

MANIPULATING ETHNIC TRADITION: THE FUNERAL CEREMONY, TOURISM, AND TELEVISION AMONG THE TORAJA OF SULAWESI

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Introduction

Focusing on a single funeral ceremony among the Toraja of Sulawesi, this article examines Toraja ethnic culture within broader—not only local but also national and global—socioeconomic contexts, with special reference to the development of tourism in the region, and to Japanese television which filmed the funeral. In so doing, the paper attempts to depict the dynamic way in which an ethnic culture is “staged” in the contemporary “post-modern” setting.¹

Following Fredrick Jameson, by the term “postmodern” I mean here a new socioeconomic mode of “late capitalism” which is characterized by the emergence of new kinds of social forms—postindustrial society, multinational capitalism, consumer society, media society, and so forth.² One of the most challenging things in the “postmodern” setting for anthropology is the way in which culture exists. Nowadays culture is necessarily involved in processes such as “globalization,” “creolization,” “displacement,” “fragmentation,” and “commoditization.” This situation raises serious questions for the anthropological study of culture. Examining his own experience in Nigeria, West Africa, Ulf Hannerz has proposed

¹ Slightly different versions of this article have been presented at the symposium on “New Dimensions of Tourism Studies” at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, July 1–3, 1993, and at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, November 17–21, 1993. I would like to thank my former colleague, Jerry Eades, for his initial English editing of the article. The fieldwork in 1992 on which the paper is based was made possible as a part of the research project on “Cultural Cooperation” financially supported by the NIRA (National Institute of Research Advancement), Japan. I did my initial sixteen months of fieldwork in Tana Toraja from 1976 to 1978 with a scholarship provided by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and have revisited the field several times during the 15 years since then. The 1992 visit was the latest one.

² Fredrick Jameson, *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991). Also see “Postmodernism and Consumer Society,” in *Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (London and Sydney: Pluto Press, 1987) pp. 111–25.

the need for a “macro-anthropology of culture” to study culture in the “global ecumene” or global interconnections.³ I will develop this theme here by examining the Toraja case from Indonesia.

Tana Toraja, or Torajaland, is a *kabupaten* (regency) located in the Sulawesi highlands, about 300 kilometers to the north of Ujung Pandang, the capital city of South Sulawesi Province. Today the regency has approximately 350,000 people. Toraja people are traditionally wet-rice cultivators on terraced mountain paddy fields, and now they also plant cash crops such as coffee and cloves. Bordered by mountains, the Toraja region was relatively isolated from the outside world until it became one of the last regions of Indonesia to fall under Dutch control in 1906. Thus scholars have long noted that Toraja culture may be representative of a prototypical Southeast Asian cultural tradition.⁴ It is misleading, however, to portray Toraja culture as static. Christianity was introduced under Dutch control in 1913, and the pace of social change has quickened as the people migrated to urban centers in Indonesia and with the rise of international tourism, especially over the last twenty years.

Between late October and early November, 1992, I attended the funeral of my former acquaintance, Puang Mengkendek, an aristocratic ex-*bupati* (regent) of Tana Toraja who passed away in December 1991. I had known him since 1976 when I started my fieldwork in the region. At that time he was the *bupati*, and I lived at his mother's house located at Minanga, a village in the southern district called Mengkendek. In this sense the funeral was for me the object not only of anthropological observation but also of participation.

In the following, I will first make a rough sketch of the funeral of Puang Mengkendek which I observed. Second, I will make some analytical comments about these observations. The focus of analysis will be on the remaking of ethnic tradition against the background of changing contemporary Toraja society.

Puang Mengkendek's Funeral

The Death of Puang Mengkendek

Puang Mengkendek, or Jacob Kadong Andilolo, died in Ujung Pandang in December 1991 at the age of 62. As mentioned above, he was a Toraja aristocrat: he was the son of Puang Mengkendek, the Lord of Mengkendek. “Puang Mengkendek” is therefore the title which he inherited from his father, although I did not learn this during his lifetime. Mengkendek was one of the petty kingdoms called *Tallu Lembangna* in the southern part of Tana Toraja before Dutch colonial rule, which became *kecamatan* (districts), an administrative division of the regency. The title *puang* is used for the aristocrats in the former *Tallu Lembangna* region.

In his personal career, Puang Mengkendek was a military man who was promoted finally to colonel. He was appointed as the *bupati*, or regent of Tana Toraja in 1974, and held this position for ten years until 1984. After his retirement as *bupati*, he became a consultant to the regency from 1984 to 1985, then in 1987 he was elected a member of parliament for South Sulawesi Province and remained in this position until his death. Under Suharto's regime, it is usual for military men to hold such positions in the government bureaucracy.

³ Ulf Hannerz, “The World in Creolization,” *Africa* 57 (1987): 546–59; “Culture Between Center and Periphery: Toward a Macro Anthropology,” *Ethnos* 54 (1989): 200–16; Robert J. Foster, “Making National Cultures in the Global Ecumene,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20 (1991): 325–60.

⁴ Robert Heine-Geldern, “Some Tribal Arts Styles of Southeast Asia,” in *The Many Faces of Primitive Art*, ed. Douglas Fraser (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 190.

Soon after his death, a family meeting decided that his funeral would be performed in his homeland, Tana Toraja, in September 1992. Although he was a Protestant Christian, the funeral was to be carried out according to the *adat* or traditional custom. It is very common now for the Christian Toraja to adopt "the traditional custom" for their funerals, because, they say, although their "belief" (*kepercayaan*) is Christianity, they are also Toraja, and most parts of the traditional funeral ceremony are customs of which they, too, as Christians, can make use.

According to Toraja custom, the method of carrying out a funeral is based on the social status of the deceased and the economic power of the deceased's family. The size of the funeral is demonstrated particularly by the number of buffaloes sacrificed during it. For Puang Mengkendek, considering his high aristocratic status and his economic, as well as political, power, the equivalent of the highest rank of funeral, called *dirapa'i*, was to be adopted.

It is interesting to note here that Sampe (a pseudonym), Puang Mengkendek's eldest son and the chief mourner, is not a Christian, but a Muslim. This is because he is married to a Muslim woman of the Gorontalo, North Sulawesi. The Andilolo family is not uniform in religious composition, reflecting a general trend in contemporary Toraja society. The Christian Puang Mengkendek's funeral was carried out by his Muslim son using traditional Toraja custom: a strange combination!

Although Puang Mengkendek's funeral ceremony was to be carried out in his homeland, Tana Toraja, of his ten children only two sons remain in Tana Toraja: one is now a member of the local parliament for Tana Toraja regency and the other is in business as a contractor. The rest of the children live in Ujung Pandang and Jakarta. Sampe usually resides in Ujung Pandang, but often goes to Jakarta because of his business. He therefore lives a nomadic life midway between the metropolitan center and the rural periphery. His lifestyle is not necessarily unusual for the contemporary Toraja people: they are nowadays actively involved in migration, *merantau* in Indonesian, to various urban areas of Indonesia.

A Letter from Sampe

In early February 1992, I got a letter from Sampe. This was the beginning of the story that I will tell here. In the letter, informing me of his father's death, he said he hoped that I would attend the funeral scheduled to be held in September. At the same time, he wrote, he was looking for a Japanese TV company to film the funeral. This was because, he wrote, his father was a man of the highest aristocracy and the funeral must be the biggest ceremony ever performed in Torajaland (the letter was originally in Indonesian).

Fortunately, there was a company which wanted to film the funeral. It was a good opportunity for the company as well, as it had already planned to film a Toraja funeral ceremony, which for a Japanese television audience, is an "exotic custom of primitive people." According to the proposal for this projected documentary, through the lens of the exotic Toraja funeral with its bloody animal sacrifices, the film would depict a human drama of life and death, which would cause cultural shock for a Japanese audience now unfamiliar with directly facing death.

I introduced the company to Sampe, who then sent a letter to them asking them to pay 125,000 US dollars as a "contract fee" for the filming. As far as I know, this was the first case in which the "contract fee" became an issue, although it is not unusual for foreign television teams to come to Toraja. Anyway, this was the beginning of negotiations which lasted till just before the funeral. In this process, Sampe asked me to negotiate with the company as a

“representative of Puang Mengkendek’s family.” However, I did not accept the proposal, because, as an anthropologist, I wanted to maintain a “neutral” position. The negotiations were therefore conducted directly between Sampe and the company. Later I heard that Sampe finally agreed on 20 million rupiah, approximately 10,000 US dollars which was actually given as a sort of “cooperation fee.”

It is true that a Toraja funeral involves a family in great expense. The total cost of the biggest funeral held in 1978, as estimated by the local newspaper then, amounted to 90 million rupiah or 120,000 US dollars based on the exchange rate at the time. This figure is correct, however, only if all the cost is calculated in money terms. What is really involved is not actual money, but access to buffaloes, pigs, rice, and so on. A funeral is still basically a social matter, but money has recently become more and more necessary and important. Against this general background of the increasing influence of money, Sampe’s behavior in looking for a Japanese TV company so that he could “market” his father’s funeral becomes understandable.

Although the majority of Toraja people are peasants, Sampe is a businessman in his forties. An associate of one of President Suharto’s sons in Jakarta, he runs several firms in Ujung Pandang, including a chopstick factory and an import-export business. He is also the *direktuur* (director) of a newly opened hotel in Tana Toraja, run by a hotel group based in Jakarta. In October 1992, when I visited Tana Toraja, part of the hotel had just opened, while most of it was still under construction. For Sampe, performing his father’s funeral and promoting his new hotel must have been closely interconnected.

It must be remembered here that it was Sampe who wanted to make use of television. In the contemporary “media society,” the Toraja are not necessarily passive nor backward. When I visited Tana Toraja in 1990, two years before Puang Mengkendek’s funeral, I was very impressed by the parabola antennas for receiving domestic as well as foreign broadcast programs which are erected even in village areas. As a Toraja tourist guide once commented, “we see the world on television every night.”⁵ And, of course, there are telephones and fax machines. Communication between Sampe and myself or the company was actually conducted mostly by fax or phone rather than letters.

Toward the Funeral

Puang Mengkendek died in Ujung Pandang, so the corpse was moved to Tana Toraja soon after the preliminary funeral which was performed shortly after his death in December 1991. After being moved to Toraja, the corpse was kept at his former residence at Batu Kila’, Mengkendek. It is usual for a corpse to be kept at home for a long time—from several months to even several years—while awaiting the later celebration.

Puang Mengkendek’s wife had died previously in March 1990 and had been buried at the Christian grave site in Ujung Pandang. In the family meeting, it was decided that a joint funeral would be carried out in Toraja for both Puang Mengkendek and his wife. Furthermore, in June 1992 his second son died suddenly in the middle of the preparation for his parents’ funeral. The funeral was thus finally to be performed for all three family members.

The main preparatory work for a funeral is to build the *rante*, the ceremonial field. As the *rante* for Puang Mengkendek’s funeral, an open field on the top of the hill near his house at Batu Kila’ was chosen, the same place where the funeral of his mother, Puang Minanga,

⁵ Valene Smith, ed., *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism* (2nd ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), p. 9.

had been held in 1990. Around the *rante* are built ceremonial shelters called *lantang* where families, relatives, and guests stay during the funeral. The construction of the *lantang* began in July and was completed just before the funeral. The work was performed using the *gotong-royong* (in Indonesian) system of reciprocal labor exchange within the local community, and the workers were not paid, although they were fed by the host family.

Although the funeral was originally scheduled to be held in September, the joint funeral of Puang Mengkendek's family actually began in October. The delay was caused, I heard, in order to adapt to the needs of the VIP guests from Jakarta whom Sampe had invited.

I myself arrived in Ujung Pandang on October 25 together with the Japanese TV team. I had come to Indonesia one week earlier, and joined the TV team on the airplane from Denpasar, Bali, to Ujung Pandang. When we arrived, we first met with Sampe in order to make the arrangements for filming the funeral. Sampe seemed busy and was in high spirits. After meeting with us, he arranged an interview with the local press to promote his father's funeral, emphasizing that it was an unusual event, and therefore worth seeing.⁶

Furthermore, Sampe, with the help of his uncle, Prof. Dr. C. Salombe, a linguist at the University of Hasanuddin, in Ujung Pandang, published a brochure called *The Traditional Funeral Ceremony of the Late "Puang Mengkendek"* (A. Y. K. Andilolo). Written in English, the brochure deals with the personal career of Puang Mengkendek, the origin myth of the Toraja people, his aristocratic family tree beginning with Puang Tamborolangi or the *To Manurung*, "who descended from the heaven," and the ritual procedures of the funeral with an explanation. English was chosen to appeal to the international tourist audience, though the English was terribly broken.

On October 26, the corpses of Puang Mengkendek's wife and son were exhumed from the burial place in Ujung Pandang, and that evening were moved to Toraja accompanied by a long line of cars full of relatives. The next morning, October 27, we also drove to Toraja with some remaining family members. In Toraja, the corpse of Puang Mengkendek, after being *dibalun* (wrapped with red cloth), had already been moved to the *tongkonan* or ancestor house at Mianga, 3 kilometers from his former residence at Batu Kila'. When we visited Minanga on October 28, Puang Mengkendek's coffin was being decorated by the *pande bulaan* (goldsmith) with gold foil of various patterns.

The Funeral

The main rituals started two days later, October 30, and continued until November 7. What follows is the main procedure of the funeral.

(1) October 30, the day called *mela alang*, "moving to the rice-barn": the corpse of Puang Mengkendek, which had been kept at the *tongkonan* house, was moved to a space on the *alang*, rice-barn. The corpse was kept there for three nights. His relatives watched and guarded the deceased, and villagers performed a *ma'badong* dance. This dance is intended to send his soul to the other world and is also performed for the pleasure of villagers who attend the funeral. In addition to *ma'badong*, a cassette tape music of *suling* (bamboo flute) music is played intermittently through loudspeakers to create an atmosphere for the Toraja funeral.

⁶ The local newspaper, *Pedoman Rakyat*, reported the funeral with the title, "Dari Pemakaman Puang Mengkendek" [From the Funeral of Puang Mengkendek] on November 8-9, 1992. The national newspaper, *Kompas*, also published an article, "Tana Toraja, Tanah, Adat, dan Sabung Ayam" [Tana Toraja, Land, Custom and Cockfighting], on November 22, 1992, reporting on Puang Mengkendek's funeral.

(2) November 2, *ma'pa'songlo*, "moving to the *rante*," or ceremonial field: this was the most magnificent and spectacular day. The funeral procession proceeded to the *rante*, a hilltop ceremonial field, about 4 kilometers from Minanga. The procession, guided by the *to maranding*, war dancers, and decorated buffaloes, consisted of the coffin and effigy of the deceased called *tau-tau*, which were carried by male villagers, and followed by his family and relatives. The procession gave the impression of a joyful festival. From this day on the scene of the funeral shifted to the *rante*. Perhaps 30,000 to 40,000 people came together.

(3) November 3 to 5, *penerimaan tamu*, "receiving guests": this is the formal reception of guests which actually started in the late afternoon of the previous day. Guests from various places in groups of 20 to 100 people, according to kin group or village, made a formal procession in the *rante* and then were welcomed by the deceased's family with betel-nuts, cigarettes, coffee, and cakes. This reception lasted three days. Guests bring funeral gifts such as pigs, buffaloes, palm wine, or sometimes money. All are carefully registered because they create debts for the family that receives them.

(4) November 6, *mantunu*, "sacrifice": this is the day on which many buffaloes are killed, and their meat distributed to all the villagers involved. That is why this ritual is called *ma'lembang* which means "making the district." It is in part to give thanks to the community which helped in holding the funeral ceremony, and also has an aspect of "potlatch" or "conspicuous consumption" in the form of sacrifice and meat distribution.

(5) November 7, *miaa*, "burial": traditionally this ritual takes place in the *liang*, a stone grave made in the limestone cliff where the corpse is "buried"; however, Christian Toraja have recently tended to bury the corpse in the ground. At Puang Mengkendek's funeral too, the corpses were buried at the family burial site near his house at Batu Kila', in a grave newly constructed when one of Puang Mengkendek's sons died several years ago.

These ritual procedures basically follow those of *dirapa'i*, the highest rank of the traditional Toraja funeral, but details are simplified by skipping the complicated traditional procedures in accordance with the Christian faith. The Christian version of *dirapa'i* is, of course, officiated over by a *pendeta*, a pastor, not by *tominaa*, a Toraja ritual priest, and rituals such as offering food to *bombo*, the soul of the dead, are not performed. The making of *tau-tau*, the funeral effigy of an important person has also been banned by the Christian Church. However, as was the case with Puang Mengkendek, the Christian Toraja often make effigies, claiming that the *tau-tau* is equivalent to the memorial photograph of the deceased. In fact, contemporary Toraja effigies are made realistic by imitating the dead person's photographic likeness.

Although the traditional format is followed, some elements were not necessarily traditional, as was observed here: first, I have to mention the enlarged social scale within which the funeral was held. An examination of the list of guest-mourners reveals that about 20 percent of them came from outside Toraja, from Ujung Pandang, Jakarta, and other cities. Sampe had invited high officials from Jakarta, including some serving cabinet ministers and the president of his hotel group. Although no minister actually came, the president of the hotel group did attend. He stayed, together with an ex-mayor of the city of Ujung Pandang, at the special guest shelter which was prepared for VIP guests.

It is said that sixty buffaloes in addition to 300 pigs were sacrificed during the course of the funeral ritual, although we should note that not all the buffaloes were killed but that some were given away alive. It was explained that if the meat is carried to villages located far away, it goes bad because of the long hours of walking. The buffaloes given away alive could be sold and the money gained could be used for the development of the village. This

is a transformation of "potlatch" type of ritual by adapting it to the new age of development in Indonesia.

Among the guest-mourners, I noticed that some people, especially children of urban migrants' families, have begun to feel some distance from the Toraja ritual tradition. One of them commented to me that the ritual was boring and even distressing and also complained about the uncomfortable accommodations and monotonous ritual food during the funeral. The *pa'piong* (Toraja ritual food cooked in bamboo tubes) and the *tuak* (palm wine) do not accord with urban dwellers' tastes, and I noticed that *ikan goreng* (fried fish) was cooked instead. Sampe, the chief mourner, did not sleep at the funeral hut but returned to his hotel, and joined in "karaoke" instead of the *ma'badong* dance! I got the feeling then that Toraja ritual tradition was being transformed from within.

I must point out the military character of the burial ritual, the final part of the funeral ceremony. Because Puang Mengkendek was a military man with the title of colonel, the regional military troop from Rantepao, the biggest market town in Tana Toraja, came to help lay his corpse to rest. Although the combination of the national military and the Toraja customary ritual appears incongruous, this participation of the army may be a concrete illustration of one form of "nationalization" of the Toraja funeral. Also, T. R. Andilolo, as the regent of Tana Toraja, gave a memorial address during this burial ritual, though he was a member of the Andilolo family as well.

With respect to the filming of the funeral, I took no active role in this except for providing some basic information. The TV producer first planned a scenario in which a Toraja girl who had grown up in the city returns to her grandfather's village to attend his funeral. Through her experiences, the film could introduce the Toraja funeral while contrasting modern city life with traditional village life. This scenario was not realized, because the prospective heroine, Sampe's daughter, did not behave as the TV producer had expected. As an urban-raised modern half-Toraja (her mother, Sampe's wife, was not Toraja) working at a first class hotel in Ujung Pandang after graduation from university, the girl seemed always to feel at a distance from the Toraja funeral and did not want to be filmed in a "primitive Toraja" setting. As a result, the "human drama of life and death" which the TV producer had planned to film came to focus on a "buffalo boy" at the funeral. Addressing itself to a kind of sentimentalism, the story went on to relate how sad the boy was when parting with his beloved buffalo.

Analysis

There are three major themes which I would like to examine in analyzing the funeral and placing Toraja ethnic tradition in a broader socioeconomic-cum-cultural context: (1) migration and Christian conversion, (2) remaking of the *aluk to dolo*, Toraja traditional religion, especially in the development of tourism, and (3) the issue of the manipulation and staging of ethnic culture.

Migration and Conversion to Christianity

First of all, I wish to examine the general background of the contemporary social and cultural change in Toraja against which Puang Mengkendek's funeral took place. In Indonesia, as a result of President Suharto's development policy since 1969, there has been a great growth in the national economy. Parallel with this economic growth, many people have moved to cities, seeking jobs and better education. Consequently, the rate of urbanization

has accelerated, and according to 1990 statistics, 31 percent of the Indonesian population now lives in urban areas.

Toraja people too, especially the younger generation, have been actively involved in this process, because Tana Toraja has no university or major industry except for an Indonesian-Japanese joint coffee plantation company. It is estimated that more than 230,000 Toraja have migrated to various parts of Indonesia,⁷ which is approximately two-thirds of the current population of the Regency of Tana Toraja.

As we have already seen, among the children of Puang Mengkendek only two live in Tana Toraja, while the rest live in Ujung Pandang and Jakarta. The guests-mourners to the funeral came from various parts of Indonesia. We can say, therefore, that Toraja society has been radically enlarged, to the extent that the Toraja homeland community cannot exist without taking the urban migrant sector into account. In other words, homeland and migrant societies form two sections of one social system.⁸

With the enlargement of Toraja society, religious changes are brought about by the very fact that people have left their homeland villages and migrated to the city. In socially, culturally, and ethnically heterogeneous urban settings, it is difficult for the migrants to maintain their own religious practices as they do in their home village. This is why, in a city like Ujung Pandang, the majority of Toraja migrants maintain their ethnic identity by adopting Christianity. Christianity is chosen, first of all, as a sort of counter-religion to Islam, the religion of most people in the city. In Malaysia and Borneo, there has been a pattern that the pagan minority "becomes Malay" (*masuk Melayu*) by converting to Islam.⁹ Toraja, by contrast, assert their ethnicity by adopting Christianity, in contrast with the coastal Muslim peoples.¹⁰

This has a historical background. Although Christianity was introduced to Torajaland in 1913 by a Dutch Protestant missionary, the process of Christianization went very slowly. By 1950, only less than 10 percent of the population had converted. The majority of the population only began to convert to Christianity during the radical Islamic movement of the 1950s and 1960s in which the coastal Buginese people were dominant. In other words, the mountain Toraja accepted Christianity in reaction to a movement among the coastal Muslim peoples.

Christianity in Toraja has also provided a means to "modernize" the people. Since Dutch colonial days, it has been related to schools and the government. Missionaries first made efforts to have the younger generation educated, and then converted. Later, the educated Christians were absorbed by governmental institutions. According to Terance Bigalke,

⁷ Toby Volkman, "Visions and Revisions: Toraja Culture and the Tourist Gaze," *American Ethnologist* 17 (1990): 93.

⁸ Jacqueline Lineton pointed out this for the Bugis migrant society. See "An Indonesian Society and Its Universe: A Study of the Bugis of South Sulawesi (Celebes) and Their Role within a Wider Social and Economic System" (PhD thesis, University of London, 1975), p. 1. Also see Shinji Yamashita, "Ujung Pandang no Toraja Shakai" [The Toraja Community in Ujung Pandang: A Study in a Local City in Indonesia], *Tonan Aja Kenkyu [Southeast Asian Studies]* 23 (1986): 29-48 (Kyoto: Kyoto University, [in Japanese]).

⁹ Rita Kipp, and Susan Rodgers, *Indonesian Religions in Transition* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1987), p. 4.

¹⁰ This pattern of Christian conversion has a great similarity to the case of the Akha in the highlands of Thailand and Burma which Cornelia Kammerer has reported on, though the role of Islam for the Toraja is similar to that of Buddhism for the Akha. See Cornelia Kammerer, "Custom and Christian Conversion among Akha Highlanders of Burma and Thailand," *American Ethnologist* 17 (1990): 277-91.

“the path to power under the Dutch led from the family tree to the school, and from there to the altar.”¹¹ After Indonesia’s independence, it was these elite Christians who were leaders in Toraja local politics.

In this context, people who have not converted are often referred to as “*orang belum beragama*” (“those who have not religion yet”) or “backward people,” though the *aluk to dolo*, the Toraja traditional religion, has been officially recognized by the Indonesian government as “Hindu Dharma” or “Hinduism” since 1969.¹² In Indonesia, a religion or *agama* must be recognized by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. The government recognizes Islam, Christianity (Protestant and Catholic), Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, while indigenous religions are not recognized. Toraja religion, which is known as a typical “animistic religion” in the anthropological literature, is thus classified as “Hinduism.”

The Christian population of Tana Toraja had risen to about 30 percent by the time of my initial research from 1976 to 1978, and nowadays more than 80 percent of the population are Christian.¹³ About 10 percent are Muslim and the followers of *aluk to dolo* now make up less than 10 percent of the whole population.

In contrast to the increase in the Christian population, the followers of *aluk to dolo* have decreased year by year as the older generation passes away. During my initial fieldwork, about 30 percent of the population still followed *aluk to dolo*. However now, it appears that the *aluk to dolo* is almost about to vanish. At the least, it is no longer a communal religion as it once was. It is true that *gotong-royong*, the mutual labor exchange system that makes it possible to organize funerals, still functions, but the people no longer share a “belief” (*kepercayaan*) which once might have supported common traditional ritual practices.

One of my informants who was an *aluk to dolo* follower at the time of my previous research has now converted to Christianity. According to her, it was very difficult to maintain the *aluk to dolo* in the contemporary Toraja village, because the mutual association system is now organized along the lines of Christian church activities. She says that unless one becomes a Christian, one encounters difficulties in social life in the village community.

The Remaking of the aluk to dolo, Toraja Traditional Religion

While Toraja traditional religion has declined in this way, the religious tradition is being remade in a new form, namely tourism. Within this new framework, ritual becomes a spectacle or an aesthetic object to see and even “to sell.”¹⁴

¹¹ Terance W. Bigalke, “A Social History of ‘Tana Toraja’: 1870–1965” (PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1981), p. 254.

¹² See Eric Crystal, “Cooking Pot Politics: A Toraja Village Study,” *Indonesia* 18 (October 1974): 144. This recognition seems to be a political judgment related partly to Indonesian party politics, which were complicated at the time, and partly to the introduction of tourism which focuses on the indigenous religious tradition. See Shinji Yamashita, *Girei no Seijigaku: Indonesia Toraja no Dotaiteki Minzokushi [Politics of Ritual among the Toraja of Sulawesi, Indonesia]* (Tokyo: Kobundo, 1988) (in Japanese), pp. 12–14.

¹³ The majority of Christians in Toraja are Protestants associated with the Gereja Toraja (Toraja Church), but there are also Catholics and new sects of Protestants such as Pentecostals and Seventh Day Adventists.

¹⁴ Similar observations of the “spectacularization” of local culture in relation to the Indonesian cultural policy and the development of tourism have been reported by Greg Acciaioli from Central Sulawesi, and by Niels Mulder from Yogyakarta, Central Java. See Greg Acciaioli, “Culture as Art: From Practice to Spectacle in Indonesia,” *Canberra Anthropology* 8 (1985): 148–72; Niels Mulder, *Individual and Society in Java* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1989).

In Indonesia, like some other developing countries, tourism has been adopted as an important means of earning foreign currency. Its importance increased in the 1980s after Indonesia experienced the shock caused by the decline of oil prices. According to 1990 statistics, the tourism sector earned 2.1 million US dollars and in 1991, "Visit Indonesia Year," 2.6 million tourists came from foreign countries. As a foreign exchange earner, tourism is exceeded only by oil and gas, timber, and textiles.

It was in the early 1970s that tourism was introduced into Tana Toraja as part of the Indonesian government's policy of regional and national development. In 1991, approximately 215,000 tourists—40,000 foreign tourists, and, remarkably, 175,000 domestic tourists—visited the area. The tourism of Toraja is "ethnic tourism" with "visits to native homes and villages, observation of dances and ceremonies, and shopping for primitive wares or curios."¹⁵ Toraja tourism is typically one which focuses on its "unique" cultural tradition, especially the spectacular funeral practices.

As we have already seen, migration to urban areas and conversion to Christianity are current trends among the Toraja population. This fact does not mean, however, that Toraja people abandon their homeland and their ritual traditions. As was the case with Puang Mengkendek's funeral, urban migrants return to their homeland to hold customary rituals. In the homeland villages, the *adat*, or local custom, is definitely important, which is why Christian funeral ceremonies are held "according to the Toraja *adat*," including sacrifices of water buffaloes and pigs, using money from urban migrant family members. Tourists then usually take photographs of the Christian funerals, being convinced that they are witnessing a Toraja traditional funeral.

By simplifying the "authentic," the Christian version of the funeral ceremony puts an emphasis on social relations and spectacular festivity. Animal sacrifice in this context is not a religious act, for Christian dogma does not regard "pagan" animal sacrifice as religious, but a means of promoting social integration in which the meat of sacrificed animals is shared.¹⁶ On the other hand, sacrifice forms the most dramatic part of the performance. It is a spectacular event, especially for the tourists. For the tourists who are not interested in its religious meaning, sacrifice is an unusual, shocking, "ancient" practice.

Another focus of Toraja tourism is the *tongkonan*, the ancestor house with its characteristic "boat shape" roof. According to Kathleen Adams,¹⁷ the tourist industry as a cultural broker contributes to the production of an "ethnic stereotype" for tourist consumers, while selecting, simplifying, and exaggerating ethnic markers. As the Toraja ethnic marker, emphasis has been put on the *tongkonan* house. The local government recommends and even financially supports the building of *tongkonan* houses. There are *tongkonan* houses which have been newly built only for tourists. Local hotels adopt architectural motifs from the *tongkonan*, and miniature *tongkonan* houses and T shirts, with the *tongkonan* house printed on them, are manufactured and sold as souvenirs.

It should be noted, however, that the *tongkonan* house does not necessarily suit the lives of the contemporary Toraja people. It is dark inside because the windows are small and the

¹⁵ Smith, *Hosts and Guests*, p. 2.

¹⁶ Bigalke, "Social History of Tana Toraja," p. 224.

¹⁷ Kathleen Adams, "Come to Tana Toraja, 'Land of Heavenly Kings': Travel Agents as Brokers in Ethnicity," *Annals of Tourism Research* 11 (1984): 469–85. Shinji Yamashita, *Girei no Seijigaku: Indonesia Toraja no Dotaiteki Minzokushi [Politics of Ritual among the Toraja of Sulawesi, Indonesia]* (Tokyo: Kobundo, 1988) (in Japanese), pp. 131–53.

residential space is also limited, in contrast with the large roof. Therefore, as Toby Volkman has noticed, nowadays additional rooms are often built in the Buginese style and attached to the traditional *tongkonan* houses.¹⁸ There are some *tongkonan* houses in a "typical Toraja village" (to use the expression of tourist brochure), which were once occupied by local residents, but are now abandoned and remain standing just for tourists. And I, an anthropologist, and my wife are the only people who lived in Puang Mengkendek's *tongkonan* at Minanga after it was rebuilt in 1968.

Tourists take photographs or shoot videos of the funeral procession, the *ma'badong* dance, or the buffalo sacrifices. In this "tourist gaze," the local custom becomes separated from society, and becomes an aesthetic object or even a commodity to be consumed. The *tongkonan* becomes artistic architecture rather than an ancestral home, and the funeral ceremony becomes a tourist object to be photographed. The *aluk to dolo*, the Toraja way of the ancestors, is thus objectified in the tourist gaze, deprived of its socioreligious context, and as a result it becomes an artistic object. Ancestors become art.¹⁹

Manipulating and Staging Ethnic Tradition

As I have already pointed out, the funeral of the Christian Puang Mengkendek was carried out by his Muslim son using traditional Toraja custom. People say that heterogeneity in religion does not matter in Toraja. This means that the differences in religious belief lose their significance in the face of the Toraja *adat*, or traditional custom, because they are all Toraja who have the same traditional custom in common.

Toraja *adat*, consisting of ritual practices of life and death, has formed a "*habitus*," to use Pierre Bourdieu's term: namely, traditional custom which is internalized and structured in the unconscious.²⁰ However, custom, taken in the way that Sampe used it in his father's funeral, is not the *habitus* any more, but a consciously reconstructed tradition. It is, therefore, something to be manipulated and something to be staged, not something unconsciously embedded in the society. It was against this background that Sampe manipulated Toraja ethnic tradition, not only to establish his father's position in local society, but also to "market" (my term) his dead father in the interests of his newly opened hotel.

It was clear that his father's funeral was a very good opportunity to promote Toraja tourism and his new hotel. As has already been stated, for this reason he invited high officials from Jakarta, including some cabinet ministers and officials and the president of his hotel group. It is said that nowadays the Toraja funeral is evaluated not only in terms of the number of buffaloes sacrificed but also the number of guest *menteri* (cabinet ministers) from Jakarta! As I have discussed in detail elsewhere, the Toraja funeral is characterized by the "politics of ritual" through which the local power structure is reproduced. With the enlargement of Toraja society, the scope of the "politics of ritual" has been greatly expanded.²¹

The Indonesian government too has manipulated the nation's ethnic cultures, or more correctly "regional cultures" (*kebudayaan daerah*) in contemporary Indonesian usage, so that

¹⁸ Volkman, "Visions and Revisions," p. 110.

¹⁹ Nelson Graburn has written that the gaze of artists and that of tourists are very similar: in their gaze ordinary things are seen from the extraordinary point of view. Graburn, "Tourism, the Sacred Journey," in *Hosts and Guests*, ed. Smith, p. 24.

²⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 72.

²¹ "Politics of ritual" is the central theme and the title of the book I wrote on Toraja ritual based on my observations during my fieldwork from 1976 to 1978 and in 1984. See Shinji Yamashita, *Politics of Ritual*, pp. 12–14.

it can market them to international tourist consumers. The "Visit Indonesia Year 1991," the national project inspired by the success of "Visit Thailand Year 1988," staged a presentation of *Indonesia Indah*, "Beautiful Indonesia," by featuring various festivals in various regions of the country. The brochure published by the Directorate General of Tourism states:

Make your dreams come true whenever you decide to visit the largest archipelago on earth, especially when you do that during the Visit Indonesia Year in 1991 . . . breathe . . . the brisk and fragrant tropical air, feel . . . the hospitable warmth of a people with a thousand smiles, and see . . . the unbelievable sceneries of flawless loveliness. Explore this ancient land for its age-old culture so naturally preserved amidst today's modernity and comforts. Let us be your hosts to a country of sharp contrasts, yet so harmonious and peaceful. *Selamat Datang di Indonesia!*²²

It is interesting to note that the "calendar of events" in the brochure includes the "Toraja Rambu Solo (Funeral) Ceremony" together with the Temple Festival at Bali, the Wayang Orang Dance Drama at Yogyakarta, the Trans Equator Marathon at Pontianak, West Kalimantan and so on. The Toraja funeral is in the Indonesian calendar of events! To quote the brochure: "the religious ceremony is held in a week of July, August, September or October to ensure that the dead person is accepted by God."²³ By being inscribed on the "calendar of events," The Toraja funeral is certified as belonging to the cultural traditions of one nation, Indonesia.

As stated in the brochure, "Visit Indonesia Year 1991" at the same time emphasized the "*sadar wisata*" or "tourist consciousness" through which Indonesia is ready to be a good host to foreign tourists. "Visit Indonesia Year" in this sense was intended to allow the Indonesian people to internalize "the beauty of Indonesia" of which they are proud. Therefore not only foreign tourists but also Indonesians themselves could share and feel the beauty of the nation. Seen in this way, tourism is a new form of Indonesian nationalism. By carefully situating ethnic cultural heritages within the regional framework of the nation, tourism in Indonesia can work inwardly as well.²⁴ In this sense tourism is an attempt at the "Indonesianization of Indonesia."

Furthermore, a Japanese television team also came to Puang Mengkendek's funeral. As I noted earlier, for Sampe television meant acquiring money and publicity for Toraja tourism, in addition to documenting his father's great funeral. For the Japanese TV company, the exotic Toraja funeral was a means to convey "a human drama of life and death" to a Japanese audience. Returning to Tokyo, the TV producer finally edited the film with an emphasis on the spectacular aspects of the funeral and the "buffalo boy" (actually a middle-aged man).

In the process of editing the film, my role was limited to checking the ethnographic correctness of its narration, because the scenario had already been fixed by the producer when I saw the preview of the film. According to a newspaper TV columnist, the film depicts "the greatest funeral in Indonesia that has ever been performed this century in which thousands

²² Directorate General of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia, *Visit Indonesia Year 1991, Calendar of Events* (Jakarta, 1991).

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁴ Michel Picard discussed the Balinese culture in tourist context as regional culture (*kebudayaan daerah*) within the Indonesian national perspective. See Picard, "'Cultural Tourism' in Bali: National Integration and Regional Differentiation." In *Tourism in South-East Asia*, ed. Michael Hitchcock, Victor T. King and Michael J. G. Parnwell (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 91-93.

of guest-mourners came and five hundred animals were killed."²⁵ It was broadcast on January 25, 1993, by the Tokyo Television network, with the title: "The Toraja: Feast of Death, People Who Live to Die."

Like tourism, television is a strong medium with which the image of the "ethnic culture" is reproduced, often based on an ideology such as "the innocent tradition which is not spoiled by modern culture," "the authentic cultural tradition," or "the primordial culture which modern society has lost." In order to produce that image, TV producers stage and even manipulate "authenticity," as was the case with the "manipulation affair" in 1993 involving the documentary programs of NHK, the Japanese public television network. Our "Toraja feast of death," too, in the final analysis may have contributed to the reproduction of that kind of image of ethnic culture.

Conclusion: Remaking Ethnic Tradition in Local, National, and Global Perspectives

We are now in an age of great mobility, in which 500 million people move around the world annually. The boundaries of society are becoming more and more blurred. Peoples and cultures cross the boundaries of society, and, as a result, the globalization and creolization of the world is proceeding. We have experienced fundamental and widespread changes in the modern world.

In such a situation, anthropologists cannot study a culture as a "complex whole" or as a "system of symbols and meanings." This is the case with the Toraja funeral we have examined in this article. As we have seen, the "meaning" of a funeral is not confined to the local context. We have to seek that meaning in the interplay of national and even global perspectives. In Puang Menkendek's funeral, not only Toraja locals but also the president of the hotel group from Jakarta, the local troops of the national army, international tourists, and the Japanese TV company played important roles in shaping the "meaning" of the ritual performance.

In this broadened socioeconomic-cum-cultural framework, the Toraja ethnic tradition, which was once unconsciously embedded in the local society, has been "deconstructed" into several independent cultural elements such as "belief," "custom," and "art." The current Toraja ethnic tradition then is "reconstructed" as a "postmodern" balance between these elements, though in fact they are hybrid, plural, and "creolized."²⁶ Therefore, to use the terms of James Clifford, we should tell the story of Puang Menkendek's funeral, not as the "entropic narrative" (or "narrative of loss") but as the "narrative of emergence" (or "narrative of invention").²⁷

At the same time, however, we must point out that in this "postmodern" reconstruction, ethnic traditions come to be "essentialized." As is the case with ethnicity, the essentialization of ethnic culture occurs in the intercultural contexts, and proceeds as a result of the interaction of power relations, emphasizing a particular element of the cultural "complex whole." It is at this point that the funeral becomes the essence of Toraja culture, as the dance is that of Balinese culture. Tourism accelerates this process, while reifying the culture much

²⁵ See the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shinbun*, January 25, 1993.

²⁶ Cf. Dean MacCannell, "Reconstructed Ethnicity: Tourism and Cultural Identity in Third World Communities," *Annals of Tourism Research* 11 (1984): 375-91.

²⁷ James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press), 1988, p. 17.

more. Today in many societies, “traditional clothing” or “traditional dance” as a conveyer of the essence of a culture exist only for the amusement of tourists.

Paradoxically, the essence of culture may be a “pastiche” in the sense in which Fredrick Jameson uses it as the keyword of “postmodernism.”²⁸ Miniature *tongkonan* or Toraja ancestor houses as tourist souvenirs, for instance, could convey the essence of the Toraja culture. And these miniature *tongkonan* are not only bought by tourists but also by Toraja urban migrants, who when they return to their homeland, buy them and take them back as souvenirs. These “pastiche” will help certify their ethnic identity in their urban home away from the homeland.²⁹

“Tradition” is thus a very tricky word to use today. As Eric Hobsbawm and others have observed, “tradition” as we now know it is mostly a recent invention.³⁰ Further, “tradition” is today something to be manipulated, staged, and consumed in macro socioeconomic-cultural contexts. Sampe’s manipulation of Toraja ethnic tradition in his father’s funeral ceremony is perhaps just one example of such a worldwide phenomenon.

²⁸ Jameson, “Postmodernism and Consumer Society,” p. 113.

²⁹ Discussing “long distance nationalism,” Benedict Anderson mentioned the story of the Greek guest-worker in Germany: on the wall of his humble house was a tourist poster of the Parthenon printed by Lufthansa Airlines. The pastiche or the copy becomes more than the original, as was the case with the postmodern tourism discussed by Edward Bruner by referring to *Cannibal Tours* of Papua New Guinea, the film made by Denis O’Rourke. See Anderson, “The New World Disorder,” *New Left Review* 193 (1992); and Edward Bruner, “Of Cannibals, Tourists and Ethnographers,” *Cultural Anthropology* 4 (1989): 438–45.

³⁰ Eric Hobsbawm and Terance Ranger, ed., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

Current Data on the Indonesian Military Elite

September 1, 1993–August 31, 1994

The Editors

The present shorter listing shows the holders of key positions in the Armed Forces headquarters and the army central and regional commands since September 1, 1993, the terminal date of our last complete listing (*Indonesia* 56, October 1993), to August 31, 1994. As we can see in the table below, there were two major waves of personnel changes in this period, the first in January mainly in the Armed Forces headquarters and the second larger one in August in the army. (A minor reshuffle in April in the Armed Forces headquarters was related to changes in the navy.) There was also an important institutional development in January: the powerful and ubiquitous intelligence apparatus, BAIS ABRI (Armed Forces Strategic Intelligence Agency) was liquidated and replaced by a less powerful military intelligence agency, BIA (Armed Forces Intelligence Agency). As early as January next year, however, we expect another wave of personnel changes, involving key positions in the army central command and some of Java's four regional commands, to ease out now troubled presidential brother-in-law, Army Chief-of-Staff Gen. Wismojo Arismunandar. This is the reason to publish this shorter list for now and wait for a year to do our next complete listing.

		Armed Forces HQ	Army	Total
1993	Sept.	1	–	1
	Oct.	–	–	–
	Nov.	–	1	1
	Dec.	–	–	–
1994	Jan.	8	2	10
	Feb.	2	1	3
	Mar.	–	–	–
	Apr.	4	1	5
	May	–	–	–
	June	–	–	–
	July	–	1	1
	Aug.	4	8	12

The military situation has been volatile as attested by waves of reshuffles every half a year over the last two years. (Major reshuffles took place in August 1992, April 1993, August 1993, January 1994, and August 1994.) As we noted in our last listing, this volatility is directly related to long simmering conflicts between President Soeharto and many senior army officers. The struggle manifested itself in this period most notably in the contest for control of Golkar, leading to Soeharto's imposition of his candidate, civilian minister of information Harmoko, as its chairman. In its wake, Maj. Gen. R.K. Sembiring Meliala openly expressed his unhappiness, saying in an interview with the now banned *DeTik* that "without President Soeharto's mandate Harmoko and Habibie are nothing" and that "they will vanish when the President is no longer in power."¹ As Lt. Gen. Harsudiono Hartas, who as Armed Forces Chief for Social and Political Affairs, forced Soeharto's hand in the selection of Gen. Try Sutrisno as his Vice-President in March 1993, pointedly remarked, "There is no smoke without fire, what Sembiring said represents the silent majority [of military officers]."² The sacking of Lt. Gen. Hariyoto as Armed Forces Chief for the Social and Political Staff resulted directly from this showdown, for he resisted Harmoko's election as Golkar chairman, reportedly without Armed Forces Commander Feisal Tanjung's approval.

As a result of the long-simmering conflicts between the President and senior officers and Soeharto's adroit politicking, the army is now deeply divided. As noted earlier (*Indonesia* 55, April 1993; 56, October 1993), Gen. Edy Sudradjat in his brief days of "record" glory as simultaneously Minister of Defense, Armed Forces Commander, and Army Chief-of-Staff, made strategic appointments to assure colonels and brigadier generals that "army institutional rationality" would not be interfered with by the President. Since then, however, palace countermeasures have been going on in waves of reshuffles. This is the reason, we believe, that Harsudiono Hartas reportedly made a distinction between "loyalists" and "Sapta Margaists" in an informal discussion early this year.³

The palace, however, sees the ongoing struggle differently. In its perspective, it is taking place neither between the President and the army nor between "loyalists" and "Sapta Margaists," but between the President and his one-time military chief turned nemesis, retired Gen. Benny Murdani. But the palace is unsure how deeply "contaminated" the officer corps is.⁴ They thought Edy was "professional," but to their dismay he allowed Benny to retain his office in the BAIS and showed his true colors. Hariyoto was seen as the President's man, but as it turned out, he resisted Soeharto's attempt to impose Harmoko as Golkar chairman. Given his Christianity and his long-time dominance in military intelligence, it is not surprising, then, that Christian generals and intelligence officers have become major targets for a continuing purge.

The liquidation of BAIS and its replacement by a less-powerful military intelligence agency, BIA, can be understood in this light. Established in August 1983, four months after Benny Murdani became Armed Forces' Commander, it combined two military intelligence apparatuses Benny had previously headed—Pusat Intelijen Strategis (Pusintelstat, Armed

¹ *Jakarta Post*, October 27, 1993.

² *Forum Keadilan*, November 25, 1993.

³ This distinction reminds us of the debate that divided the Philippine military in the final years of the Marcos dictatorship: What does the AFP mean, the Armed Forces of the President or the Armed Forces of the Philippines?

⁴ "Contaminated" is the word used by an officer savvy in the thinking of the palace circle. He intimated that perhaps as many as 50 percent of officers down to the rank of colonel are suspected of being "contaminated" by Benny Murdani.