S: When there were conflicts in Ternate and Ambon, there wasn’t a feeling of fear here among the people, because there is a Christian majority here and all of us are related, each family has some Muslims and some Christians (field interview 10/17/2009).

In Minahasa, marriage is a factor in locating one’s origins, in the sense that it locates people in relation to places that come to define them. The ties of marriage that maintain religious identity refute the conflation of religion and region that differentiates people from Gorontalo and people from Minahasa as incommensurably different and ethnically unrelated. Even as people recognize ancestral ties that link them to other places (Gorontalo, or Java) they can choose to express their origins through the kinship tied to the place where their social ties are strongest, as Haji Budi explains:

KAS: You said earlier that the Muslims here in Remboken have origins in Gorontalo, but do the Muslims here feel like they are Minahasan people or Gorontalo people now?

Haji Budi: In my experience, what I can see is, from what I see of the Muslims in Remboken, there aren’t any that can be said to feel like Gorontalo people anymore. The children of Remboken feel like are definitely Remboken people, because we were raised here. Although in the past my ancestors came from Jogja, Diponegoro, the one who was “thrown out” by the Dutch here, I feel like a Minahasan person, like a Remboken person. It’s because the children of Remboken, the Muslims Remboken, have endured in Remboken. There is no tendency...there is no feeling of fear here, our way is to live side by side peacefully, because they feel they are Remboken people, they no longer speak the Gorontalo language, they all speak Remboken, that’s what they all know (field interview 10/17/2009).
Muslim’s place in Remboken is defined by the relationships they share with Christians, a complementary relationship that indicates not just who they are culturally, but religiously as well. It’s a relationship that invests consocial ties with meaning that exceeds the boundaries of the ‘neighborhood’ and can be carried elsewhere in a decontextualized form:

Haji Budi: So we praise God (bersyukurlah), the way Muslims say this is alhamdulillah, if a Christian, what do they say? Hallelujah, right? That too... for Muslims it’s alhamdulillah, we say this because we anyhow all of us live in conditions that are safe, peaceful, prosperous, we live at peace with one another, that’s the way it is. So the Muslim community has been in Remboken for something like 160 years, and if they are not living here, it’s because people always go looking for their place, many have left the village, those who are in Remboken now are those who remain in Remboken are the ones who like living in the village, Remboken village, I mean. There’s many who live outside the village, we’ve spread all over Indonesia, they are on the island of Java, in Sumatra, in Kalimantan, in Maluku, in Ujung Pandang, there are many Remboken people in those places (field interview 10/17/2009).

Networks of kinship through marriage have also contributed to membership in larger regional networks based on membership in a fam that created cross-village alliances. It was these larger kin networks that helped to assimilate the Gorontalo immigrants into the relationships between sub-ethnic groups that lent to a larger overall sense of Minahasan identity based in the social and ritual interaction between differentiated groups inhabiting the same geographic domain (kawanua):

Oma S: Many Gorontalo people moved to Minahasa, they are spread around Bitung, Manado, Remboken, Langowan, Kawangkoan too, if we are talking about the Sumat family name there are many related people, they intermarried with the mountain people and prospered, our male ancestor had four wives, and four of them had children, while others didn’t have children.

Questioner: Of the four wives, were all of them from Remboken?

Oma S: No. One was from Tondano. We also had a female ancestor who came from Gorontalo, named Haramani Bilatula. She went all the way to Remboken. At that time, our ancestors were financially well off. She was asked to marry into a Tondano family. Other females of the line were asked to marry into a Langowan family, the To’sali family. One of our male ancestors, Haji Bone, was asked to marry a girl from Tonsea, family Tumaluntung. Haji Bone actually had seven wives, but only four of them had children. It was our grandmother who had
many children. Some are in Langowan, some are in Tondano...so when we wanted to have a party in the past, to have an event, four big sacks of rice were not enough! (field interview 8/6/2009).

Local literacies: language, religion and reading Minahasaneness in ritual interaction

Consocial ties, or constellations of social relations and participation that take place in particular locales, can also evolve to serve as markers for inclusion in categorical identities or “ethnoscapes” that join people in relation with strangers in the Indonesian context. Theorizing this evolution where everyday practice is objectified into a group of decontextualized characteristics returns us to the consideration of how adat and other practices belonging to the realm of culture are constructed, performed and circulated in Indonesia. For my informants from Remboken, the local practices that are most often seen today at official events and public performances are remembered as real rituals that punctuated social life in the village. Haji Budi and Oma S describe their memories of participating in events that few young Minahasans have ever experienced as ritual, and yet continue to be performed in the context of “cultural art” (seni budaya), representing Minahasa in an objectified form that is decontextualized from its original ritual and social functions, and in a manner that doesn’t come into conflict with religious values. As was discussed in Chapter Five, some Christian groups have been attempting to reinvest these performances with ritual meaning by integrating them into liturgical practice.

The use of local languages other than the regional creole, Bahasa Manado, is one indicator of identity that is increasingly divorced from practical context, as few fluent speakers of them remain. Attempts to revive these symbols of cultural identity have taken several forms in Minahasa, including revitalizing them through insertion in Christian liturgy (Chapter Five). To “dig up” (menggali kembali) the meanings attached to terms in local tongues like Tombulu returns cultural and religious practitioners to the heart of the debate about where culture ends and religion begins, as the earliest translations of these languages were undertaken by missionaries who aimed to incorporate ritual language into biblical translations. Today, it is impossible to separate meanings assigned to certain key terms from
their association with organized religion. No matter how far meanings have shifted or been influenced by forces from beyond their original context, they are still potent symbols of identity, even if those who use them do so without fluency.

The centrality of language as a symbol of particularistic, local belonging is especially marked in Indonesian configurations of nationalism, highlighting both the promise and failures of a supra-ethnic community that promises justice and equality for all groups (Eriksen 1994:570). As a second language for most inhabitants of the archipelago, Indonesian incarnates a modern ideology, promoting an open, cosmopolitan means of communication that is free from historical weight, “a language whose ideological value has derived in part from being portrayed to its speakers as a markedly second and subsequent language” (Keane 2003:505). Keane argues that the use of Indonesian not only implies a kind of self-conscious distancing from local identities, but also functions like the registers of the hierarchical local tongues it claims to replace (ibid., 512), indicating it belongs to a high culture that in turn devalues local languages when used (ibid., 517). The language’s value for the national project lies in its potential to allow speakers to “claim a public persona markedly apart from some presupposed prior self and its social relations” (ibid., 521). It is due to these associations that Keane identifies code switching between Indonesian and local languages as metalinguistically and ideologically distinct from other kinds of code switching, since it can both consciously and pragmatically invoke the opposition of the modern to the non-modern, the national to the local, and the private to the public.

If speaking Indonesian establishes a claim for distance from categorical identities, local languages can express a desire to highlight social ties that the national language ostensibly erases. Local languages express not only indexical links to particular contexts (Keane 2003:509) but also pragmatically reassert boundaries or create boundaries using language to demarcate a community composed of speakers of the same language. It is these sociocultural functions that leads Keane to see Indonesian code-switching as different from other language switching in its intentionality to mark the local as a space of intimacy opposed to the national public. The use of local languages, and in fact their identification as “local” is always relational and contrastive, and therefore always draws meaning from the larger cultural-ideological order (Silverstein 1998:404). As I have demonstrated in
examinations of the use of Minahasan languages in regional churches, “local” languages can be used to symbolize a cultural identity that is socially and pragmatically distant, distilled as a cultural object that may be more foreign to speakers than the national tongue. Local languages can be performed like a traditional dance or worn like a traditional costume even if they are not socially or practically operational.

Both Haji Budi and Oma S stress the sociocultural functions of local language use at the village level as something that positions them in contrast not only with relatives in Gorontalo and the Jaton Muslims, but also with the more cosmopolitan communities that use Bahasa Manado in the city. Oma S refers to the language spoken in Remboken as a “mountain language” that is not legible to the urban descendants who relocated to Manado after Permesta:

KAS: But do you feel like a Minahasan person?

Oma S: Yeah, Minahasa.

KAS: Not Gorontalo?


KAS: You mean one of the local Minahasan languages like Tombulu or Tondano, or just Bahasa Manado?

Oma S: There are Remboken people in Manado also, but just a few, they don’t really understand if I use the mountain language (field interview 8/06/2009).

Haji Budi also identifies the language he speaks as “Remboken,” insisting that the version of Bahasa Tombulu he speaks is inseparable from the village context, while simultaneously situating “local” language as an abstracted cultural symbol that stands in for ethnoregional identities around the archipelago. Here he cites a common local myth of Minahasan ancestor’s “origins elsewhere” while comparing Minahasan languages with other ethnic languages. Similar to Minahasa, “Batak” and “Dayak” are both terms that indicate an overarching ethno-regional identity composed of a number of sub-ethnic and language groups:
KAS: Can you speak a local language? Can you speak in the language of this area?"

Haji Budi: Yes, I can.

KAS: What language?

Haji Budi: Remboken...

KAS: Is Remboken language like Tombulu? Or is it a dialect?

Haji Budi: There are differences. If you speak Minahasan, although there are a number of tribes, they are all connected by family ties. There was an ethnology book before, or an ethnography, that said Minahasans definitely came from Lombok, meaning that Minahasans originated from outside. Remember that those of us in Minahasa still have languages that resemble the Batak language, there’s also a similarity with Toraja language, and with Dayak language, as well as similarities with Philippino language and Visaya language. In the past there was one ancestor who scattered, in the past, right? But it is said that this ancestor wanted to die, so he liked to move around. It was like that, I think, so I think that the Minahasans are from one tree [line], for example, one ancestor. If you are talking about Tombulu, Tondano, and Tonsea, all those languages are the same. The only ones that are a little different are Tontemboan, Tonsawang, Tombatu and the market language, Melayu or Manado language. That’s different, but Tombulu, Tondano, Tonsea, Tolour, and Remboken are the same. The only differences are the accent and the dialect, but they are just a little different, maybe one or two words” (field interview 10/17/2009).

As Haji Budi demonstrates, local languages can be contextually specific to the nexus of social relations in one village, while also representing a more abstract construction of language as a signifier for the ethnolocal. In his description, local languages with all of their historical accretions can also relativize foreigners like the Muslim Minahasan emigrants, proving that everyone in the region came from elsewhere. The mutual intelligibility of Minahasan languages reinforces the abstract quality of the concept itself as an overarching container for a number of distinct experiences.

That local languages are used in Indonesia to signify particularistic identities even when they are estranged from contexts of pragmatic use is convenient when representing the conglomerate of histories and customs, and even distinct languages, contained within an identity that combines people and place in the same scale. Language preservation starts to look more like education, where people are
learning to translate their thoughts into what is said to represent them, even when that language is alien to their everyday communicative context. Or the use of local language may be promoted as something that is self-consciously a symbol of identity without any referent to actual communication. Haji Budi describes government preservation of “Minahasa” language:

Haji Budi: I remember a while ago, when I was the village head, I used to be the village head here. When Pak Sarundajang was Governor, he told us all once in a meeting for the heads of the villages that “the Minahasan people can not leave behind the language of their ancestors,” what he meant was Minahasan language. So all activities had to be done in regional language, the language of the ancestors, and even they were used for plaques and official government announcements, it all had to be carried on in local language. That was the suggestion of the Governor then. But the reality was that not everyone wanted to use the language. There were many who didn’t use the language anymore. It was pretty much forgotten in everyday life, both within and without of the household. Children were already going to school and were used to using the common language, Indonesian, and Bahasa Manado. They had forgotten the regional languages too (field interview 10/17/2009).

Even as Haji Budi’s experience of language references his particular ties to Remboken village and the flow of a social life in Minahasa, it may be the work regional language does in signifying identity detached from particular local context (even as using that language creates a context of the local) that has allowed Muslims to identify with a language that has Christian culture built into its translated meanings. When I asked him if anyone in the village still practices Opo-ism (a reference to rituals of ancestor worship that are considered to conflict with Protestant teachings), Haji Budi relayed to me his understanding of the word ‘Opo’, a term that missionaries adapted as a gloss for biblical concepts of God:

Haji Budi: “When people used to work before, the elders would say God the Great (Opo Empung Wangko), that’s Remboken language. “Opo empung wangko wanariran purang kilangit,” if we translate that loosely into Indonesian, it means “God the Greatest who reigns in the sky,” if in Islam, it’s “he who is enthroned in the center of the sky,” that’s how it would be said in Arabic, I think. I think that the beliefs of the Alifuru in the past resembled religion, there are similarities that they believed in Allah, yeah

198 Alifuru was a term the Dutch used to describe highland inhabitants in Maluku, which was also sometimes used to describe the highland tribes of Minahasa in colonial documents.
like when they say “Opo Menambo-nembo” or “God who sees all,” who watches over us, who sees the existence of all he created is what they mean. There’s also “Opo Empung Walian” or God the Mighty, and this resembles official religions like Islam and Christianity (field interview 10/17/2009).

For Muslims in the village, language can also mark the barrier between cultural activities and worship, allowing them to participate in those practices that are associated with Minahasan culture, even if those practices are organized under church auspices. Islamic language ideology differences from the Protestant view of language as an arbitrary medium that has the potential to express inner states. In Islam, it is not the inner state that produces religious expression through language, but the repetition of Quaranic verse in Arabic that dictates the inner state. When I asked Haji Budi how he felt about those who are practicing cultural preservation through the integration of culturally emblematic performances within church services, he pointed out that for Muslims, activities marked as worship must always be in Arabic. Therefore, even cultural activities held at the church did not necessarily cross the line between culture and religion:

KAS: I wanted to ask, there is a movement now in some Minahasan churches to preserve language and culture, but through church activities. They worship in Bahasa Tombulu, and there is maengket during the Christian worship services. I am wondering that if Minahasan culture is practiced in the church, how does that work for the Muslims here? How can they participate in the preservation of culture in this way?”

Haji Budi: Like I said before, in terms of Minahasan culture, Muslims participate too. If you are talking about church, Muslims are not active in worship (ibadah). We all have our individual rights to worship according to our own beliefs. But if we’re invited to the church, we usually go, we just don’t participate in the worship, we just sit and watch, and don’t bother them. Yeah, that’s the way it is, Muslims don’t do anything, don’t get involved in those kinds of things, if there is a worship service. We use the language of the Quran, the original language, and that can’t be changed. If during a worship service, we use the Quranic language, and it can’t be mixed with anything. We have laws, there are five laws or pillars, there is permitted (halal) and forbidden (haram), and as Muslims we must pay attention to these things. These things can’t be mixed, culture is something that is outside of worship. Like dance, all of the Muslim youth in Remboken participate in the mapalu activities, and the like. They are even all active in the neighborhood family organizations (rukun keluarga), in fact some of the Muslim youth are the leaders. So there is equality” (field interview 10/17/2009).
For Haji Budi, worship and Minahasan cultural activities are easily distinguishable. The influence of Christian theology on how Tombulu language is translated has no potential to threaten religious identity, because worship can only be performed in Arabic. Tombulu doesn’t belong to the realm of religion for Muslim practitioners in Remboken. When cultural activities are performed in religious spaces or associated with religious import, Haji Budi describes these in relation to the comportment of official ceremonies in the state: the worship of God is appropriate in mixed religious public space as long as each person can worship according to his or her beliefs. For Christians who are attempting to connect with cultural practices they feel alienated from, Tombulu language cannot be disentangled from Christian values and meanings, as was described in Chapter Five. To be Minahasan one has to be able to worship in a local language, something that Muslims cannot do. However, in their more decontextualized forms, like at touristic performances, official ceremonies, and demonstrations of cultural art (seni budaya) religious import or ritual efficacy is not necessary (and perhaps cannot be enacted given the anonymity of these events).

The maengket dance, which is most commonly performed today in Minahasa to showcase Minahasan but not necessarily Christian identity, similarly functions as both a social practice and a symbol of local identity. A harvest ritual, maengket performances recall the structure of ritual and social interaction centered around agricultural practices, but these days is more likely to be encountered as a cultural object, a performance genre that is taught in school or through religious institutions. In colonial times, maengket dances were held at the end of the harvest, serving as an event to socialize prospective marriage partners and maintain village cooperative networks called mapalus. Participation in mapalus networks was based on the circulation of crop surpluses, which meant that some of the early immigrants from Gorontalo, who had yet to own land and often depended on fishing or gold bartering

199 Official ceremonies of any kind in Indonesia often begin with prayer “according to individual beliefs” (menurut agama masing-masing). This is even in the case when one religious group is clearly the majority at a given event. The public space is therefore often a religious space, although technically neutral to the differences between recognized state religions.
for their livelihood did not participate. Those who did farm, however, were included in the practice regardless of their religion. Haji Budi reminisces about the loss of *maengket* and other life-cycle rituals in the village context given their transformation from ritual into cultural performance:

Haji Budi: Really there’s still a lot of Minahasan culture, yet there is also much that has been left behind by people now, by the Minahasan people now, things that were carried by the old ones before....but there is so much that has been discontinued. In the past, *maengket* was usually done by the Minahasan community after the harvest; the harvest was a busy time when people got together. The old ones [those in the past] would cooperate, for example, if I wanted to harvest, if I have a garden, people would say “When? Tomorrow?” Then the next day everyone would come, it would be crowded, and everyone would be helping each other, working together. Usually I would prepare food and drink. That was the harvest, the *maengket*. Really at that time was when all the young people met, met girls I mean, the young girls, the young men and women could meet and be taken back to their households. That was the benefit, lots could happen. Usually young women were carefully controlled by their parents, they couldn’t go out of the house whenever they wanted to like they can now. So that’s usually how it was, the situation with *maengket*, so that they could meet the young men, the parents would bring out the young women together, the ones who could already work, you know? They were introduced to the community, “this is my child”, and then from there they might continue to meet, to see each other, sometimes this ended in them making a household together. That’s what the *maengket* was.

KAS: And you participated in the *maengket* in Remboken?

Haji Budi: I took part when I was a young man, I participated in the *maengket*, and the *mapalu* ceremony. The *mapalu* ceremony was always busy with people, and the women were brought. I participated until I had a fiancée, and I didn’t allow her to work. She would just come with me to the gardens, carry a towel, or an umbrella for the heat or the rain, to shelter me with. The *mapalu mawaratan*, usually there were 50-60 people, sometimes even 100. Before, everyone was involved, there was no one left out.

KAS: Everyone? Christians and Muslims?

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200 In her interview, Oma S explains that her family did not participate in *mapalus* because their main source of income was from fishing and trade in gold. It is unclear if her family continued their trade because it was economically beneficial or because it was difficult for them to obtain land to farm. Having a profession other than farming would have been one marker of difference between migrants and “indigenous” populations.
Haji Budi: Yes, *mapalus* were for everyone. From what I know, *mapalus* and *pakasa’an* were all cooperative efforts (*gotong-royong*) within one village.

KAS: Are there still young Muslim people who participate in the *maengket*?

Haji Budi: Yeah, I wanted to say this, I have a daughter in law who is a convert, she is the head of *maengket* here. She is from a Christian background, but she converted to our religion. Meaning that there is still *maengket*, as she carried it with her into Islam. Here it is used by the government, and you can see this from history, and the children now play *maengket*, I always push people, especially the younger generation, to become carriers of these traditions. But it seems they are distracted now, with television, cell phones....the thing I used to watch a lot in the past was *katrili*. *Katrili* was an inheritance from the Portuguese and the Spanish, and the Remboken people know this. Both the Muslims and the Christians in Remboken know this dance. The only ones who preserve it now are in Tonsea, it’s starting to be encouraged (field interview 10/17/2012).

Participation in performative genres that are associated with Minahasa is not just an expression of community participation, but can function as a pragmatic marker of Remboken Muslim’s difference from those Muslim “migrant” groups whose communities are located in the urban center of Manado. In her dissertation work on the role of music in defining an “Arab” identity for the inhabitants of capital city’s “Arab Quarter” (*Kampung Arab*), Birgit Berg describes how the Arab-Indonesian community of North Sulawesi distinguish between “Manadonese” and “Minahasan” identities at public events (2007:125). Different styles of musical performance are used by the community to mark events as representative of one aspect of the community’s identity over others, for instance, the use of the Gambus Orchestra is used to invoke an “Arab” space (ibid., 133) that distinguishes these Muslims from other Muslims in the region. Yet the characterization of these musical genres or performative aspects of culture as emblematic of different facets of community identity are also regionally contextual, dependent on the local constructs of Islam and Christianity as categories of religious identity. Popular genres like *dangdut* that are only loosely associated with Islam nationally are becoming significant “sonic markers” of a pan-Indonesian Islamic identity in events where Muslims from different backgrounds join in to celebrate with *Kampung Arab*.

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201 The word *katrili* comes from the French *quadrille*, a dance with a 6/8 beat thought to have been introduced to Minahasa when the Netherlands was under Napoleonic rule 1795 – 1810. The dance is still performed at weddings today (Tambayong, 2007:118).
residents (ibid., 117). In socially expansive events that are spaces for interaction between religious groups, Kampung Arab residents are discriminating in the kinds of cultural displays they include (ibid., 125). Wedding receptions (resepsi), a common social event across North Sulawesi, are marked as regional not only in social interaction across groups, but displayed through the use of western wedding clothes and the performance of Manadonese pop songs in the regional language. In this context the Kampung Arab community purposely leave out local musical genres like the bamboo orchestra (orkes bambu) because they are thought to reference Minahasan culture and Christianity, not the general characteristics of the modern inhabitants of urban Manado (ibid., 125).

Receptions with mixed religious attendees are often held in conjunction with certain social events, such as weddings, funerals, and meetings of community social organizations or public political displays. Major Muslim and Christian holidays are also a time when regional community cooperation is put on display and Muslims and Christians attend receptions at each other’s houses. Other religious events, however, tend to be segregated in order that displays of mutual cooperation do not veer into the territory of shared worship. Receptions are held after religious events are a space that reflects the ideals of a mixed-society like Manado without employing specific cultural elements that are associated with any one religion, but more generally with religiously neutral symbols of regional social life like the use of Bahasa Manado.

The religious linguistic ideology that prevents Muslim Minahasans from using any language other than Arabic in worship or religious ritual is one reason that these practices often are perceived as being unrelated to local culture. There is some conflation in Indonesian Islam between religious practice and the lifestyles of the Middle East, so that cultural practices associated with that region are sometimes conceived as part of a transnational Islamic culture that unites worshippers and exceeds local boundaries. The concept of an Islamic culture that is distinct from local influences (even if that culture itself is an accretion of practices from the region thought to have an authoritative claim to defining Islam) has been a major theme in the definition and development of Indonesian Islam. Concern over the ontological division between religion and culture has characterized the evolution of Indonesian Islam as much as it has Christianity, but a refocus on purging local
elements from Islamic practice is one effect of a recent Southeast Asia-wide ‘re-pietization’ movement (Hefner 2011:2). In some cases, regional practices are so closely intertwined with the development of Islam that they are imbued with religious import and become “Muslim” by association, although their connection with Islamic theology may be tenuous at best. On the other hand, Islamic influences can also be obscured if the practice in question is deemed to be local. 202 These binaries are often invoked and shifted in instances where certain religious practices or lifestyles are politicized. 203

Even if practicing Islam does not conflict with being Minahasan, Islamic ritual remains a space that can fail to articulate with claims to localness. For Muslims in the Kampung Arab or Jawa Tondano, the “exogenous” nature of Islamic practice functions to maintain their distinct identity both as Muslims and as people who are tied to places elsewhere. When these groups may use public receptions (resepsi) as a religiously neutral space that relativizes Muslims and Christians as equally local in a cosmopolitan space, it does little to refute the Islam’s non-local status.

Can Islamic practice ever be performed in such a way that could minimize Islam’s foreign attribution, or does it always invoke an extra-local context that marks Muslims as having culture from somewhere else? As I have explored in previous chapters, one of the appeals for expressing local identity through the framework of Muslim-Christian relations is that public displays of this relationship not only reifies religious difference, but necessitates attention to religious practice. Muslim and Christian identities in North Sulawesi have become more defined in

As Hefner notes, colonial administrators reified the distinction between adat and Islam by overlooking Islamic influences on Javanese society, only allowing Islamic law to be recognized as part of a community’s legal framework if, in their estimation, it was recognized as part of existing adat systems. In Hefner’s opinion, this was one expression of the European construction of Islam as something exogenous in comparison to endogenous adat (2000:32-33). The application of this division through a legal framework is continued in the idea that Islam is an “import” to Indonesia. Struggles over religious authority that claim local influences detract from a core of “authentic” Islam is one contemporary epiphenomena of these colonial divisions.

203 For example, female circumcision is an issue that plays on the binary of culture versus Islam. Although the practice is related to Islamic thought on the nature of female desire, the question of whether it is supported by Islamic theology is controversial. If challenged as to the religious basis of this practice, some communities who engage in it will bolster their political position by claiming that the practice pre-dated the arrival of Islam in the region, making it a cultural practice that is less easily challenged politically.
relation to each other through a constant process of “mirroring” difference, or focusing on how Muslims and Christians differ intelligibly against the backdrop of religious citizenship in Indonesia. Muslims say Salam and Christians say Shalom. Muslims go on pilgrimage to Mecca, Christians to Israel. Muslims are prohibited from eating pork, and pig is a celebratory dish for Christian social events. These parallels invoke moments of double recognition: both that the relationship between Muslim and Christian Indonesians is always formulated in terms of their fundamental differences, and that Muslims and Christians in North Sulawesi, united in a regionally specific system of interreligious interaction, see themselves as the same in relation to other ethnic groups within the rubric of the national.

“Religious relations” evolves as a new form of inclusion in the symbolic construct of the national, a new Indonesian “ideology of difference” that provides “ways of imagining difference that make people more alike” (Harrison 2006:154).

The evolution of these cultural directives for interaction between the two religious groups into a more abstract category of belonging has intensified and standardized the public expressions of the differences that make Muslims and Christians in Minahasa the same. The irony of this genesis is that as Muslims in Minahasa are able to take advantage the redefinition of Minahasa to be recognized as part of it, the social realities from which the idea of a multi-religious Minahasa evolved have become less flexible. Oma S was particularly focused on how food boundaries have increasingly become more rigid at joint Muslim-Christian social events since her youth. She described how Muslims and Christians at events for extended, intermarried families were regulated by adat that required those who attended to bring beverages (even locally produced alcohol commonly consumed at ritual occasions) and the food for everyone to be prepared by the hosting family. Muslims and Christians ate off the same “long table,” reminiscent of the Minahasan tradition of foso where feasts were hosted to demonstrate an excess of resources that implied the mark of divine favor. Things have changed, according to Oma S:

Oma S: But now, it’s no longer like that. Now, if the Christians want to have an event, they invite us to cook. In the past, we just ate together, each person with their own plate. No one was shy to bring their own plate. Now, the Christians invite the Muslims to cook, giving us uncooked rice and fish and telling us to cook it on our own.
I have mixed with Christians. I used to sell at the market in the village of Leilem. There were so many young people who worked at the market, and they were always getting married. They invited me to Leilem for the wedding. I would peek in the kitchen and double check to see how they were cooking. They weren’t always careful with the food. When they served it, they asked me to eat, but I told them I couldn’t, that I was carsick from the ride. I saw that they hadn’t been careful with the food preparation, so I just told them I was sick, I saw that with the way they cooked it was only the fish on the table that were clean [ritually pure], and I didn’t eat. From the past, Christians and Muslims have always mixed. But now things are different, if the Christians have an event, they give us chicken, uncooked rice, for us to cook ourselves. So they are free to eat with us and they like to, but the food from them we cannot eat. In the past things were regulated (field interview 8/06/2009).

The idea that Islamic culture, as something that originates “somewhere else,” is equivalent to stricter religious observance or competence also devalues the local practices of Islam that have long been defined in relation to Christianity in Minahasa. One of the village members asked Haji Budi about the contributions of Islamic culture to Minahasan identity, to which he responded about the loss of certain performance genres that are associated with Islam:

Questioner: About 30 years ago, I heard that Islamic culture began to be restored, and was able to mix with the ethnic culture of Minahasa?

Haji Budi: Islamic culture? Islamic culture used to be very active here. There was the Hadrah, the Burdah, the Sirah and the Qasidah and also there was Silat that was culture. But when my father moved to Lamongan, those activities started not to be done so much. In the past my father was the leader for all these things, Remboken people attended, and Java people. I was just married when that happened. When I was an Imam in Karimba, it was still active, activities were held until morning. It was still going on then, but when I left Karimba, those activities weren’t going on any more. In Lombok [an island near Bali] we still have descendents, if there is an event

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204 A type of Islamic literature.
205 Hadrah, Qasidah and Burdah are all performance styles that are related to Sufi traditions that accompanied the spread of Islam across Southeast Asia. According to David Harnish, these genres “constitute local manifestations of transnational styles...and have accompanied a dynamic movement away from adat and towards a more thorough embrace of Shariah and agama [religion] (2011:103). Most of these styles are also associated with Javanese Islam (ibid., 95).
206 Silat or Pancak Silat is a martial art which is associated with some aspects of Islamic mysticism.
we get invited, but there aren't any activities here anymore. This is our deficiency here in Remboken now, not having an expert [to lead these kinds of activities]. I used to never know anything about what was going on at campus, I'm not that smart, but I can play guitar, and I was the leader of the Indonesian Youth group in Remboken before, I led it, but as a Muslim-Christian organization (field interview 10/17/2012).

To some degree, this view of Islam as coming from somewhere else means that to localize, to become a part of a Christian place, is to lose some aspect of identification with Islamic culture as it is understood in the Indonesian context. As place can be commuted to a biological category through new formations of kinship and ancestry that connect people to places through descent, the association of religion with place extends the biological metaphor to religious identity:

Haji Budi: Yeah, the meaning of Islam in Remboken, we can say that our lives here as Muslims are in a simple condition, you can say that. But for those of us that love this homeland (tanah air) or Remboken, I think there isn't any thought to... to return to the issue of ancestors that we were talking about earlier, yeah, there are many Gorontalo people here, and I myself am from Jawa Tondano. There is any thought to leave Remboken... my extended family is there in Jawa Tondano, in fact the Vice Mayor of Manado, his grandmother shares a household with my family.207 I don't think about moving there, I like Remboken, even though the descendants of Muslim Jawa Tondano have already spread far, there are many of them in Langoan, in Platahan, in Kotamobagu,208 and in Ujung Pandang, my younger siblings are in Banjarmasin, there are some in Kediri, in Surabaya, and in Jakarta, even in Maluku.209 So its like that, I think that the union of Muslims here is normal, there are no problems. Hopefully, as humans we mostly hope that we can all live in a comfortable environment because there are similar feelings between people in the same religion and between religions. And that's one reason why we stay here, because of that harmony, right? To go back to what I was saying earlier, Remboken is a place of mixed blood. We don't have original Muslim blood anymore, our blood has already been mixed with the indigenous people (orang pribumi) (field interview 10/17/2012).

In his exploration of the racial basis of contemporary cultural identity, Walter Ben Michaels argues that in pluralist societies, the ethos of tolerance necessitates an essentialist assertion of identity because “instead of who we are being constituted by

207 This is referring to my host father, who is also related to Oma S's family.
208 All sub-districts in North Sulawesi Province.
209 Ujung Pandang is another name for the city of Makassar in South Sulawesi. The rest of these cities are on other islands.
what we do, what we do is constituted by who we are” (1992:683). In other words, in the framework of cultural pluralism, “culture does not make up identity, but reflects it” (Michaels 1992:683). It is an apt description for the evolution of identities based in consocial relations that are metaculturally narrated to correspond with more abstract categories of identity that are inherited and immutable. Those categories tell us what we are and what we are not in a primordial sense. It is in the movement between those incommensurate, primordial categories that some sort of internal essence can be perceived to be lost. Michaels argues that the concept of culture, although meant to displace racial categories, has actually continued the construction of identity based in biological categories like race (1992:684), and that it is the racial aspect of culture that makes certain practices appropriate for certain groups of people (1992:683). In his argument, if there is no underlying racial overtone to cultural identity, “losing our culture can mean no more than doing things differently from the way we do them now, and preserving culture can mean no more than doing things the same” and “assimilation” has essentially no meaning (1992:685). That Muslims in Remboken see their religious identity as something that has the potential to be diluted by their Minahasan culture makes it clear that being Minahasan is becoming less a matter of social participation, and more a category of definition that constructs personhood as something that transforms relationships in certain places into constructions of kinship, narratives of relation, and ‘blood’ that make culture appear to be more than practices between people, but a context that exceeds time and place.

I have tried to demonstrate in this chapter the role that another categorical identity, religion, plays in defining place as “matter that acts” on people, or the idea that “places are essentially selves” (Brown 2005:11). North Sulawesi may be becoming less of a Christian place as ethnolocal identities become more politically visible and viable, but the role of religion in defining Minahasa still powerfully acts to define who belongs to place and who doesn’t, and therefore to define who people are. The designation of which place gets to definitively act on defining identity is intimately related to religion, an aspect of the discourse on “being Minahasan” which as this dissertation has demonstrated, is particularly fraught and contested. This was clear when I when I presented the results of my research at the end of my field period, which led several local Christian scholars to criticize my misunderstanding
of the Muslim presence in North Sulawesi, as my Muslim informant Fera describes in this email:

Fera: Just wanted to respond to your paper at the anthropology seminar last week, because I didn't have a chance to say anything at that time. I'm glad there is someone who can see “US” the Muslim of Minahasa the way we are and acknowledge us scientifically as part of the Minahasan people. However, I was also so sad knowing that even educated Christian-Minahasan like the lecturers of UNSRAT who commented on your paper, still call us “those who live in Minahasa” as opposed to “the people of Minahasa.” Surely, religion is the key differentiating factor between the two communities. It’s hard to change one’s long established picture of the Minahasan people who are supposedly the only those who are Christian. I agree with your statement that it is changing now, although very slowly. And I think that those who don’t agree with that aren’t ready for the change although they can see it brightly and clearly. Because, it is also difficult to make sense of a Gorontalonese, Makassarese or Sundanese that is Christian (if you are from those ethnicities, you MUST BE a Muslim)” (personal communication 1/14/2010).

That the potential for Minahasa to become less defined by Christianity rests in the very activities that reify difference between Christians and Muslims may facilitate the eventual acceptance of Muslims as people of Minahasa, not just people in Minahasa. If the framework of religious harmony can be used to connect Islamic practice in particular villages to Minahasa as a category of identity that unites Christians and Muslims in a relationship of comparison with other ethnic groups, then there is a potential for Muslims to see their religion as something belonging to Minahasa, not coming from outside of it. Take, for example, this excerpt of a public speech made by a member of Oma S’s family in Remboken, at a Muslim event to release three people from the village for the Hajj pilgrimage (acara pelepasan haji). This is a public religious event where Muslims ask forgiveness for any sins they have committed to their fellows and engage in prayer to ensure their successful completion of the Islamic pillar of pilgrimage to Mecca:

Bapak S: I am married into the Sumah family, had children, and alhamdulillah I am considered a Remboken person, and because of this it is a point of pride this congregation, and becomes a motivation for all of the Muslim congregation here to, God willing, follow them [the pilgrims going on Haj] in fulfilling Allah’s call next year.”

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210 This email was written in English.
In closing, our family has prepared food, not everyone likes the same thing, “not everyone has the same tongue,” maybe there is some food that is too salty or spicy, we sincerely take this opportunity to ask your forgiveness. Hopefully all of us attending will receive a blessing from Allah SWT. As information for Miss Kelli, this is a testament to the existence of our harmony here in Remboken, because among us are many of our non-Muslim relatives who are in attendance. To all of our family who are in attendance right now, there are some from Manado, some from Girian along with some from those of us from Bitung, what’s more Mr. Lurah [Christian head of the village] is here with us, we ask him to please pray for us. Pray we will return from the ‘Holy Land’ of Mecca and will be able to socialize again with the community here  (ceremony for the release of Hajj pilgrims, 10/17/09).

The head of the section of religious affairs for the sub-district office of Remboken, a Muslim teacher, added:

All of the natural world praises Allah here where this afternoon we have been granted permission from Allah and in addition have been given the chance to attend this sacred event, that is the release of the candidates for the Haj pilgrimage who come from Remboken, people of Remboken. I was energized and extremely proud after I found out that this event would be held for my congregation here in Remboken, and at my office when I found out the event would be held here, I was longing for my teacher and so excited that I would be instructing candidates for the Hajj from Minahasa, because for two months now I have known that the only candidates for Hajj from Minahasa have been from the sub-district of Tondano. We at the office are always requested if there is a candidate for Hajj, and after the other day everyone knew that there would be a release of a Haj candidate from Remboken. Oh, praise be to God.

To those respected guests in attendance, there are four hajimah of us who will undertake the Haj pilgrimage. First, I want to admit that and be clear that I am a weak servant, because without the power of Allah SWT, I would not be able to do anything, this I admit. This should increase our devotion, our faith in Allah SWT that we maybe have yet to experience here in our homeland, Minahasa, in Remboken. We don’t know what we will experience there (ceremony for the release of Hajj pilgrims, Remboken 10/17/09).
That this religious event serves as a reflection on this Muslim community’s understanding of their place, and makes a claim for Minahasa as their homeland, is telling of how the public performances of “being Minahasan” exploit and capitalize on the ambiguity of Minahasa as a category of identity. It also displays how national discourses are circulated and coopted to lend authority to claims of identity that are constructed in ways outside of the common-sense, normative associations between particular religions and ethnic groups. The event in Remboken references the unique relations between Muslims and Christians – categories of national belonging – that embody their connection to a particular place. That religious categorical identities can be used both to exclude others from group membership in public performance, and can also be re-narrated to make a claim for belonging, displays the transformative potential of publics as spaces organized by discourse to redefine fundamental concepts of national belonging and personhood. Considering if it is possible to untie Minahasa from its religious past, and what the implications of separating culture from Christianity might mean, has not precipitated the erasure of religious identities. Instead, it has narrated new possibilities for these categories to remain salient in the constructs that tie people to each other, and to place, in ways that seem natural and irrefutable. For these Muslims, the result of pilgrimage
is to elevate and exalt the value of their relationship with their Minahasan home. They hope to carry their pride in their place of origin with them beyond the social context of North Sulawesi, testament to their claim that Muslims are not out of place in Minahasa after all.
CHAPTER 7:  
CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF MINAHASA AS A CHRISTIAN PLACE

In analyzing Minahasan identity at a moment of transformation, this dissertation has taken a critical look at the use of religion in public as a defining aspect of identity, examining how religion, as a system of classification (Durkheim 1912), interacts with the metacultural (Urban 2001) designations of what belongs to the realm of the cultural, driving cultural change as a public, discursive phenomena. Specifically, it has examined this process through the dilemma of Protestant Christians in the politics of recognition and representation in the Indonesian state. One aspect of this dilemma is that Protestantism makes claims about the religious subject’s relation to the past, and the relationship between religion and culture, that don’t easily articulate with national discourses and modes of inhabiting, and displaying, particularistic identities. In addition, as state religious minorities, Christians’ ability to make displays positing a religiously exclusive local identity in public are at best circumscribed, and at worst, dangerous and not politically advantageous. In the North Sulawesi province, the national minority status of Christians takes on a more complex political and social import, as they represent the political and demographic majority in a religiously-mixed regional political constituency. The advent of decentralization policies has challenged regional coherence and further politicized regional identity and its role in resource allotment, and religious identity has become a potent public element in establishing the rules for social interaction and the politics of community morality in regions throughout Indonesia. The religionization of broad expanses of social life in Southeast Asia in the last thirty years, and the increase in religious association and observance (Hefner 2011:2) contributes to how ethnic and religious categories now openly represent communal identities in public, complicating inter-communal relationships (Schroter 2010:12).

This is not the first ethnographic examination of the role of religion in Indonesia in defining and demarcating difference in an interactional context through
history (Aragon 2000; Bigalke 2006; Duncan 2003; Geertz 1960; Hefner 1993; Li 2001a; Mujiburrahman 2001; Rodemieier 2010), or as an institutionalized categorical frame for national citizenship and identity (Aragon 1996; Kipp 1993; McVey 1995; Lipner 2006; Monnig Atkinson 1983; Picard 2004; Steedly 1999). Instead of focusing on the political construction of religious subject positions, or tracing the historical evolution of one group's interaction with these frames for recognition over time, I have focused on the way Christianity is productive of difference in the ethnographic present in North Sulawesi, and responded to the need to examine religion as a public aspect of identity-building in Indonesia's transforming political context (Acciaioli 2001; Adams 2006; Bowen 1993; Hasan 2009; Jacobsen 2002; Schiller 2001). I have documented the way that Christian perspectives are being used to adjudicate debates over what constitutes culture and who can authoritatively claim to belong to, and purvey, cultural symbols that represent Minahasa in public. By using a methodological approach that considers identity as a public phenomenon, I've identified and traced contestations around religious and ethnolocal identifications, documenting the potential that public and performed identities have to transform cultural categories in their circulation. I've also considered the limits of using Christianity as a founding principle in the construction of ethnolocal identities that are conceived of, and recognized through, standardized national forms of exhibiting difference.

The revival of the concept of adat as a platform for resources, recognition, and social justice has spurred a reexamination of the articulation of religion and culture in the definition and expression of identities based in notions of primordial associations with particular places in the Indonesian archipelago. The discourse of adat is informed by nationally-standardized forms of displaying difference and objectifying cultural practices as decontextualized symbols of ethnicity, and this is a critical juncture where state policies of managing difference through display (Pemberton 1994:12) overlap and articulate with the discourses and practices of tourism. Whether domestic or international, representations of culture for consumption address an audience beyond the immediate social context. This can have unexpected consequences in the processes of definition and in debates over authenticity, belonging, and the authority to assign meaning to ambiguous symbols for a group. Not only does the production of cultural objects for an audience
“constitute sites for the articulation and the negotiation of various hierarchical identities and relations” within a community (Adams 2006:9), but it seeks to draw the perspective of outsiders, changing the stakes of inter-communal debates, widening the scope of possible actors and institutions involved, and including extra-local audiences in the circulation of discourse.

I argue that the separation of the domains of religion and culture in the North Sulawesi public facilitates the continued public visibility of Christianity as a subject position. The symbolic separation of these domains produces a version of ethnolocal identity that does not posit an exclusive relationship between religion and the ideological convergence of history, place, and tradition that is the normative form of expressing difference in Indonesia. The state of social relations between Muslims and Christians in the region is pragmatically marked as cultural through the inclusion of the discourse of religious harmony in standardized, public displays and performances of local tradition. When adat, and its categorical projection, ethnic identity, is publicly dissociated from an exclusive tie with religion, then being overtly Christian is not only an acceptable expression of the first national precept of the national ideology of Pancasila (belief in one God), but also has the potential for much wider circulation as an exemplary application of the moral imperatives of the state regarding harmonious group relations. This recapitulation of national discourses on religious relations into a differentiating characteristic of local or regional identity is not intentionally engineered, but demonstrative of how the ambiguity of symbolic forms of identity are narrated, debated and invested with meaning through the circulation of discourse in the metacultural space of the public.

Documenting the public processes through which Minahasan identity is claimed, debated, and made visible in public highlights how the politics of recognition “take account of the past in a very specific way,” presenting history as identity (Markell 2003:13). Being recognizable as a cultural citizen in Indonesia is dependent on a perception of the past as an unproblematic repository of an already extant identity that “proceeds and governs action” (ibid., 2003). This poses a particular problem for Protestant Christians, whose faith requires a radical reassessment of the meaning of the past in light of new ontological regimes. Although Minahasans do not focus on the moment of disjuncture between the past and the present as has been documented in many other cases of communal
conversion to Christianity, their interpretation of history is nevertheless constantly transformed as tradition is evaluated and made meaningful through a religious context. The strain of Protestantism introduced to the region that would come to be recognized as Minahasa was instrumental in the definition and categorization of ‘the Minahasans’ in relation to other groups identified through the rubric of *adat* in the Indies. But Dutch Reform missionaries also labored to organize the domain of culture according to their religious principles, simultaneously identifying what culture was and making it practically and semiotically inseparable from the realm of religion as experienced by the Christian converts under their tutelage.

Despite this history, deciding how culture’s association with Christianity should be interpreted is not uniform even among local Protestants. Some make Christianity a primordial aspect of Minahasa, to assure that it remains an unquestionable (and visible) aspect of the cultural landscape. These kinds of “ethnotheologies” not only affirm the link between Christianity and traditional practices (Scott 2007:302), but assert a powerful continuity (and exclusivity) between Christian identity and traditional concepts of reckoning relationships to and through place, such as land ownership, subsistence patterns, and kinship. This dissertation has paid particular attention to the kinds of philosophical implications that Christianity, and in particular, Protestantism, offer to elevate indigenous tradition, and ironically, to facilitate connection with aspects of local culture that were disrupted by the same forces of modernity that introduced the religion to the region. In a more general sense, I consider the particular technologies of experience (Luhrmann 2004:519) and language ideologies (Keane 2002:66) that Christianity offers to adherents in dealing with their alienation from a proper “cultural” past. By using resources drawn from Christianity to affirm their territorial and historical specificity (Scott 2007:325), Christianity can be considered as something belonging to the domain of the cultural, despite its universalizing tendencies. As was demonstrated in the case of the practice of cultural or “contextual” liturgy, seeking the recognition of Christianity as a cultural object that can represent particularistic identities is informed by the kinds of discourses and re-presentations used both in national recapitulations of the local as *adat*, and in touristic performances of culture. The desire to see one’s church, or culturally-inflected liturgy, share the same sort of recognition that other cultural sites do, speaks of Christian aspirations
to see their religion recognized as a significant element of Minahasan particularity, but also to see Christianity more significantly represented in fundamental modes of national belonging.

For other Protestant practitioners, the denial of the ontological divide between religion and culture is problematic in its exclusivity, and perhaps more importantly, it creates a limited sphere for the expression of Christians’ political aspirations for the region. Local elites and members of cultural organizations who create forums for the exhibition of “harmonious” culture, and orchestrate media coverage of positive instances of Muslim-Christian interaction (*kerukunan beragama*), are involved in the familiar process of translating local social realities into the terms of state constructions of reality. As Bowen (1986:559) described in his analysis of another familiar state generated discourse of harmonious relations, *gotong-royong*, these expressions can act as “mediating signs” for “state demands [that] are part of a culturally recognized history of such demands” in the set of wider power relations that intervenes between the community and the central government. The utilization of a principle of religious harmony not only makes practical sense for minority politicians who must be careful not to impugn the majority in their midst, but also supports their aspirations for the Christian-dominant Minahasa to be recognized as an exemplary place in the nation. Furthermore, the discourse of religious harmony echoes the biblical paradigm of human unity (Scott 2005:116-117) that was historically instrumental in identifying Minahasans as distinct precisely through their inclusion in the universal scheme of Christian brotherhood. The discussion of love (*kasih*), harmony (*harmonisme* or *kerukunan*) and local brotherhood (*torang samua basudara*) in the inclusion of Muslim co-habitants in expressions of regional identity reflects aspects of an Indonesian Christian theological and political positioning that finds constant expression in the performance of local culture as multi-religious.

To theorize about why ethnolocality continues to endure as an influence on group identity and ideas of selfhood in Indonesia, I have considered it in relation to theories of the public sphere, where the game of recognition and definition relies in large part on the ability to make a claim about who we have always been, even though who we are is being shaped in interaction, in response to others, and within the horizons of the dominant ideology. Understanding how actors respond to,
challenge and co-opt the dominant discourses that circulate in Indonesia’s multicultural state has been examined from the anthropological perspective of how these activities are linked to cultural change through the metacultural narration of the categories of culture and religion. This is why, as Boellstorff (2002:24) argues, we must consider how actors might understand their local identities as contextualized by a prior sense of being Indonesian. We have to consider how an awareness of minority status (whether ethnic or religious) is created in those “institutionalized patterns of cultural value that constitute actors as...less than full partners in social interaction” (Markell 2003:19). People don’t imagine themselves as equal, or the same, when they imagine their place in the national public, and speaking in the voice of the national public is one strategy for addressing the awareness of that imbalance. This can be seen as a significant aspect of the rise of the ethnolocal as a vehicle for representing the aspirations of people literally and figuratively on the outskirts of the nation; as Boellstorff (2003:37) notes, the proliferation of new ethnolocal identities in places like Sulawesi implies that “ethnolocality is, if anything, more entrenched in “out of the way” places where state presence, and responses to that presence, can be significant social dynamics.”

The conscious use of newspapers and social media in documenting and circulating these displays and discourses of Minahasa’s harmonious difference, and the mediated nature of identity in contemporary Indonesia, has led this analysis to be anchored in theories about how publics operate, particularly in the context the multicultural nation-state. Ethnolocalities in the Indonesian nation can be seen as publics, in that they are metacultural spaces that “give form to a tension between the general and the particular” (Warner 2002:11) especially in out of the way places like North Sulawesi where talk about belonging is often organized by a shared sense of subordinate status (Warner 2002:120). By focusing on the mediation of particularistic identities in the nation-state, I’ve considered other perspectives on how the technology of print and the kind of subjectivity it creates did not ensure equal participation or affect the societal imbalances, but simply reproduced them in convert ways (Warner 1990:49). Dominant publics appear as the public “because they can take their discourse pragmatics and lifeworlds for granted” as the natural, universal order of being. The utilization of newspapers, social media and other forms of print media in North Sulawesi to cover public displays of religious harmony
demonstrates an awareness of the media as operating in a moral space linked to the nation (Keane 2009:50, Spyer 2002:2), one where certain differences are valorized over others (Hagen 1997:109) and places are hierarchically ordered (ibid., 112). Christians make themselves visible, and make North Sulawesi comparable to other regions in the nation, through media coverage that talks about Minahasa, and Minahasan Christians, through the national discourse on the ideal relations between Muslims and Christians.

Studies of where, and how, Christians have space to publicly express their faith, and the history of interaction with Christianity that defines them, are of increasing import given Islam’s heightened visibility in the public sphere. The recent development of Islamic moral messages for mass consumption has engendered a national circulation of representations of Islam in pop-culture media that have theological and political import (Hoestery and Clark 2012:208). Although there is much debate over the religious value of commodified forms of Islam, the proliferation of Islamic symbols and texts in the national public is interpreted by some proponents as a form of Islamic proselytization (da’wah) that has the potential to spread the message of Islam to a much broader audience (Hasan 2009:247-248). Television shows, advertising, film and fashion are filled with images of Islam and interpretations of pious behavior, often mingled with messages about civic behavior and national pride. In a country where Christians must be careful not to do anything that can be construed as proselytization, cannot freely use religious symbols in public space, and rarely see their values represented as national pop-culture, the options for expressing Christian identity seem especially circumscribed, and historically specific, place-based experiences of Christianity more important than ever.

Further research should be undertaken to understand how these public debates about the relationship between religion and culture are not only transforming regional inter-ethnic relations into new expressions of ethnolocality, but also to see their effect on interdenominational ties within Indonesian Christianity. One of the points of distinction between the more established Christian and Catholic traditions in Indonesia and “new” denominations like Pentecostalism is found in theological interpretations on how Christians should relate to culturally dictated social mores and practices, especially those related to the family. Changing
religious demographics and the explosive growth of Pentecostalism has spurred new ecumenical ties between the previously fractious Minahasan Protestants and Catholics, whose religious identity cannot be entirely separated from their ethnic identification as Minahasans. Both of these denominations see the amelioration of their congregations as inter-Christian conversion to Pentecostalism grows. Although Pentecostal converts are still considered Minahasan, Pentecostalism is not considered to have any privileged relationship with Minahasan culture or history. Ecumenical performances of culture as a liturgical practice don’t just represent new relationships between historical rivals. They also have the potential to transform institutional practice. The Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa, GMIM) has historically acted as the vanguard of Christianity’s civilizing power in the region, the institution that made Minahasans into Christian moderns, so to speak. The church has long policed the borders of appropriate Christian engagement with tradition, and any culture that has been allowed in the church has been mainly in the form of purified symbolic performances divested of any kind of ritual import. The inclusion of culture in the church as a liturgical practice, one that aims to reconnect Minahasan Christians with their cultural identity and re-ignite their excitement for Protestant ritual, could signal a larger shift in GMIM policy.

It remains to be seen if the Muslim groups in North Sulawesi who call themselves Minahasan will succeed in making their identification recognizable as part of Minahasan identity, or if the regional culture of harmonious difference will become a common-sense aspect of the Minahasan ethnolocality. The answer lies in the possibilities for Muslims to continue to be included in public enactment of the local, and the scope of recognition for the meaningfulness of those displays (Barth 1969:132). If the regional performance of harmonious difference continues to be pragmatically invoked as something that identifies North Sulawesi as a particular place in the nation, then the parameters for belonging to Minahasa may expand to include those formerly marked as outsiders by their religion. This requires the consocial ties that Muslims see as linking them to local histories to be enshrined as part of cultural distinction. Yet even if Christians recognize regional Muslims as equal participants in the construction of the local, ethnolocality persists as a category that locates ethnic alternatives in racialized links between place and
religion, links that identify certain kinds of people. The historical association that outsiders make between Christianity and Minahasa may prevent Muslims in the region from being recognized as anything but people from elsewhere. Whether or not Muslim Minahasans come to be recognized as descendents of Minahasa, the fear that Minahasa will lose its tie to the Christian faith is unfounded. The multicultural vision of Minahasa that is being created in the North Sulawesi public continues to make Christianity a visible organizing principle for the region’s contemporary identity, albeit one that denies that being from Minahasa is a claim that exclusively belongs to the region’s Christians.
APPENDIX A
TRANSCRIPT EXCERPTS

CHAPTER THREE

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Panawar: Boleh ngga pak, saya cerita itu, tapi kalau di Sulawesi Utara jangan cerita itu, tapi dia cerita juga, tapi orang Sulawesi Utara, Manado terutama, tidak pernah terpengaruh, begitu juga di Maluku Utara kan banyak orang Sangeh, banyak orang Kristen, pulang semua, mereka menceritakan, mereka saling berpelukan, jangan sampai terjadi ini di Maluku Utara, saling menangis. Saudara saya telepon, “Kak, kita ini sedang kumpul di rumah saya. Waduh, bagaimana posisi di Manado?” Manado tetap aman, tetap rukun, jadi mereka bertemu, saling berpelukan, jangan sampai terjadi dulu itu, tidak ada guna kan itu.

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KAS: Ada hubungan darah, karena mereka di sini sudah kenal, karena ada orang dari Gorontalo, Tandano, ada banyak kelompok sub-etnik. Tapi mereka rasa sebagai satu kan?


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CHAPTER FOUR

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Pak Frankie: Minahasa ini kalau kita terlalu keKristen dalam tanda kutip itu bahaya, karena akan memunculkan fundamentalisme yang luar biasa, dan bukan hanya dari sisi aspek relijiusitasnya, tapi juga kesuankannya, itu lebih parah. Itu saya menduga beberapa tahun ke

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Respondent 1: Waktu dorang bilang manguni adalah burung hantu dan tak memiliki Roh Kudus, apa kata kita sebagai Manguni Muda (Pemuda GMIM)?

Respondent 2 : hehe.. mereka yang anda maksudkan itu siapa? Burung, cicak, kadal, kecoa, pohon, manusia, adalah ciptaan Tuhan yang Maha indah, wujud Karya Nya yang luar biasa bagi dunia. jika manguni kemudian dikahtakan dengan hantu, itu cuma pikiran, buatan dan ciptaan manusia, bukan Tuhan. so, tidak ada hubungan sama sekali... Enjoy aja lagi, yang ada Roh Kudus ato tidak, tidak tergantung pada lambang gereja, tapi pada buahya sehari-hari...

Respondent 3: ingat ktika yesus di bptis, bhwa merpati hinggap di pundak yesus, yg mengartikan bahwa merpati adlh lambang ketulusan, keagungan dll., yg menjadi prmsalahn bkan merpatinx, melainkan lambangnx. so,, manguni ataupn merpati atw apapn it yg mnjadi persoalan banyak lambng bkan burungnx. akan tetapi ketika ada pihak2 trntu yang ingin mengubah tanda2 dri nenek moyangx maka terkutuklah ia. (band. pd kitab yeremia) jdi krna manguni mrupkn slh 1 peninggaln nnek moyng qt maka yg akn mengbhx maka trktuklah ia. Coba perhatikan Burung Manguni di Logo GMIM. Di tengah, ada gambar hati warna merah kong ada gambar Salib. Artinya, burung Manguni pun bisa terima Yesus. Apalagi warga GMIM.

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Langoy: Yang saya tahu Indonesia menganut sistim pemerintahan demokrasi (secara harafiah berarti pemerintahan rakyat), bukan otoriter, segala keputusan hanya dari pemimpin. Oleh karena itu saya mendukung usulan dari tokoh-tokoh MITRA untuk membahas polemik ini dengan duduk satu meja, membahasnya bersama, bukan menetapkan persoalan satu hal, yang perlu terus di lestarikan.

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Lumintang: lambang burung Manguni tidak perlu lagi dipermasalahkan, ikon ini bukan harus kita tafsirkan sebagai bentuk terjadinya sinkretisme secara religi, tapi harus dilihat sebagai ciri khas 'integral' ke-Minahasaan. Lambang burung Manguni bukan lagi tanda pengkultusan kepercayaan leluhur, tapi sudah merupakan alat yang menjadikan manusia MITRA tetap merasa satu kesatuan dengan Minahasa Raya, baik dari latar belakang sejarah, budaya, kekeluargaan dan spirit yang tidak bisa dihilangkan.
KAS: Mungkin artikel dari seorang sarjana tersebut salah, karena dia bilang BM adalah milisi Kristen.

Pak Thom: Itulah yang mungkin salah. Kita baru-baru bikin musyawarah nasional di sebuah hotel, dalam rangka ulang tahun BM. Itu sudah dipaparkan dalam rapat nasional bahwa BM bukan dari Kristen semata, tapi juga dari kalangan Muslim.

KAS: Apa peran BM dalam kegiatan nasional?

Pak Thom: Kebetulan dalam rapat terbaru, dan pimpinan tertinggi serta dari pemerintah sudah mempercayakan BM untuk mengadakan semacam lokakarya tentang cinta tanah air, dan itu salah satunya karena ormas ini sudah jadi mitra pemerintah. Karena sudah terdaftar dalam Departemen Dalam Negeri.

Pak Thom: Saya bilang orang Minahasa itu ada rasa persatuan yang kuat ada di rantau, tapi ketika ada di daerah sendiri, tidak ada rasa persatuan. Sehingga kita bilang mengapa orang Minahasa ini tertinggal dalam hal-hal tertentu seperti dalam pemerintahan. Orang-orang Minahasa banyak yang tidak dipakai.


Pp. 180 – 181

KAS: Mungkin bisa menjelaskan visi dan misi BM?

CHAPTER FIVE

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KAS: Dan saya ingin tahu, kenapa anda memutuskan untuk ikut serta dalam kegiatan konteks seperti dalam bahasa Tombulu dan komisi kebudayaan?

Annie: Karena bahasa Tombulu itu, yang umumnya diatas umur saya itu ingin sekali bercakap-cakap dengan bahasa tombulu toh, sedangkan sangat kurang ibu-ibu yang seumur dengan saya yang lancar bahasa Tombulu, jadi ketika ada lagu-lagu yang baru atau lagu-lagu apa, yang saya pikir mudah untuk dipindahkan ke bahasa tombulu diterjemahkan, saya sangat rindu sekali supaya orang-orang tua itu, saya pikir mereka mungkin mereka lebih mendalam meresap arti daripada lagu-lagu itu.

Pp. 202 – 203

KAS: Bisa dijelaskan sidikat apakah perasaan anda waktu pakai bahasa Tombulu?

Annie: Kalau saya perasaan saya ketika boleh bukan mampu 100%, boleh berbahasa Tombulu atau memberi diri dalam kegiatan ibadah untuk mengisi dengan bahasa-bahasa Tombulu lagu-lagu dan lain sebagainya, memang dalam hati saya kecil memang ada keinginan kerinduan untuk mau mengerti karena memang tidak mampu berucap, karena hidup dari keluarga yang tidak berbahasa tombulu, kami hanya mendengar dan saya hanya dari opa-opa yang biar tetangga...

Kami belum begitu sempurna masih banyak kesalah, kelemahan, kekurangan tapi berupaya untuk selalu berusaha, karena ternyata banyak orang-orang tua yang senang sekali untuk mendengarkan lagu-lagu yang dinyanyikan lewat pengeras suara dalam bahasa Tombulu, dan ketika ada himbauan-himbauan dalam bahasa Tombulu mereka sangat senang sekali, karena sudah sangat jarang orang-orang yang berani untuk berusaha bercakap-cakap atau menghimbau dengan membawakan dengan bahasa Tombulu, itu kerinduan saya sekalipun banyak tantangan, ada orang-orang juga yang mungkin merasa lebih tua dari saya, yang seakan-akan mereka lebih tahu dari saya, ya bukan tidak mungkin, manusia itu ada punya iri sedikit atau bagaimana, karena ada orang-orang lebih tua dari saya tahu berbahasa tombulu tapi tidak ada keberanian untuk tampil. Koreksi apa-apa, saya terbuka, saya bukan mengatakan apa yang saya bawakan itu sudah sempurna, tidak, saya tampilkan itu supaya ada orang yang mendengar yang kalau mereka ingin bahasa tombulu ini akan menjadi lebih sempurna, mereka dating untuk mengoreksi, memperbaiki, itu yang menjadi kerinduan saya, bukan berarti saya tampil itu supaya saya ingin dipuji, tidak.

Pp. 208 – 209

Gertrude : kalau gak ada keberanian sulit

Annie: Pertama bilang malu, malu karena yang juga karena berbahasamu, berbicara dipenyempitan itu kan kalau menyanyi bahasa tombulu kurang mengerti betul kata-kata kalimat itu memang meresap jadi memang ada rasa sukacita didalam, pokoknya lebih merinding lagu itu dihati, jadi itu dan dikerinduan dihati paling dalam ingin menghibur, memberikan semangat pada orang-orang tua dan disini banyak orangtua yang rajin sekali seperti itu, mereka suka sekali ingin sekali memang untuk meresapi ini, dalam ibadah ada lagu-lagu tombulu bahasa Tombulu, namun namun ada kendala memang ada masalah, yang mereka menurut kami ada talenta disitu mereka sebenarnya mampu dalam, ada pemahaman mengerti tentang tombulu namun karena mungkin dalam hati mereka ada pandang enteng atau apa, jadi kritik hebat memang datang, orang langsung menghina atau menuduh salah begini begini, namun dalam hati kami prinsip kan kami hanya untuk
memuji Tuhan, nanti kalau ada perikasa kan ada pakar-pakar yang boleh, orang edit data yang terbaik yang sempurna, jadi perasaan saya memang ingin sekali karena ada makna ada nilai dalam hati yang memberikan suasana menyentuh lagu bahasa Tombulu.

Gertrude: menyentuh sekali, karena terkadang itu lagu bahasa Indonesia ada yang mungkin terlalu tinggi dia punya arti kalimat itu, jadi kurang susah.

Annie: Langsung mengena dihati.

Gertrude: Karena kalau bahasa tombulu itu memang kurang tahu sekali dia punya sasaran, maklumlah gak ada pendidikan bahasa Indonesia yang lebih mendalam, jadi gak terlalu mengerti jadi gak terlalu menyentuh serta orang terjemahkan merinding, kurang meresap bagaimana menyanyiin bahasa Tombulu.

Annie: Itu yang paling utama.

Hendrik: Tapi kadang-kadang ada banyak kritikan dari jemaat.

Annie: memang banyak kritik, tapi itu ga jadi halangan buat kita.

KAS: Menurut anda yang paling untuk memuji Tuhan?

Annie: Iya.

Gertrude: Dia punya utama itu memuji Tuhan, terang salah kata Tuhan tahu, cuma itu terangkan pusat pikiran, jadi dorang kritik ini kritik itu, kalau memang tahu silahkan tampil jangan cuma bicara dibelakang, ini lebih bagus lebih cocok bagi ini, orang tampil ini bukan sempurna, ini memang kurang dengar kiri kanan bukan memang gak belajar, bagi ini kamu bilang ini salah nanti kamu bikin benar.

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KAS: Kalau ada tradisi dari masa lampau yang tidak sesuai dengan gereja seperti sekarang?

Wilhelm: Jadi tantanga dari gereja untuk membentuk komisi kebudayaan itu tertuju di bahasa. Dan itu kebudayaan-kebudayaan dulu, bukan itu yang jadi sasaran. Tapi itu tetap diperhatikan oleh gereja bagaimana kebiasaan dulu, mereka sekarang so percaya Tuhan, percaya agama Kristen. Sasarannya sekarang adalah menggali bahasa.

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KAS: Jadi menurut pendapat anda apakah cocok dekat gereja dijadikan tempat atau sarana dalam melestarikan tradisi budaya?

Annie: Iya pasti, semua, malah sangat penting kita masukan dalam budaya.

Gertrude: Yang penting itu dalam rangka pujian-pujian pada Tuhan, gak masalah itu.

KAS: Jadi tradisi budaya dan agama Kristen tidak bisa berpisah? Duduk sama-sama ya?
Gertrude: Karena kebudayaan itu juga pada dasarnya itu penyembahan pada sang kaliq, dia punya utama, tidak pribadi-pribadi orang-orang itu yang punya sasaran yang lain, yang mungkin ambil kesempatan misalnya mendewakan, menyimpang dari ajaran misalnya orang sebenarnya mah menyembahkan sang pencipta itu, yang mendoakan sang pencipta misalnya, itu tapi kalau memang orang tetap mengutamakan si pencipta itu, penyembahan kepada pencipta itu, itu bagus, karena di desa kami ini mungkin ada lagi satu dua orang yang punya adat kebiasaan yang mengaku punya kebudayaan tinggi, akhirnya ternyata dia punya keyakinan sudah menyimpang, misalnya dia mengiakan Tuhan yang lain, memanggil dewa-dewa, roh-roh orang yang sudah meninggal, lalu mendewakan dia, menyembah dia, itu yang tinggal pribadi-pribadi itu yang mungkin salah melangkah, salah menggunakan kebudayaan itu, tapi yang sebaiknya itu kebudayaan itu perlu sekali dikaitkan dengan kepercayaan agama Kristen, asalkan memang dia punya tujuan sasaran utama yaitu penyembahan kepada tri tunggal, bikan roh-roh dewa-dewa, bertentangan dengan ajaran Kristen itu.

Pp. 219 – 221

KAS: Pendeta, kenapa anda mau belajar bahasa Tombulu?


KAS: Mungkin komisi kebudayaan di Lolah bisa bagi contoh model untuk gereja GMIM di Minahasa?

Annie: Ada jemaat dari Tomohon pernah minta, tahun lalu.

KAS: Dan tidak ada masalah dengan senot gemin sekarang? Pakai Bahasa Tombulu atau bahasa daerah tidak ada masalah?

Gertrude: Tidak ada masalah.

KAS: Ya pendeta dulu bilang maengket...

Gertrude: Itu liturgi asli Minahasa.

KAS: dan semua gereja GMIM mesti pakai maengket?

Pdt Sinubu: Tapi ada beragam, orang khusus pendeta menerjemahkan budaya Minahasa ke dalam para jemaat termasuk contoh misalnya maengket, biasanya itu dipadukan maengket itu hanya salah satu dari bagian usul liturgi, misalnya maengket tentang penyembahan atau pengakuan dosa, hanya diperankan dalam bagian-bagian dari liturgi, ini dua budaya yang berbeda, budaya Eropa disupi dan budaya Minahasa maengket, karena dua budaya yang berbeda dalam dipadukan hanya dipadukan seperti itu akhirnya tidak ada, ternyata ibadah itu jalan tapi pameran ibadah itu putus, jadi ketika pemeran maengket itu dipenyembah masuk lalu atau pengakuan dosa, selesai pemeran itu dia langsung terputus dalam konteks peribadatan, nah karena itu di liturgi ada di Lolah ini merangkul semua tidak hanya dalam satu-satu, satu usul.

Hendrik: Sampai di terakhir tutup ibadah ada maengket. Kalau di gereja lain mereka bilang itu konstektual itu, tapi hanya ibadah reguler yang diterjemahkan oleh penghulu, tidak ada maengket.
Pdt. Sinubu: Lalu ini diterjemahkan dalam bahasa daerah.

Gertrude: Kalau torang pakai tambor, paduan.

Pastor Sinubu: Jadi bagaimana mau dikembangkan lagu-lagu dan irama dan budaya tombulu itu mau diterjemahkan ke dalam di liturgi GMIM, jadi tanpa menghapus dari nilai-nilai di liturgi gemin sebagai bagian dari gereja vrensberial, ad gereja Katolik jadi bagaimana mengintregasikan antara budaya minahasa dengan ibadah gemin, itu yang mau dikembangkan, apa yang ada sekarang itu hanya salah satu model yang harus dikembangkan, sehingga memang diharapkan dibentariskan gereja itu akan menangkap tanda ibadah yang konstektual, bagaimana pengtasbihkan gereja sesuai, pengtasbihan gereja itu sama seperti selesainya masyarakat Minahasa mambangun rumah, ada maramba’.

Gertrude: Ada maramba’.

Pdt. Sinubu: Di luar bagian penyembahan dalam rangka mensyukuri bangunan sudah selesai, namun ketika diresmikan apa yang itu rutinitas, apakah ketika buka pintu ketika dia masuk ke dalam, itu sudah masuk dalam versi maramba’.

Hendrik: Jadi ada solit di muka baru masuk jemaat masuk gereja dengan maengket?

Gertrude: Iyo, penyesuain dang torang di dalam gereja, beda tu dengan marambak dirumah masing-masing, ini kan di gereja

Pdt. Sinubu: Tinggal syairnya yang dirubah disesuaikan dengan konteks peribadatan, diaturlah bagaimana, kan kita tidak tahu atasan tidak tahu lagi, jadi hanya memfasilitasi saja. Masih itu lebih kena dan lebih yakin ketimbang misalnya apa yang dipositkan gemin sekarang dalam rangka untuk mengikuti perkembangan negara, apakah syair dan lain sebagainya dengan, itu kan lebih mengarah kepada perkembangan music modern.

Gertrude: Ikuti dia punya alunan dari solo itu kung lagi depe meresap sekali beda dengan bekas cara beda, gak ada dang, lebih meresap, lebih mendekat dan torang punya permohonan.

Pdt. Sinubu: Orang yang tidak tahu akan terbawa dengan irama.

Gertrude: Depe dia punya irama-irama maengket itu kok itu memang ada daya tarik supaya orang dapat pemahaman.

Pdt. Sinubu: kalau mau dipelajari lagu-lagu tua minahasa itu yang butuh terbawa dengan dengan suasana hati, jadi bagaimana suasana hati untuk menyembah kepada Tuhan diungkapkan begitu saja sehingga muncul depe irama seperti itu, kalau memang permohonan akan muncul depe irama sangat mengena sekali, sehingga siapapun juga akan terbawa dalam unsure emosional ini.

Pdt. Sinubu: Jadi memang ada bahasa Tombulu yang dia bisa dapat rangkum ini berapa orang tumohon, orang lola, versi-versi adat tombulu sehingga perlu dipelajari itu bahasa tombulu, apa itu sebenarnya bahasa tombulu tua,kah sama di Tonsawang, Tonsea ...

Gertrude: Kalau tombulu tetap ada, biar torang pakai kebiasaan gak sama dengan dorang tapi torang mengerti dorang punya maksud, tujuan dan dorang punya ucapan.
Hendrik: Semua didapat di ini ritemnya, iramanya.

Gertrude: iya irama.

Pp. 222 – 223

KAS: Sejauh mana dampak tradisi atau budaya jika bahasa Tombulu dalam kegiatan ibadah dijadikan contoh bagi masyarakat Sulawesi utara? Bagaimana pengaruhnya?

Annie: Jadi pengaruh sangat besar pengalaman kami.

Gertrude: kalau dikaitkan dengan kebudayaan torang maengket dini sudah termasuk mempengaruhi Sulawesi utara, karena sudah terkenal karena maengket itu dia punya tarian pertama itu penyembahan.

Hendrik: Mungkin kalau ditanya orang dari luar daerah Sulawesi utara, jawa kamu tahu maengket dari mana, dari Sulawesi utara, apakah bahasa itu bahasa Tombulu?

Gertrude : Iya, bahasa Tombulu karena gak ada bahasa lain, asli Tombulu, biar di Jakarta tombulu, biar orang Tontemoan yang bikin maengket tetap bahasa Tombulu. Begitu juga orang Tondano tetap dorang ada bahasa Tondano daerah Tondano tapi kalau dorang ikut maengket bahasa tombulu kupakai, tidak ada bahasa Tondano maengket.

KAS: Atau apa sana, Tonsea?

Gertrude: Biar orang Tonsea, kalau itu pertandingan maengket tetap bahasa Tombulu kupakai, gak ada bahasa Tonsea.

Annie: Jadi berpengaruh cukup.

Gertrude: ada tapi gak laku dipasaran dorang maengket, ya gak laku dipasaran, memang Cuma mesti bahasa tombulu, itu bagus sudah dia cocok punya kata-kata.

Kelli: jadi dasar !

Hendrik: Itu berapa kali melantun festival, orang sunde, saya pikir mereka bisa bahasa Tondano.

Gertrude: Kalau bertanya dimana-mana maengket tetap bahasa Tombulu, padahal itu Cuma di kecamatan tumbariri, tumohon, penele. Cuma 3 kecamatan Tombulu.

Pp. 225 – 226

KAS: Tadi memang ada kaitan diantara budaya dan agama, jadi bagaimana dengan orang Islam di Minahasa, karena ada orang Islam disini mereka pendatang Gorontalo, atau Makassar, atau lain-lain? tapi ada juga keluarga disini, keluarga muslim, mereka merasa bagian masyarakat Minahasa, kalau tanya pada mereka, mereka bilang saya orang Minahasa?

Hendrik: Karena minahasa itu identik dengan orang Kristen!

KAS: Jadi bagaimana pendapat anda mengenai orang Muslim bilang saya juga orang Minahasa?
Gertrude: Ya mungkin orang dorang kurang karena darang punya suami islam dari gorontalo atau istri dari gorontalo sampai sobage teno itu so kare depe marga Minahasa akhirnya dia punya suami Gorontalo atau Makassar, jadi serta tanya entah dia ya depe istri Minahasa ya bilang kita Minahasa, karena depe sebenarnya minahasa gak ada yang islam, gak ada, Kristen semua, cuma karena kawin dengan orang gorontalo atau orang jawa, sampai darang tanya kesana torang minahasa, tapi telusuri o dia punya suami gorontalo atau depe istri yang gorontalo tapi so tak ika dengan orang Minahasa karena perkawinan.

KAS: Tapi juga ada keluarga islam disini sudah lama tinggal di minahasa, ya dari gorontalo tahun, seratus tahun lalu, sekarang mereka merasa iya saya juga orang minahasa saya pakai bahasa Manado, ada keluarga di desa-desa di gunung, tapi itu menurut anda itu bukan orang Minahasa.

Gertrude: Kalau menurut kita darang cuma pendatang lalu kawin disini, tinggal dipinggir-pinggir pantai darang, mereka karena darang so darah Minahasa setengah.

Annie: tapi yang banyak iku Kristen.

Gertrude: Kalau torang telusuri orang islam—islam di Tanaawangko ada kelurga di Lolah tapi karena darang selama disana dak kawin dengan orang minahasa, darang Cuma orang pedagang, pedagang dipinggir-pinggir pesir pantai, konon kawin dengan orang minahasa, gitu. Kalau memang orang minahasa islam, kalau memang ya ndak no, karena kurang karena darang ada, ternyata kalau darang mau telusuri tu orang borgo sana, darang ada keluarga di gorontalo, makasar, ternate, orang pendatang darang, karena cuma ada yang orangtua mereka sudah, andai orang minahasa kawin dengan orang minahasa terpaksa darang yang orang punya keturunan darang bilang keturunan minahasa karena lahir di Minahasa

KAS: tapi anak mereka akan menjadi orang Minahasa kan?

Gertrude: iyo, lahir disini.

KAS: Dan bagaimana mereka bisa ikut serta dalam budaya minahasa, kalau budaya melestarikan di kegiatan gereja ? dalam ibadah Kristen atau kegiatan lain dalam lain didalam gereja ?

Gertrude: Biar darang Minahasa, karena darang so islam, so susah orang mau ikut kebudayaan Minahasa

Hendrik : Kalau mereka praktek budaya Islam ya?

Gertrude: He,heh, karena darang memang so bagitu.

Hendrik: karena budaya islam tidak bisa dicampur dengan budaya Minahasa!

Gertrude: Sulit, gak mungkin masuk, baru dia punya bahasa, bahasa Arab

KAS: tidak bisa pakai bahasa Tombulu?

Gertrude: Iya, darang kan sambung dengan bahasa Arab, kecuali kalau pindah Kristen ikut bahasa kebudayaan Minahasa.

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KAS: Dan saya mau bertanya pak pendeta kalau ada rencana untuk kasih kesempatan kepada golongan lain di lola seperti orang katolik, orang panti kosta untuk ikut serta dalam ibadah di gereja GMIM?

Pdt. Sinubu: Kalau acara-acara umum kan biasanya diundang juga.

Hendrik: Tapi belum ada.

Pdt. Sinubu: bertepatan dengan ibadah sama-sama di hari yang sama, mungkin kalau hari hari selain hari itu mungkin bisa.

Hendrik: Waktu upacara satu itu lewat, Katolik kan hadir.

Pdt. Sinubu: Jadi itu salahsatu tujuan dilakukan kenapa harus dikembangkan tim kontekstual seperti itu, jadi ini yang bisa merangkul orang minahasa kembali, yang selama ini menurut kita kehadiran gereja di minahasa mengalami kegagalan atau sangat diterjemahkan, orang gereja hadir untuk mempersatukan umat bukan untuk hidup terpecah belah sama sekarang misalnya di minahasa dan Sulawesi Utara, berapa dominasi gereja.
Gertrude: kalau di Lolah memang 3 besar.

Pdt. Sinubu: Jadi seperti ini bisa merangkul, mempersatukan kembali dan tidak mungkin di kemudian hari akan muncul satu gereja minahasa, dak kristen dak orang katolik. Lalu ini merupakan tata ibadah yang merangkum semua, semua umat semua generasi.

CHAPTER SIX

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Haji Budi: Muslim di Romboken sudah sekitar 160 tahun ya, jadi berarti coba kita hitung, sekarang 2009, berarti kita di Romboken ini, Muslim itu masuk ke Romboken itu tahun 1840an atau 1850an, ketika itu memang Kristen di Romboken baru mulai tumbuh, kan 1831. Jadi Kristen baru mulai tumbuh, Islam masuk, hampir berbarengan, cuma beda sedikit.

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Pak Kridosono: Saya bisa menyebutkan begini mungkin saya akan untuk memudahkan, bia berdiskusi lagi nanti, andaikan SULUT Penduduknya mayoritas bukan Kristen, saya kira tidak akan seperti itu. Saya seorang Muslim, jadi andaiakan SULUT pendudukan majoritas bukan Kristen, Sulawesi Utara tidak akan seperti sekarang.

KAS: Bisa jelaskan sedikit ...


Pp. 250 – 251

Menarik ... walaupun saya belum meneliti itu, kencendurangan ini bisa saya memahami. Di Sulawesi Utara sebernanya tidak ada kelas sosial. Tidak ada kelas kerajaan, tidak ada ningrat, tidak ada jelata, sama, tapi di Sulawesi Utara, sejak masa Indonesia, dalam pengertian jaman modern ketika Indonesia lahir, dan pembagian, administrasi pemerintahan diselenggarakan

Oma: Maksudnya oma, antara orang Islam dan orang Kristen lebih bagus di sini depe pergaulan atau tempat lain?

Oma S: Bagus, Manado, Remboken lebih bagus, di tempat lain so nyanda terlalu, tapi disini daerah besar toh, jadi orang Kristen deng orang islam sama semua kerja sama. Waktu dulu kwa pilih-pilih. Waktu dulu kalo orang Islam mo undang rupa mo sekolah, nanti dia so keluaran MULO toh, nanti keluaran MULO dulu kalo mo ini sekolah, Orang Islam kasiyan lai ndak mampu, nimbole sekolah itu. Tapi kalo mampu ya, tapi kalo mo cari kedudukan susah dulu, dorang pake system orang Kristen. Sekarang so nynda, orang satu semua dang. Dulu ndak boleh, biar dorang so keluaran MULO, dorang liat dulu bagaimana, dorang ndak mo kasih kerja, memang kata waktu jaman Belanda dorang pilih-pilih dorang pe orang kerja, orang-orang Islam waktu kerja dulu susah, tapi sekarang sekolah semua, pandai-pandai, perempuan laki-laki so kerja, mar dulu nanti dorang ada doi baru boleh kerja, baru boleh sekolah sampai klar.


Haji Budi: Jadi kita tinggal di sini ya, tinggal 400-500 jiwa, yang ada, kira-kira begitu keadaannya sekarang. apalagi di zaman-zaman pergolakan dulu Peresta, tahu Peresta? Teman-teman saya banyak orang yang cari makan, katakan saja cari keselamatan, perlindungan di luar kampung, begitu bagaimana banyak yang tidak kembali ke Romboken dan menetap di tempat mereka itu mengungsi dulu begitu, ya itu.

KAS: Kalau kadang-kadang di tempat lain di Indonesia, waktu saya bicara dengan orang Indonesia, asal dari tempat lain, mereka bilang: ‘Oh, tidak ada orang Muslim Minahasa,
semua orang Minahasa orang Kristen,’ dan saya tidak setuju, tapi mungkin sekarang sudah ada orang Muslim Minahasa...


Pp. 263 – 264


Kehidupan antara Muslim dan Non Muslim, termasuk Kristen di sini baik, kerjasama ada semua, kegotongroyongan ada, apalagi semua kegiatan-kegiatan langsung terlibat, artinya ikut serta dalam semua kegiatan. Ya tidak mengenal ada perbedaan agama, misalnya kalau orang membungun Gereja, orang Muslim juga bantu, dan sebagainya. Ya begitulah, sampai
di Romboken ini ya, kerukunan dan keamanan antara Muslim di sini maksudnya tetap terlihat bagus, begitu keadaannya di sini. asal pertama yang masuk ke Romboken ini asalnya dari Gorontalo, yang awal masuk ke sini, lalu di kemudian hari, ada yang dari suku-suku lain, karena kawin-mawin misalnya ada suku lain suka kawin di sini, dengan gadis-gadis Muslim, tapi memang pada awalnya, yang ada di Romboken ini orang Gorontalo. Ya seperti kita juga, kalau ayah saya juga dari Jaton ayahnya, ya cuma datang karena kawin di sini, ya gitu.

Pp. 264 – 265

Pak Kridosono: Anda bisa melihat bagaimana di sini kalo Idul Fitri orang Kristen mendatangi, perayaan itu, dan kalo Natal, orang Islam juga pergi. Jadi kalau ditarik atau dikembalikan lagi dengan kasus Jawa Tondano atau komunitas Jawa Tondano, itu memang sudah ada sejarahnya, sejak keabad 19th kita sudah seperti itu. Saya pernah meneliti juga bagaimana beberapa tokoh Kristen yang ada di Tondano pada waktu ah menerima kaum muslim, walaupun Belanda waktu itu target adalah meisolasi mereka karna mereka datang tidak dengan pasangnya, tiada perempuan waktu itu, mereka akan punah, atau toh terjadi mereka akan menjadi orang Kristen. Tapi yang terjadi tidak ada, tidak conflict, tidak ada pertentangan yang berarti, bahkan kemudian ada kerjasama kebudayaan.


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Pp. 265 – 266

Pak Kridosono: Itu tidak pernah ada konflik agama yang dilakukan oleh penduduk asli terutama yang mestinya ktalua di tempat lain bisa terjadi. Di Minahasa tidak. Walaupun ini adalah majoritas Kristen, tetapi mereka tidak melakukan gugatan, pengusir, bahkan kawin-mawin. Ini indikator yang kita bisa lihat kenapa orang ... jadi sudah terbukti. orang Minahasa yang Kristen itu cenderung terbuka. Walaupun mereka sudah Kristen, Kristen itu tidak dijadikan alat untuk berkonflik, untuk menjadikan Kristen sebagai alasan ada agama lain, ada faham lain. Relatif tidak ada. Itu dasar dasarnya, jadi agama dan kemudian terutama bahwa agama di dalarnya itu adalah kebudayaan. Orang minahasa tidak mempunyai sejarah konflik seperti di dearah lain mereka punya sejarah perang,
pergantian pemimpin atau raja-raja, di minhaasa tidak. tidak punya. Sini hanya suku-
suku, atau kumpulan suku, atau suku sub-ethnic yang tidak punya sejarah perang. Tidak
ada koflik antara sub-ethnic di sini. Bahkan ketika Minahasa dikenal kita merurut sejarah,
sejarah demokrasi yang dikenal, adalah Batu Pinawetengan. Itu adalah ketika mereka
bertemu, bukan konflik yang mereka bicarakan, tapi membagi, anda ke mana, siapa
kemana, begitu, jadi begitu.

Pp. 266 – 267

Questioner: waktu orang pertama datang ke Gorontalo dan menikah dengan orang Minahasa,
semau masuk Kristen atau bagaimana dengan hal agama?

Oma S: Orang gorontalo kalo di Minahasa ini, itu perempuan masuk islam, ndak masuk Kristen.
Kecuali sekarang ini so ada. Ada yang so suka tu agama. Tapi, nimbole. Itu Katolik lagi ning
boleh orang yang Kristen toh apa...kaweng dang, tu agama dulu kan hanya tiga toh, Katolik,
Kristen, Islam. nanti sekarang so Pantekosta, banyak-banyak sekarang, rupa-rupa agama. Tapi
dulu nyanda, hanya tiga tiga itu nimbole baku kaweng orang Kristen deng orang Islam. Tapi serta so
pergolakan apa sama sudah sama so baku kaweng, tapi banyak juga itu mantu ini juga Kristen
Fam Supit dorang, setelah dorang kaweng, tapi dulu nimbole.

Questioner: Mar yang dulu, Oma pe tete dulu, yang Oma masuk Islam toh, boleh?

Tompek orang Gorontalo nimbole masuk Kristen.

Questioner: Trus itu Oma pe keluarga kasi dang? Oma pe keluarga yang Kristen kasih boleh?
boleh kaweng deng orang Islam? Yang dari keluarga kristen itu apa megijinkan?

Oma S: Boleh kawin, tapi laki-laki nimbole masuk Kristen.

Questioner: Ndak, maksudnya, yang dorang pe keluarga Kristen kasih dang, dong pe anak
masuk kristen?

Oma S: Iyo

Questioner: Kong dorang ndak mara?

Oma S: ndak

Questioner: Masi baku pigi dang?

Oma S: Iyo, sedangkan kalo mo bikin acara makan sama-sama. Dulu di Parepe sana, biar ikang
ini dang babi, tapi meja to panjang. Nyanda mau lepas bagitu to makanan, bawa piring,
mangkok, bawa leper apa semua, makang sama-sama, makang to nasi. Jadi biar baku ramai-
ramai makan, tapi ndak baku ambil sana ambil sini nya ndak, so tau. Minum so mesti bawa,
adat dulu.

Pp. 267 – 268

Questioner: Waktu setelah kaweng kong berkunjung apakah ada perasaan “Oh dorang Kristen,
torang Islam?” apakah so campur baur sampe skarang?

Page 268

Oma S: Waktu konflik Ternate dengan Ambon, to orang ndak ada perasaan takut, karena disini kan mayoritas kristen jadi semua so basudara, karena masing-masing kelurga tetap ada yang islam dan ada yang Kristen.

Pp. 268 – 269

KAS: Dan Om bilang tadi orang Muslim di sini, di Remboken asal dari Gorontalo, tapi orang muslim di sini merasa mereka sebagai orang Minahasa atau sebagai orang Gorontalo sekarang?

Haji Budi: Kalau menurut pengalaman saya, katakan begitu, pengelihatan saya, atau pengamatan saya, kalau orang Muslim di Remboken ini tidak ada, ya kalau dikatakan tadi berasa seperti orang Gorontalo lagi, mungkin tidak ada lagi. Anak-anak Remboken sekarang merasa memang orang Remboken, ya itu tadi kita kan besar di sini kan? Walaupun dulu juga, nenek moyang saya yang asal Jogja itu, Diponegoro kan, yang dibuang oleh Belanda ke sini, tapi saya merasa sebagai orang Minahasa, bahkan orang Romboken, begitu. Itu sebabnya, anak-anak Remboken, Muslim Remboken betah di Remboken, tidak ada kecenderungan, tidak ada rasa takut, pokoknya tidak ada, kecenderungan hidup berdampingan secara damai, karena mereka merasa bahwa mereka itu orang Romboken, anak-anak sini kan tidak tahu lagi bahasa Gorontalo. Semua bahasa Remboken, tahu semua itu.

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Pp. 269 – 270

Oma S: Banyak orang Gorontalo pindah ke Minahasa tapi Bitung, Manado, Remboken, Langowan, Kawangkoan juga ada, jadi kata kalo rupa fam Sumat itu banyak basudara to jadi
dorang kaweng· kaweng deng orang orang gunung jadi so banyak, tong pe tetek 4 bini, 4 ada anak, tu lain hanya satu · satu dang

Questioner: Empat binik, orang Remboken semua?


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KAS: Tapi Anda rasa sebagai orang Minahasa?

Oma S: Ya, Minahasa

KAS: Ndak Gorontalo?


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Haji Budi:

KAS: Bisa berbahasa dalam bahasa daerah ini?

Haji Budi: Bisa

KAS: Bahasa apa?

Haji Budi: Remboken

KAS: Remboken, itu seperti bahasa Tombulu? Atau ada logat?


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Page 275


275 – 276

KAS: Saya mau tanya itu, ada gerakan sekarang, di beberapa Gereja di Minahasa untuk melestarikan bahasa dan budaya. Supaya dalam kegiatan Gereja, mereka beribadah dalam bahasa Tambolu, dan ada maengket di dalam ibadah Kristen, dan saya ingin tahu kalau ada kebudayaan Minahasa di dalam gereja, bagaimana dengan orang Islam Minahasa di sini, bagaimana mereka ikut serta dalam melestarikan budaya Minahasa?


Pp. 277 – 288

KAS: Dan dulu, Bapak ikut serta dalam maengket di Romboken?

Haji Budi: Saya ikut waktu pemuda, saya ikut mapalu, itu ramai memang, biasanya waktu itu bawanya memang, sehubungan kalau saya ini punya tunangan, biasanya saya tidak kasih dia kerja, dia cuma ikut di kebun, misalnya tempat kerja, dia bawa handuk, bawa payung, ketika panas ataupun hujan, ya dia payungi kita. mapalus mawaratan. Ya itu kadang-kadang 50-60 orang, bahkan 100 orang, dahulu kala kan begitu, semua ikut terlibat, tidak ada yang terkecuali.

KAS: Semua? Orang Kristen, orang Islam?

Haji Budi: Iya, mapalus semua. Jadi saya tahu, mapalus and pakasa’an, itu semua kerjasama, gotong royong, dalam satu kampung.

KAS: Masih ada itu orang muda Islam ini yang ikut maengket?


Page 282

Oma S: Tapi sekarang,so nyanda, skarang kalo orang Kristen mau bikin acara, dorang undang
orang islam masak. Tapi dulu biar makan sama, seorong pe piring, nyanda baku malu dang bawa sendiri-sendiri. Tapi skarang so nyanda, orang Kristen kalo mau undang orang islam memasak, dorang kasi bawa ini ikan beras, kamu masak sendiri.

Oma juga bergaul dengan Kristen. Satu kali pergi ke Leilem dari oma bajual di pasar, rupa-rupa jualan dipasar, sampai dorang kawin-kawin, anak-anak memang tinggal di pasar terus, kong dorang undang pi Leilem, mar oma liat dulu, dudu di muka pintu, tengo’-tengo’ dapur, jang kurang kage, masak-masak kasana, dorang kurang angka di orang pe makanan sudah so pas kamari “oma makan” Kong oma bilang “Oma nimbole makang kalau abis naik oto, pusing, muntah,” padahal oma liat itu ikan no angka-angka dorang pe ikang situ, hanya pilih - pilih kemari, oma nimbole makang abis naik mobil, padahal oma liat, kalo kwa dorang memasak laeng to, bersih tapi ini hanya ikang di meja dong pilih-pilih, mar oma ndak makang.

Dari dulu kwa memang baku bergaul dang Kristen, Islam, tapi skarang komang so laeng, kalo orang kristen mau acara, dorang kasi ayam, beras, apa samua masa sandiri, jadi so bebas makang, tapi dorang biar makang deng torang, dorang suka, dari dorang kwa nyanda.

Pp. 282 – 283

Questioner: Mulai dipugar 30 tahun kemarin, kemudian kebudayaan Islam yang bisa berbaur dengan kebudayaan etnis Minahasa, saya pernah dengar ada itu?


Page 283

Tambahan lagi saya kawin dengan salah satu keluarga sumah, punya anak, jadi alhamdulillah dianggap sebagai orang Remboken dan memang oleh sebab itu barangkali suatu kebanggaan bagi jamaah di tempat ini sekaligus menjadi satu dorongan bagi jamaah kaum muslimin, insya allah ditahun tahun depan akan ada yang menyusul kami memenuhi panggilan Allah SWT.

Yang terakhir sekali, apabila dari keluarga menyiapkan hidangan yang pasti torang semua ya tak sama torang pe lidah, mungkin ada yang rasa terlalu bagaram terlalu pedis atau bagaimana, melalui kesempatan ini kami mohon maaf yang sebesar-besarnya. Mudah-mudahan kami dan kehadiran kita di tempat ini kan mendapat ridho dari Allah SWT. Yang terakhir barangkali informasi pada miss Kelli, inilah keberadaan kerukunan kami di Remboken ini karena ditengah-tengah kami banyak saudara-saudara kami yang non-muslim hadir. Kepada seluruh keluarga yang hadir saat ini, ada yang dari Menado ada yang dari Rorong Peuncak, yang dari Girian sudah sama-sama dengan kami dari Bitung, apalagi pak Lurah sudah sama-sama dengan kami, Kuntua tolong doakan kami pak. Torang pulang dari tanah suci Mekah torang boleh baku sapa dengan masyrakat disini lagi.


Bapak Ibu hadirin yang saya hormati oleh karena itu ada empat hajimah yang dapat kita laksanakan dalam pelaksanaan ibadah Haji. Yang pertama, mengakui lah dan yakinlah bahwa Sang adalah hamba yang lemah, bahwa tanpa kekuasaan Allah SWT, saya tidak dapat berbuat apa-apa, itu kita akui. Itu adalah peningkatan takwa kita, iman kita pada Allah Subhanwartallah yang mungkin tidak pernah kita alami di tanah air, di Minahasa, Remboken, kita tidak tahu apa yang akan kita alami di sana.
APPENDIX B
EXAMPLES OF BROCHURE/EVENT MATERIALS

1. Opening speech in the promotional material for the upacara adat at Watu Pinawetengan on July 7, 2008, part of the North Sulawesi Arts and Culture Festival in 2008. Speech by Benny Mamoto.
2. Brochure from the Guinness World Records Event, part of the North Sulawesi Arts and Culture Festival, October 31st, 2009, including the poem “Life’s Harmony” (*Harmoni Kehidupan*) by Benny Mamoto.
NORTH SULAWESI ART AND CULTURE FESTIVAL 2009  
(NSACF 2009)

Panitia mengundang Bapak/Ibu/Sdr-i untuk menghadiri dan menyaksikan Peristiwa Kebudayaan tingkat dunia di Sulawesi Utara yang akan ditandai dengan acara pemecahan rekor dunia, penyerahan sertifikat GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS untuk seni budaya Sulawesi Utara dan pagelaran budaya, yang akan dilaksanakan pada:

Hari: Sabtu  
tanggal: 31 Oktober 2009, jam 14.00 s.d. selesai  
Tempat: Stadion Maesa, Tondano, Minahasa, Sulawesi Utara  
Acara:
1. Pemecahan rekor dunia Musik Bambu dan Kolintang  
2. Pagelaran budaya 10 (sepuluh) dari Utara.  
3. Penyerahan sertifikat GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS kepada Komunitas Musik Bambu & Kolintang Sulawesi Utara

Panitia mengucapkan terima kasih atas perhatian, dukungan dan kehadirannya.  
Pakatuan wo pakalowiren.

Tondano, 25 Oktober 2009  
Ketua Umum

Dr. Benny J. Mamoto
SUSUNAN ACARA
NORTH SULAWESI ART AND CULTURE FESTIVAL 2009

Sabtu, 31 Oktober 2009

09.00 Seluruh peserta dan pengisi acara tiba di Stadion Maesa Tondano
13.00 Pemeriksaan oleh Adjudications Manager
   GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS
14.30 Tamu Undangan tiba
   Menteri Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata RI tiba
15.00 Ucapan selamat datang dari MC
dilanjutkan laporan Ketua Panitia
15.15 Pagelaran Kolintang massal
15.45 Pagelaran Musik Bambu massal
16.30 Pagelaran Seni Budaya 10 (sepuluh) dari Utara
17.00 Prosesi penyerahan sertifikat GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS
17.30 Sambutan Menteri Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata RI
17.45 Sambutan Gubernur Sulawesi Utara
18.00 Ucapan terima kasih dari Bupati Minahasa

KEGIATAN LAIN :
Kamis, 29 Oktober 2009 Seminar kebudayaan
Jumat, 30 Oktober 2009 Lokakarya dan Lomba Kolintang
Sabtu, 31 Oktober 2009 jam 19.00 di Wale Ne Tou
Minahasa, Tondano :
* Penyerahan Hadiah Lomba
* Penyerahan rekor MURI
* Fashion Show Kain motif Pinawetengan
3. Promotional brochure for *Kain Pinabetengan*, a textile designed to represent the North Sulawesi region with the incorporation of cultural symbols.
APPENDIX C

EXAMPLES OF CONTEXTUAL LITURGY

Alangkah bahagianya hidup rukun dan damai
Di dalam persaudaraan bagai minyak yang harum
Alangkah bahagianya, hidup rukun dan damai.

Totorz le'os e karia, sa mahle 'o-le'osan
Witu um pahtuarian, tamu mokan pahmolei
Kahriman en totorz le'os, sa mahle 'o-le'osan.

5. DOA PEMBUKAAN oleh Penimpin:

Opo empung Wailan wana Kasuruan simalengkew u
langit wo un tana’, tembone kai in oki-Mu,
imengalei wia Niko, pahpa’an kai e mahrewok wiai.
Kuramo ung kalelo wo u raraate na, Niko Empung
Wailan, ya tentumo ung kalelo wo u raraatenai wia
se makapalumpung nai.
Tongkorano-me kai keter wo kamang wangko
imaayang ani paayyang nai. Tia iwaya-waya kai
imasungkul u lewo ne kasuat tou, kaapa reges lewo,
kaapa papayaayang ne rei werewerenan.
Kenupe um pengalelen nai wia Niko Empung
Wailan.
Tuhan Allah, yang di tinggi, penyelenggara langit dan bumi.
Tjilah kami anakMu yang berdoa pada-Mu, kami yang
berkumpul di sini. Sebagaimana kerinduan serta kecintaan
kami pada-Mu Tuhan yang agung, begitu pun kerinduan
serta kecintaan kami terhadap leluhur kami. Berikanlah kami

kekuatan serta berkat melimpah untuk mengerjakan tugas
kami. Jangan biarkan kami saat menghadapi yang jahat,
sesama kami, atau bahaya, atau pekerjaan setan. Itulah
permohonan kami pada-Mu, Tuhan yang agung.

5. BACA PUISI (Zaim Rofiqi, Kompas 28-6-09)

AKU I

Bukan hitam sebab sebayang terang
Lamat-lamat masih menghampar
Di ujung pandang
Meski nyaris padam

Bukan putih secercah bayang
Seperti merintangi terang
Mengusik hamparan
Mengaburkan sudut kiri atau kanan
Sudut barat dan selatan.

Bukan hijau
Yang kadang membuatmu silau.
Bukan merah
Yang kadang membuatmu terbakar
Bukan kuning
Yang bahkan membuatmu kuyu
Bukan biru
Yang kadang membuatmu menangis.
Aku, abu-abu:
Hamparan antara.
Lapangan mungkin.
Dataran barangkali
Bentangan entah.

Bersamaku, kau tak akan jadi buta
Karena kelam
Atau cahaya.

Bersamaku, kau masih bisa melangkah
Meski meraba.

Bersamaku, kau akan selalu terjaga
Sebab kau akan tersesat,
Atau menemukan tenggara.

Bersamaku, kau akan selalu siaga
Sebab kau harus terus bertanya:
Bentangan yang terhampar
Apa memang menuju barat,
Atau utara?

6. NYANYIAN KAREMA.

Niakumo si mawe’e-na’ase, yah wiamo ang kaayaan
Yah werenanku an tana’, aleme’ loyot kampe’,

Si suatan mahra’ar sumena-mena’
Ta’an ka’asi’i umpele-peleng rima’i-za’i.
Ref: (sewua) e oway, e royore.

Wo aku sumaru sendangan-timu’
Yah sinumpak umberekenku un akel matutung
Yah tumaraktak an taliwatu maharagos
Wo ni’ileku tawi ni’itu, sumoso’ane mengasin.
Ref: E oway, e royore.

Wo mawiling aku, sumaru sendangan-amian
Yah kinapateseanku un assa retik
Yah mahtou karete ni’itu un tu’is rawir
Wo rimuru’ mawire-wirei u lahit imbene.
Ref: E oway, e royore.

Tumondong aku mapasaru amian-talikuran
Yah kinawerananku witu un wangelei ne kotulus
Yah karurur’karate ni’itu un wawali kundamah
Yah minahlung ni’itu un tewasen ne rumopa
Ref: E oway, e royore.

Kamurian aku mapasaru timu-talikuran
Yah kapatesanku ma witu un ayamen ka’ukur
Yah sanaremong witu un tambelang tumitikak
Taan un antang witunate si raara, menorome niaku
Ref: E oway, e royore.

Liwiganku sia sa apa ung ngaranaka
Yah mingkot sia: Lumimu’ut ung ngaranaka
Yah tentukan kasi’i sia limawang ung ngaranaka
Wo totoseku ung ngaranaka: Karema ne rumages
Ref: E oway, e royore.


Orang-orang itu mendengarkan tanpa kesan. Akhirnya pemimpin kelompok itu berkata, “Serangga juga dapat melakukannya”.

‘Dan yang lebih istimewa adalah, mereka gembira!”

Sesudah beberapa ribu tahun, kita sudah begitu maju, sehingga kita memberi palang pintu dan jendela kita pada malam hari, sedang bangsa-bangsa yang kurang ‘maju’ tidur di pondok yang terbuka.

10. PAHNUMU’EN. Pak Benny MAMOTO.

11. Nyanyi bersama: ONETE TANDA MATA.

Kapia maka lupa, onete tanda mata (2x)
Onete ta natan tute, suapa ikau ne ya ne sene

To ondei to mapito’, one suka rekena (2x)
Undu-unduman le pira, suapa ikau ne ya ne sene
Jangan dilupakan tanda mata, tanda mata yang sudah ada
Di mana pun kau berada saya pun ada di situ.
Teman yang baik hati tetap dikenang
Walau kau di tempat yang jauh,
ingatlah terus saya pun di situ.

12. Doa SYAFAAT.

P.: Mahtuari peleng, marilah kita panjatkan doa
Kepada Allah yang Maha Pengasih dan Penyayang
yang senantiasa menyertai perjalanan hidup kita
dengan rakhmat dan kasih-Nya. Mohon sesudah tiap
ujud, kita doakan dan nyanyi bersama:
Empung Wallan, tembo-tembone,
Tembo-tembone se mengale-ngale.

1. Untuk bangsa Indonesia:
Ya Bapa, sudilah memberkati bangsa dan negara kami yang tercinta, Indonesia, khususnya dalam penyelenggaraan pemilihan Presiden nanti. Semoga proses pemilihan ini berjalan aman, lancar, tertib,
dan damai, dan semoga calon yang terpilih mampu
mengarahkan negara dan bangsa ini menuju kesejahteraan bersama.
Empung Wailan...

2. Untuk warga tanah To’ar Lumimu’ut:
Ya Bapa, kami se bagian kecil warga Minahasa yang berkumpul di batu Pinabetengan ini, hendak mendoakan saudara-saudari se warga di mana pun mereka berada. Jauhkanlah mereka dari mara bahaya dan bencana, berikanlah reseki se tiap hari, dan semoga persatuan dan kesatuan yang diidamkan dapat diwujudnyatakan dalam hidup.
Empung Wailan...

3. Untuk para pencinta dan pemerhati budaya:
Ya Bapa, hidup manusia tak bermakna bila tidak dilandasi nilai-nilai yang luahir dari pada-Mu. Semoga para pemerhati dan pencinta budaya, khususnya dari kawasan Utara Indonesia ini, mampu mengembangkan kreasi dan produksi mereka, sehingga jati diri kami mendapatkan dasar yang kokoh lewat nilai-nilai kemanusiaan yang luahir dan bermartabat.
Empung Wailan...

4. Bagi kami yang hadir di sini:
Ya Bapa, kami yang berkumpul malam ini di sini hendak mengenangkkan karya dan dharma bakti para leluhur kami, dan serentak mengukuahkan niat kami bersama untuk mengembangkan hidup secara lebih adil, damai dan dipenuhi dengan cinta kasih.
Semoga niat-niat kami ini mendapatkan restu dan berkat daripada-Mu.
Empung Wailan...

P.: Semua ujud yang kami panjatkan ini kami satukan dengan doa bersama seluruh warga Minahasa, dengan menyanyikan lagu: OPO WANANATASE.

13. BERKAT.


Semoga berkat Allah yang mahakuasa: Bapa, Putera dan Roh Kudus, turun atas saudara sekalian dan senantiasa menyertai saudara.

Amin, amin, amin.
14. REKREASI: NYANYI MAKAARUYEN

Secara bergilir masing-masing kelompok bergantian mendorong lagu-lagu rakyat yang disiapkan.

15. API UNGGUN.

Menjelang jam 24.00, seluruh hadirin membawa obor dan memasang api unggun yang sudah disiapkan. Kemudian semuanya tetap berdiri, membentuk lingkaran mengelilingi api unggun ini dan sambil berpegang tangan menyanyi bersama:

ESA MOKAN GENANGKU WIA NIKO
Tiamo marua-rua genang e karla
Mengat, ngake, utaw nan pakatuk paka wonder
Kita waya.

Penyusun dan penanggungjawab: P.R. Renwarin pr.
Batu Pinabetengan, 6-7 Juli 2009.
2. Liturgical guide for a contextual liturgy at Imanuel Lolah GMIM church, (formerly GMIM El’Fatah Lolah) in 2008, written by the Cultural Commission
Jamaat: Sia simahwali-wali wo mehemo ung kamangNa wia ung gerejata, in tarekan meikaayo witu un taun'na sanahatus enem napulu,
(karena Tuhanlah yang telah menyertai dan memberkati gereja kita sehingga saat ini telah mencapai usianya yang ke-160 tahun)
P : Ya meimo...kiita lumooz mahwali-wali kuria ang kakantarenta, se pakasa musik bambu, zazzien, wo maengkiet. Meimo ta Lumoor Si Empung kuria unate mahpa-paaz wo mapaya ung pengaleyenta wia ni Sin.
(marilah kita mengucap syukur bersama-sama dengan nyanyian-nyanyian kita, musik bambu, dan tari-tarian. Marilah kita mengagungkan Tuhan dengan sukacita dan mengangkat doa-doa kita kepadanya).

Trio : O Empung reng-engan...tembonome kai nmarewok e royor...
Jamaat : O Empung reng-engan...tembonome kai nmarewok e royor...
Trio : I pahwali-walime...witu u lalan kawangunan e royor...
Jamaat : I pahwali-walime...witu u lalan kawangunan e royor...
Trio : I zou-zou mange...witu u lalan kawewo e royor...
Jamaat : I zou-zou mange...witu u lalan kawewo e royor...
Trio : Roroane ung kamang...witu um pemandungennai e royor...
Jamaat : Roroane ung kamang...witu um pemandungennai e royor...

Tuhan yang pengasih lihatlah kami yang sekarang berkumpul
Tuntunlah kami ke jalan yang benar
Jauhkanlah kami dari jalan yang jahat
Berkatilah kami dalam segala kebutuhan kami.

PAKAULITAN A SUMALA (Pengakuan Dosa)
P : Tua wo katuari, kita e tumam. Makalaker kita lumeos andei wangi wia se kasuat tou,
√

kita limangkoyo witu unmutaza ni Empung. Meliau kita makaulit ang kasunalaanta wia Si

Empung.
(Saudara-saudara kita hanyalah manusia biasa. Banyak kali kita melakukan dosa dan
desakahan terhadap sesama kita, kita melanggar perintah-perintah Tuhan. Marilah kita
mengaku dosa kita kepadanya Tuhan)

Jamaat : 3 5 5 .6 6 7 6 .5 5 3 5 .3 3 2 3 .0
O po Wa- na -na -ta -se am -pu -nga ne - ni -ka -i -e
(Tuhan yang di tinggi ampunilah kami)

P : Empung kawasa wana a ngkakawasan, ampunganne ung gereja nai.
Witu u ngkawilanna naselat ne lengkey
Witu u ngkinaindeanna naselat a ngkaskaulitan
Witu ung katalosonna naselat ne nyempis
Witu u zi' spandungna tu ngkarimukmukan a nyimekMu

Tuhan yang Mahakusa, ampunilah gerejaMu
Atas kekayaannya diantaranya miskin
Atas ketakutaninya diantaranya kehidukulitan
Atas kepengoccomannya diantaranya yang tertindas
Atas ketidakpeduliannya ditengah-tengah penghancuran ciptaanMu.

Jamaat : 3 5 5 .6 6 7 6 .5 5 3 5 .3 3 2 3 .0
O po Wa- na -na -ta -se am -pu -nga ne - ni -ka -i -e
(Tuhan yang di tinggi ampunilah kami)

P : Empung wuta rara'tean, ampunganne kai
Witu u zi tablos maeman nai wia niKo
Witu u zi tablos memandung nai, u ngkinolanoanMu
Witu u zi tablos maeman nai, witu ngkawilannaMu
Witu u zi tablos maeman nai, witu rara'teanMu.

Tuhan yang pernah kasih, ampunilah kami,
Atas kekurang-yakinan kami dalam Dikau
Kurangnya harapan kami dalam kerajaanMu.
Kurangnya keyakinan kami dalam kehadiranMu
Kurangnya percaya kami dalam pengasihanMu

Jamaat: 3 5 5 . 6 6 7 6 . 5 5 3 5 . 3 3 2 3 . 0
O po Wa- na -na -ta -se am -pu -nga ne - ni -ka -i - e
(Tuhan yang di tinggi ampunlah kami)

P: Empung a ngkadamam,
Wenene kai witu u ntesaMu karia ne touMu
Ahkite ne kai witu katoaban ulit
Tuneenne kai intumerina u nengali ni Kristus
Imekene kai wo ketezene witu u ngkungkungan Roh Lenas.
Wehane nana’u sa’ kai zeimo si nanau

Tuhan yang domai
Baharuih kami ke dalam perjanjiamu dengan umatMu
Bawalah kami kepada pertobatan yang benar
Ajarlah kami menerima pengorbanan Kristus
Jadikanlah kami kuat dalam linungan Roh KudusMu
Tandaiah kami jika kami kehilangan identitas.

Jamaat: 3 5 5 . 6 6 7 6 . 5 5 3 5 . 3 3 2 3 . 0
O po Wa- na -na -ta -se am -pu -nga ne - ni -ka -i - e
(Tuhan yang di tinggi ampunlah kami)

P: Peleng ampengaleyen nai kenu, ipapa’ayo nai wia niko, karia ungaran ni Oki’Mu Lenas Yesus Kristus. Amin.
(suatu doa pengakuan ini kami sampaikan kepadaMu hanya di dalam nama AnakMu yang kudus Yesus Kristus. Amin)

Jamaat: Kumantar: “Ngaran Yesus Talinganu” (Nama Yesus Berkumandang)
1. Ngaran Yesus talinganu karerenteng kulyaan
Ngaran Yesus mspaayo ngkalawizen ne tou
Talinganun tateLawha tezamo a lewo’mu
Peleng se maemen sia tinerungan lengenNa
Reff: : Yesus ko si sena’ rondo wongke nu ma nateku
Rumuges rara’teanu wo rumooz ngranNu

2. Ngaran Yesus serit wanguh simeri wamunatu
Witu sena’ rara’tean totoz lenas genangMu
UngaranNa e rahuwoho peleng ang ksusuan
Sena rara’tecanNa si memaka si lewo
Reff: : Yesus ko si sena’ rondo wongke nu ma nateku
Rumuges rara’teanu wo rumooz ngranNu

U SESESA NI EMPUNG (Pembacaan Firman Tuhan)
P: Ka pu’unaan kita imaca ung kaol, wo napah gegenang, memo kita mengaley
Ung ketez si Roh Lenas:
O Roh Lenas. Wiuka a nume ung genang nai peleng, wo kai leos gumenang a SesesaMu, wo kai zei makaluz, mahpalulum un pa’emanan nai wia niko Empung
Ama, Empung Yesus Pakasa ni Roh Lenas. Amin.
(Sebelum kita membaca Firman Tuhan, dan meremungkanya, mariilah kita memohon kekuatan Roh Kudus:
Ya Roh Kudus, bokalai hati dan pikiran kami supaya kami selalu mengingat akan FirmanMu, kami tidak lupa, dan tidak terombang-ambing akan iman percaya kami kepadaMu ya Allah bapa, Putera dan Roh Kudus, Amin.)

(Macaung Ung Kaol……)
-Pembacaan Alkitab
KAKANTAREN NE PAKASA KOLOM 15, 16
ASESESA (Khotbah)
Jamaat: Kumantar karía musik bambu "KANTARENE WIA NI AKU"/"NYANYIKAN LAGI BAGIKU"
Kantarené wia ni'aku 'nTaaz Kaulitan,
Totoz i makaarüten, 'nTaaz Kaulitan.
Umakapaazen, tatu" menäku.
Refr. Wangun rondo, kalawizan, 'nTaaz Kaulitan,
   Wangun rondo, kalawizan, 'nTaaz Kaulitan,
KAKANTAREN NE PAKASA SÉ SÁKEY/UNDANGAN
RARAGESAN (Persembahan)
P : Ni itumo tua wo katuari, pahpaan u rara'nate ni Empung, niaku mehe u sesesa wia nikamu, wo kamu maapaayo unawikmu tanu ung raragesan wangen wo lemas tanu ung kapanz ni Empung, pahpa'an nitumo ung raragesanu leos.
Meimo kita mahali ung raragesanta karía un nate mahpa-paaz wia si Opo Empung. Kareasa kita mehe ung raragesanta kita kumanar kakanarina.
(Karena itu saudara-saudara, demi kemurahan Allah aku menasehatkan kamu supaya kamu mempersembahkan tubuhmu sebagai persembahan yang hidup, kudus dan berkelen kepada Allah karena itulah ibadahmu yang sejati, Marilah kita membawa persembahan dengan hati penuh syukur pada Allah. Sementara memberikan persembahan kita menyanyi bersama...)

"ÉRÉ' AN UNTUNGKU"/BESARLAH UNTUNGKU"
1. Jamaat : Érê' an untungku, sa Sí Jesus anaku
   Lenas unaté' é ku, a léos pahwehêNa,
   Zozo' regas regas, enderohon kahyuan,
   Enté unatéku, j Sí Jesus anaku.
Refr. Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Sa totoz lekepo o Sí Jesus in anaku.
2. Se Wewene : Maan ing'kan siapa kapunyaa t'kahyaaan,
   Taan zëli'kan susa zëli'kan rawoi wo wendu,
   Pahpaan 'nggenangku, sa Sí Jesus anaku,
   Ya totoz lekepo wamong pinayangku.
Jamaat
Refr. Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Sa totoz lekepo o Sí Jesus in anaku.
3. Se Tuama : Zozo' i lekepo s'Jesus susuutanku,
   Tiaan kasusaan wendo rawoi ma'ento',
   Wia 'ngkaayahaa aku tutû' merang,
   Ti wale-Na lenas ens'mokan tooku.
Jamaat
Refr. Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Sa totoz lekepo o Sí Jesus in anaku.
4. Jamaat : Tarékankanatou wito mo 'ngkarondozan,
   Tu rara'teân-Na totozo kan pelesir,
   Taaz talinganku Sí Jesus èn anaku,
   "Ko la sungkuten-Ku, witi wale ni'Ama'-Ku"
Refr. Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Ulit, ulit, érê an untungku,
   Sa totoz lekepo o Sí Jesus in anaku.

Musik Bambu.................................
P : Meimo sumombayang...
Opo Empung wana ung kalawizen, witu rara’teanu meiromu wia niki,
Ipapayo nai wia niko wisa utotoz wugun witu un tou-touan nai. Kamangene
ung raragasan nai, ni itu em pakeen nai lumooz ungaranNu. Amin.
(Mari berdoa: Tuhan yang kekal, dari kemurahan pemberianMu atas kehidupan dan semua
sumber, kami persembahkan kepadaMu, apa yang terbakat dari kehidupan kami. Berkatiilah
persembahan kami yang akan kami pakai untuk kemuliaan namaku. Amin)

MAPA’AYO UNG MAKASE (runsendai) (Litani Pengucapan Syukur/ berdiri)

Jamaat: 3 2 1 7 6 5 7 6 ..0 3 2 3 5 3 2 3 3 ..0
Ka-i me-nga-ley wia siEm-pung Ka- i me- nga-ley wia siEm-pung
6 7 1 7 5 3 4 5 6 5 3 1 3 2 1 7 6 5 7 6 ..0
Ka-i -me-nga-a- ley Ka-i -me-nga-a- ley Ka- i me- nga- ley wia siEm-pung
(Kami menaikkan doa kami kepadaMu Tuhan...)

P : Sana hatus enem napulu nataun, limangkoya niko e nimatume si a’tauan Wilken memo
kimeroz untanenem Injil wia mbanua Lolah untotez makara’teen kenu. Makase tentu ung
kalake O Empung Lenas.
(160 tahun yang lalu Engkau telah mengutus Missionaris Wilken menaburkan benih-benih
Injil di desa Lolah tercinta ini, terima kasih banyak Tuhan Mahakudus)

Jamaat: Kai mengaley wia Si Empung.... (ikantar)
(Kami menaikkan doa kami kepadaMu ya Tuhan)

P : Tatanemen iti en timos anmuame ambu’ut a ma paemelan, ampengaleyen, wu rumaraa
twu um pahsotouan nai peleng. Makase tentu ung kalakeg O Empung Lenas.
(Benih-benih Injil itu telah bertumbuh dan menghasilkan buah-buah iman, pengharapan
dan kasih di tengah kehidupan kami. Terima kasih banyak, O Tuhan Yang Mahakudus.)

Jamaat: Kai mengaley wia Si Empung.... (ikantar)
(Kami menaikkan doa kami kepadaMu ya Tuhan)

P : Peleng an mokai wo zei sima’wa wo ampengalai linangkoy naimome peleng witu
amahimek um paemanan gereja nai. Niko rimorohme ung genang leos wo ung ketez wia niki
peleng. Makase tentu ung kalakeg O Empung Lenas.
( Berbagai rintangan, keluair dan pergunuluden telah kami lalai bersama ditengah-tengah
perjuangan iman gereja kami. Engkau telah mengasahgerahak hikmat dan kekuatan pada
kami semua. Terima kasih banyak o Tuhan Yang Mahakudus.)

Jamaat: Kai mengaley wia Si Empung.... (ikantar)
(Kami menaikkan doa kami kepadaMu ya Tuhan)

P : Peleng a makapaazzen wo a kamang witu um pemandangan nai, tu mpaayangen nai, witu
kaselewiren gereja nai, sumahisi, maesu tu rewok, wo sumelewir. Makase tentu ung kalakeg
O Empung Lenas.
(Limpah nuh sukacita dan berkat kami rasakan ditengah tugas pelayanan gereja kami,
bersaksi, berseru dan melayani. Terima kasih banyak O Tuhan Yang Mahakudus.)

Jamaat: Kai mengaley wia Si Empung.... (ikantar)
(Kami menaikkan doa kami kepadaMu ya Tuhan)

P : Tu nendo kenu kai kumuruz, wo mongkot wo lumooz Niko pahpaan unumur gereja nai e
moikaayo tu sanahatus enem napulu. Abkitene kai tu toutouan nai ingkumonta witu
numerus untoutouan nai imilek unendo maheye karia ung ketez tu mpaemanan nai en tantu u
rorohMu. Kenumo um pengaleyen nai wia niKo karia u ngaran ni OkiMu Lenas Yesus
Kristus.Amin.
(Sujud syukur hari ini kami persembahkan padaMu atas usia gereja kami yang ke-160, tunjukkan kami menapaki kehidupan selanjutnya, menatap hari esok dengan semangat iman dan kepastian akan amalMu.)

UNGKUMUSI (berkat)
Jamaat : Kumantar "GEREJA TANU ’MAN LONDÉI”/GEREJA BAGAI BAHERA
1. Gereja tanu ‘man londéi ti’nastik rinbengbeng,
    Um wéhehan un angean Ti panté kasaru,
    Ya mëhëmo sempa’ reges, erat wo tila ‘pong,
    Lëos wo léwo’ sinaru, pendis mahéléwe,
    Meligawo se zimaké, karía un indé’;
    Totoz zou’ pé’nungean, toro lasuwaan!
    Refr. Empung savangan, Empung savangan,
    sa Ko zé’kan witu kai kakelewo, empungku sawangan.

2. Gereja tanu man londéi, atoren ni tou,
    Pëlëng sé tou maayang, kït pa’yangenna,
    Totoz mahesa-esaan, lumetek wo mezen,
    Tanu mé ikua ni sia, n’itu mpa’ yangenna,
    Nesa ni Aseng Lenas, mahimek mahuezu’;
    Witu uman rara’lëan, pa’iman anenté
    Refr. Empung savangan, Empung savangan,
    sa Ko zé’kan witu kai kakelewo, empungku sawangan.

P : Opo Empung matau ampele-peleng, sa’toro lenasmumu um pinasungkulan nai kenu. Sa’toro ung ketezMu irorohmu wia niki peleng.
(Ya Tuhan kehidupan dan sejarah, kiranya Engkau mengadakan acara kami ini. kiranya keksatan dari padaMu di eraikan bagi kami semua)

Trio : Mengale-ngaley uman…pakatuw pakalawire e royor...
Jamaat : Mengale-ngaley uman…pakatuw pakalawire e royor...
Trio : U kamang nyopo Empung…mawali-wali kita peleng e royor...
Jamaat : U kamang nyopo Empung…mawali-wali kita peleng e royor...

(Jamaat mahayo lengen)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adat</td>
<td>tradition, custom, traditional law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adat-istiadat</td>
<td>traditional practices and rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agama</td>
<td>religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arisan</td>
<td>informal, social banking system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bia</td>
<td>conch shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bupati</td>
<td>district head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desa</td>
<td>village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doa</td>
<td>prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fam</td>
<td>family name, surname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foso (BT)</td>
<td>traditional Minahasan feasting practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gotong-royong</td>
<td>mutual help, cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ibadah</td>
<td>church service/worship service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irama</td>
<td>rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kabupaten</td>
<td>district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kasih</td>
<td>love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kawin-mawin (BM)</td>
<td>intermarriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kebudayaan</td>
<td>culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kecamatan</td>
<td>sub-district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kepala desa</td>
<td>village head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kepercayaan</td>
<td>belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kerukunen beragama</td>
<td>religious harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keter (BT)</td>
<td>bravery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kolintang</td>
<td>wooden xylophone-like instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maengket</td>
<td>Minahasan life-cycle ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manguni (BT)</td>
<td>owl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mapalus (BT)</td>
<td>village cooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marga</td>
<td>family line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masyarakat adat</td>
<td>cultural/traditional community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orang pribumi</td>
<td>indigenous person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pakasa'an (BT)</td>
<td>tribal confederation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seni-budaya</td>
<td>Cultural art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanah Suci</td>
<td>Holy Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torang samua basudara (BM)</td>
<td>We are all brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonaas (BT)</td>
<td>traditional leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walak (BT)</td>
<td>pre-colonial social unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACRONYMS AND NAMES

**AMAN**: *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*  
The Indigenous People's Alliance of the Archipelago

**BKSAUA**: *Badan Kerja Sama Antar Umat Beragama*  
Organization for Cooperation between Religious Groups

**DepHukum**: Departamen Hukum  
Department of Law

**DPRD**: *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*  
Regional House of Representatives

**GOLKAR**: *Golongan Karya*  
Functional Group Party

**GMIM**: *Gereja Masehi Injili di Minahasa*  
The Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa

**Indische Kerk**  
The Netherlands State Church

**Kesbangpol**: *Badan Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik*  
Body for National Political Unity

**KNIL**: *Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger*  
Royal Netherlands East Indies Army

**Komnas Ham**: *Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia*  
National Commission for Human Rights

**MINUT**: *Minahasa Utara*  
North Minahasa

**MITRA**: Minahasa Tenggara  
Southeast Minahasa

**MULO**: *Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*  
Primary School for Natives

**NICA**: *Nederlandsch Indie Civil Administratie*  
Netherlands Indies Civil Organization

**NZG**: *Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap*  
Netherlands Missionary Society
ORMAS: *Organasasi Massa*
Civil Organization

PemProv: *Pemerintah Propinsi*
Provincial government

Perda: *Peraturan daerah*
Regional regulations

PRRI/PERMESTA: (Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republic Indonesia/Perjuangan Semesta
Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia/Universal Struggle

SARA: *Suku, Agama, Ras, Antar-golongan*
Ethnicity, Religion, Race, Inter-group relations

SK: *Surat Keputusan*
Governmental Decree

STAIN: *Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri*
State Islamic School

TNI: *Tentara Negara Indonesia*
Indonesian army
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Ammerell, Gene
Andaya, Barbara


Andaya, Leonard


Anderson, Benedict


Anderson, Benedict


Appadurai, Arjun


Aragon, Lorraine


Aritonang, Jan Sihar, and Karel Steenbrink


Armstrong, M. Jocelyn


Asad, Talal


Asad, Talal


Austin· Broos, Diane

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Beteille, Andre

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Boellstorff, Tom

Bowen, John Richard

Bowman, Glenn

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Briggs, Charles L.

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