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Isolated groups or indigenous peoples; Indonesia and the international discourse


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The most prominent international indication that interest in the position of indigenous peoples has reached global proportions was the proclamation of the United Nations Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1993. When at the end of that year it had become apparent that all the goals could not be achieved within a one-year time frame, the Decade of Indigenous Peoples was proclaimed.

Indonesia ignored the UN Year of Indigenous Peoples. The government refrained from participating in international discussions on the topic, insisting that the 'indigenous issue' does not apply to Indonesia. Indonesia, it claimed, is considered to be 'a nation consisting predominantly of indigenous population' (Permanent mission 1993). Even so, numerous international organizations invited representatives of Indonesian indigenous peoples to speak about the situation in their country. Recently, the Asian Development Bank involved some members of indigenous groups in Indonesia to join in discussions about operational procedures for development projects affecting indigenous peoples in Asia. Due to increased awareness and a higher degree of organization, some of these groups present themselves as separate ethnic groups or indigenous peoples and speak out more vocally than they have in the past.

This article will focus on discussions about the tribal groups or indigenous peoples of Indonesia. The outside world regards this issue as one particular example of a general, nearly global phenomenon of indigenous peoples or cultural minorities within a modern nation-state dominated by people of a mainstream culture. In Indonesian state policies, however, this distinction is looked upon in a different manner. It is not conceptualized in terms of indigenous versus non-indigenous, as all Indonesians are considered to be indigenous. The government looks upon these groups as deviating from the cultural mainstream, and policies are aimed at bringing these people back into the mainstream of Indonesian life. The term used to refer to these people is not 'indigenous community' – since the government acknowledges only one Indonesian people (bangsa) – but 'isolated community' (masyarakat terasing). How then do tribal groups in Indonesia actually deal with global interest in the situation of indigenous peoples, and how does the government of Indonesia try to avoid outside involvement? First of all, I will briefly outline how the international community has dealt with indigenous peoples in recent years, then I will focus on Indonesian state
policies towards tribal peoples. Finally, based on a number of examples from different contexts, I will describe reactions to localization, Indonesianization and globalization.

**Globalizing the local**

In recent years the position, fate and rights of indigenous peoples have increasingly become topics of concern at the global level. No longer do direct representatives of these peoples call for recognition of their problems. Discussions are no longer dominated by their intermediaries from international support organizations. Diplomats, legal experts and representatives of powerful multilateral banks have entered the battleground of indigenous affairs. What is at stake during their meetings are often declarations of the rights of indigenous peoples by international bodies, or rules of conduct for governments and development organizations. Through successive stages of discussion involving a wide range of participants and stakeholders, final texts are prepared. Inspired or morally coerced by these activities at the international level, national governments, particularly those of the 'donor countries', have been quick to respond to these challenges. The next stage, however, is to put these guidelines concerning indigenous peoples into practice while implementing development projects or taking a stand on these issues in international forums. This is particularly difficult for governments when financing or implementing projects in other countries.

Nations with indigenous peoples often have existing policy statements that differ from what is being agreed upon at the international level. The interest of the international community can to some degree be seen as a response to these national regulations or as a response to what was achieved by implementing them.

Examples of international organizations that have formulated these kinds of declarations and rules of conduct are the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. In addition, international non-governmental organizations like the Worldwide Fund for Nature, the World Conservation Agency and the World Council of Churches have formalized their position on indigenous peoples in declarations or policy statements.

An interesting aspect of this debate is that it certainly did not arise from a sense of altruism within these organizations. It is much more the result of years of struggle by these groups and their intermediaries against

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1 In the Netherlands, for instance, the Department of Foreign Affairs adopted a memorandum in 1993 relating to this issue. This document, entitled *Indigenous Peoples in the Netherlands’ Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation*, is intended to guide all diplomatic and development activities in this field.
systematic repression, a struggle which remained unnoticed in many cases. Organizations like Survival International, Cultural Survival and the International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs have been heavily involved in lobbying for indigenous rights, and have called political and public attention to cases of injustice to tribal peoples. Because of increased pressure by indigenous peoples themselves and also because of the work of support groups, exposure in the mass media and in some cases the work of researchers, international politics started to take this issue seriously.

The first important document at this level is the United Nations ILO convention on indigenous peoples, originally from 1957 (no. 107) but revised in 1989 (no. 169) with statements about the protection and integration of indigenous, tribal and semi-tribal populations. This convention, however, was only ratified by a small number of countries. In the following years many other declarations, directly or indirectly related to tribal peoples, were issued by the UN, for instance the conventions related to racial discrimination in the workplace (Roy Burman 1995).

Potentially the most important document that is due to emerge will be a United Nations declaration that has been extensively discussed in sub-committees and numerous working groups. The preliminary versions of this Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is divided into a number of chapters, state that these peoples have the right of self-determination and that they are entitled to the support of national governments and the international community in exercising this right (UN Draft Declaration as cited in Barnes, Gray and Kingsbury 1995). Many versions of this declaration will be discussed and amended before it is finally accepted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

One of the most critical elements in this document is the concept of indigenous people in its singular or plural form. Some countries do not look upon indigenous peoples as a separate and collective entity. They prefer to think and write about indigenous people instead of peoples. Other countries want to do away with the term altogether, insisting that all their people are indigenous. The search for acceptable terms has been going on for a long time. Terms that have been suggested and used by individual countries include 'aboriginal people' (or 'aboriginals'), 'first peoples', 'tribal peoples', 'ethnic or cultural minorities' and 'hill tribes'. Each of these terms has its advantages as well as its problematic aspects. By and large the term 'indigenous peoples' has been generally accepted in international diplomatic discourse, in spite of objections from a number of countries. In the preliminary working definition for UN documents, this term refers to communities and peoples that have a historical continuity with the area they occupy (Davis and Soeftestad 1995).

For many years the World Bank had been criticized for its neglect of the fate of indigenous peoples affected by the projects it funds. Finally, in 1982, the World Bank issued a report entitled Tribal Peoples and Economic
Development containing operational guidelines for designing and implementing projects affecting tribal peoples (World Bank 1982). Based on experience gained in the field and on discussions held at all levels, these guidelines were reformulated and reissued in a more focused form in 1991 as the document Operational Directive 4.20: Indigenous Peoples (World Bank 1991). The World Bank has now also replaced the term 'tribal peoples' with 'indigenous peoples', following the general trend.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) was relatively late in responding to the worldwide challenge to focus more attention on the rights and position of indigenous peoples, although 70 percent of the world's indigenous peoples actually live in Asia and the Pacific region. In addition, many of the most controversial cases of development projects affecting indigenous peoples are located in Asia. Hydroelectric dam construction, large-scale infrastructural works, transmigration, and logging and mining operations have often given rise to violent confrontations between indigenous peoples on the one hand and nation-states and international development agencies on the other. For a long time, the ADB explicitly followed the guidelines of the World Bank, but lately it has taken steps to formulate its own policies. As one step in this process, a meeting was held in Manila to discuss draft guidelines with representatives of indigenous peoples, donor organizations and government officials of some Asian countries.

Some years ago, nature conservation institutions like WWF and IUCN 'discovered' indigenous peoples as their natural allies in the struggle for a better environment and for the effective safeguarding of protected areas. That is why indigenous peoples play an important role in strategic documents like Caring for the Earth (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991). In numerous publications this idea is elaborated and illustrated by successful projects in the field (Kemf 1993, for example). However, the relationship between indigenous peoples and nature conservationists has not gone undisputed. One of the objections is the utilitarian character of the relationship, which may be useful at the initial stage of protecting certain areas but may become problematic later on. There is always a fundamental conflict between the interests of pure nature preservation or wilderness protection and the interests of indigenous people, who have to make a living in that same environment. This makes it difficult to close down certain areas completely or to impose total protection on particular species of plants and animals (Gray 1991; Colchester 1994).

Such tension can also be felt in WWF's most recent statement on this subject. In May 1996 WWF adopted a statement of principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation. These principles are meant as guidelines for the partnership between WWF and indigenous peoples' organizations for conserving biodiversity within indigenous peoples' territories, and for promoting sustainable use of natural resources. Reading through the principles it becomes clear that recognition of indigenous rights are considered im-
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important only insofar as they contribute to WWF's main mission, which is to conserve nature and ecological processes by:

- preserving genetic, species and ecosystem diversity;
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable both now and in the future;
- promoting actions to reduce pollution and the wasteful exploitation and consumption of resources and energy.

This is evident from statement 11 which reads as follows:

'Consistent with Article 7 of the ILO Convention 169, WWF recognizes indigenous peoples' right to decide on issues such as technologies and management systems to be used on their lands, and supports their application insofar as they are environmentally sustainable and contribute to the conservation of nature' (WWF 1996:4; emphasis added).

So we see that the principles for partnership with indigenous peoples' organizations are utilitarian and conditional. They are subject to a critical evaluation of the consequences seen in terms of the organization's ultimate aims. For a conservation agency this is of course understandable, because once full rights for exploiting natural resources have been granted, who will speak up for nature, and in particular for endangered species, whose continued existence can hardly be called useful?

Apart from the increased attention paid to the fate and position of indigenous peoples by these multilateral governmental or non-governmental organizations, the work of another movement is also becoming noticeable. At numerous spots in the world, representatives of indigenous peoples are coming together to discuss their experiences with an encroaching outside world and to support each other in the struggle to obtain certain rights or to file complaints against governments or multinational companies. An example of this kind of declaration is the Charter of the Indigenous Peoples of the Tropical Forests, issued by the International Alliance of the Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests (1992). The aim of such discussions is to achieve general consensus within global forums on the rights of indigenous peoples. Major elements of these declarations and documents are the recognition of the right to cultural identity, to ethnic language and religion, and most of all the right to the land and its natural resources and protection of intellectual property rights. These rights are argued to be of universal validity, comparable to the rights of individuals as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Nation-states, as legal entities, are often unrepresented at such discussions. Sometimes this is because the organizations are based on a different footing, and sometimes because the aim of the discussion is only to prepare declarations and documents that are to be discussed and ratified in an international forum at a later stage. Many of these declarations, however, are only ratified by a small number of countries. They play a limited role
in the actual struggle of indigenous peoples, and it is hard to use them as the basis for legal arguments.

Implicitly these global documents and declarations are mainly directed at nation-states, which are in almost all cases the driving force behind the external processes of change among indigenous peoples. Only nation-states can effectively guarantee protection from this form of pressure, even though logging and mining companies or encroaching farmers might be directly involved in penetrating the tribal area.

That is why international organizations put pressure on national governments to provide this protection. In responding to criticism, multilateral organizations like the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank often claim they have little leverage, since nation-states are autonomous. When banks provide loans to states, they may attach certain conditions to these loans. But nation-states are free to accept these conditions or reject them. If loans are not granted because the conditions related to indigenous peoples are unacceptable, states are free to seek financing from other sources.

This international movement focusing on the position of indigenous peoples is an example of what Khondker (1994:23) labels 'globalization of the local', a movement or aspiration which is locally based but which is repeated in numerous places, thereby broadening and reinforcing its scope, status and claims. In this way, the struggle of indigenous peoples is raised to the global level.

The emphasis on the local, that is the status and rights of indigenous peoples, is closely related at the global level to one of the five dimensions of global cultural streams identified by Appadurai. It fits his description of 'ideoscape':

'concatenations of images, but they are often political and frequently have to do with the ideology of states and the counter-ideology of movements explicitly oriented to capture state power or a piece of it. These ideoscapes are composed of elements of the Enlightenment world view, which consists of a concatenation of ideas, terms and images including freedom, welfare, rights, sovereignty, representation and the master term democracy.' (Appadurai 1990:229.)

The other dimensions in addition to the ideoscape are the movement of people from every corner of the world, the world of production and consumption of modern technology, financial flows, and, finally, the global media infrastructure, that is the world of mass media (Appadurai 1990). These other dimensions also play an important role in the development process of indigenous peoples in Indonesia, and I will come back to them later.

Irrespective of how Indonesia as a nation-state perceives indigenous or tribal peoples, within the international context the indigenous peoples of Indonesia are always classified in the same category as indigenous people in other countries. Each country uses a different term; for example, in the Philippines reference is made to 'indigenous or cultural minorities', in
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Thailand 'hill tribes', in India 'scheduled castes and tribes'. In Malaysia the term is Orang Asli, while in Vietnam it is 'ethnic minorities'. With respect to Indonesia it is striking to note that in the international literature, East Timor and Irian Jaya seem to dominate the discussions on indigenous communities, while little reference is made to the numerous other tribal communities in other parts of Indonesia (see, for example, Barnes, Gray and Kingsbury 1995).

Tribal groups in Indonesia

In this section I want to discuss briefly some aspects related to the position of tribal peoples in Indonesia. First of all, I want to look into the way the Indonesian government has dealt with the problem of defining its tribal population. Then I will provide some basic data on their numbers and dispersion. Finally, I will describe the main policies on tribal people.2

The concept of masyarakat terasing

The official concept in Indonesian policy documents regarding the people whom the outside world labels as indigenous peoples is at present masyarakat terasing, or isolated community. This concept, however, has an interesting history. Shortly after Indonesian independence, when the bureaucracy for the new nation was created, the Department of Social Affairs was put in charge of all tribal people in the country. Initially the focus was on a limited number of small ethnic groups living in extreme poverty; some Sumatran groups like the Kubu and the Mentawaians were mentioned in particular. Projects were implemented to bring some relief to these people, but their impact was limited.

At that time the plural form suku-suku terasing, or isolated ethnic groups, was used to refer to the various ethnic groups. The word terasing was preferred to other words like underdeveloped, undeveloped or primitive, because of their negative connotations. Terasing was chosen because it referred to what was seen as the dominant characteristic of these peoples: their isolation. They were regarded as living isolated from the mainstream of Indonesian social and cultural life. Judging from the available documents of the Department of Social Affairs (see, for example, Departemen Sosial 1973), no consideration was given to using the term Orang Asli ('original or indigenous people'), as is done in Malaysia, or 'indigenous tribes' (inheemsche volksstammen), which was the term used in Dutch colonial documents.

Some years later this plural term suku-suku terasing was replaced by the somewhat ambivalent masyarakat suku-suku terasing. This term is ambivalent because masyarakat indicates a kind of overall unity, even a

2 See Persoon (1994) for extensive discussion on these subjects.
sense of community, while suku in its plural form implies differences between the groups. Within a few years, however, this ambivalence was resolved by replacing the term with masyarakat terasing. The common characteristic of isolation, overruling all differences between these tribal groups, was thought to be the dominant aspect. That is why the term masyarakat terasing has been used since the mid-1970s for all tribal groups in the country. Some policy documents refer to specific ethnic groups, but this is always done within the framework of the unifying concept of masyarakat terasing. This can be illustrated by a recent book by the Indonesian anthropologist Koentjaraningrat entitled Masyarakat Terasing di Indonesia (1993), which includes some twenty case studies of what he calls 'groups of the isolated community' (kelompok masyarakat terasing).

In English translation, I prefer the term 'tribal peoples' or 'tribal groups' as more neutral than 'isolated group'. Essential in the anthropological meaning of the word 'tribe' or 'tribal' is a strong degree of self-sufficiency regarding not only means of subsistence but also language, religion, political leadership and legal authorities. Characteristic of these tribal peoples is a strong sense of cultural identity vis-à-vis the more dominant ethnic groups in the national society.

Population figures and tribal diversity

Roughly speaking, the Indonesian Department of Social Affairs estimates that about 1.5 million people belong to the masyarakat terasing. Over the years there has been some variation in the way they were defined and how they were counted. From the mid-1960s until about 1980, the numbers have continuously increased from about 30,000 to 1.7 million. Since then, numbers have gone down somewhat, but generally speaking the total number at the national level has stabilized over the last few years at around 1.5 million. Estimates for specific provinces do vary, however. Sometimes new tribal groups emerge on the lists while others are dropped. Also, the size of particular tribal peoples is not always consistent over the years, and these changes certainly do not always reflect demographic developments. It is not easy to explain such variation. A lot seems to depend on how provincial governments deal with their tribal populations and how they perceive them.

The distribution of tribal peoples over the country is very uneven. It is estimated that more than 600,000 people in the province of Irian Jaya belong to the masyarakat terasing, as do a substantial portion of the population of East Kalimantan: 400,000 people. The remaining tribal peoples are spread over 19 other provinces. Officially only six provinces do not have tribal peoples within their boundaries: Lampung, Bali, Central and East Java and the two urban provinces of Jakarta and Yogyakarta.\(^3\) In some

\(^3\) This is not to say that the official classification of tribal groups always coincides with the anthropological use of the term.
cases the tribal population constitutes only a small minority of a province, such as the 5,000 Baduy people in West Java, who are an insignificant minority demographically speaking amidst 35 million Sundanese. In other cases the situation is less extreme.

An interesting anthropological question, of course, is which ethnic or tribal groups are classified as masyarakat terasing and which are not. This is not an easy question to answer, however, as in some cases the official documents do not always follow anthropological criteria in classifying the ethnic units, while in other cases only part of a particular ethnic or tribal group is classified as masyarakat terasing. General surveys report that there are some 80 to 100 different tribal groups, but in Irian Jaya the situation is more complicated, because for this province alone a number of 200 ethnic groups is sometimes given. In some documents this number is reduced, however, by combining tribal groups into a kind of ethnic cluster.

Regardless of how the numbers are calculated, anthropologists, linguists and other researchers as well as policy makers all agree on the enormous diversity of cultures within this masyarakat terasing. Over the years numerous efforts have been undertaken to reduce this diversity to a limited number of socio-cultural types of tribal peoples, based on particular criteria or a combination of criteria (see H. Geertz 1967; Avé 1970; Koentjaraningrat 1983; Persoon 1994). Almost the whole range of tribal lifestyles can be found within the Indonesian Archipelago, running from dispersed hunters and gatherers (like the Kubu, Punan and Sakai) and sea nomads or sea gypsies (Orang Laut and Bajau) to various types of shifting cultivators, including those operating from permanent settlements with a relatively elaborate material culture (such as the Dayak, Dani and Mentawaians). Indonesia also has a few interesting examples of cultural enclaves in which a traditional lifestyle is maintained in spite of being surrounded by peasants incorporated into the modern society. The Baduy in West Java are a good example of such an enclave culture. Due to a long tradition of protection by the central authorities (a tradition which dates back for centuries), they are able to withstand outside pressures and encroaching farmers.

Official policies: back to the cultural mainstream

The ultimate goal of the Indonesian government is to integrate tribal groups into the social and cultural mainstream. The official view is that for a variety of reasons and at various stages in history these groups have lost touch with the main processes of social, religious, political and economic change, and it is the obligation of the state to help them return to the mainstream. More concretely, this mainstream policy is expressed in terms of housing and settlement patterns, modes of production, cultural expression, formal education, health care, religion and interaction with other parts of society.
This mainstream policy is most explicit in the programme of the Department of Social Affairs, but two other departments are also directly involved in changing the life, culture and prospects of tribal peoples: the Department of Forestry and the Department of Religion. The policies of these three departments will be described in their original wording.

**Social affairs**
The Department of Social Affairs defines its target group, the *masyarakat terasing*, as isolated communities whose members live in forests, in mountainous areas or in riverine or coastal zones, and in social circumstances (economy and level of civilization) of a simple nature. Because of their isolation they have no contact with the outside world, and as a result there is hardly any social change or progress (Departemen Sosial 1986:3). In a number of publications the characteristics of these tribal peoples are described in greater detail and attention is paid to their religion, food, clothing, housing, body decoration, sense of beauty and art, and consciousness of state and nation. In all these fields, life in the tribal communities does not meet the standards of modern Indonesia. It is the obligation of the Department of Social Affairs to bridge this gap, thereby creating more political, economic and socio-cultural unity in the country (Departemen Sosial 1986:4).

This development and civilization programme lists the following goals:
1. permanent settlements in sufficiently large social units;
2. increase in production capacity;
3. expansion of societal life outside the family group;
4. enhancement of rational and dynamic mental capacities;
5. uprooting of the tribal world view and way of life;
6. development of norms similar to the rest of the country;
7. increased consciousness of state and nation;

The core activity of this development programme is an all-encompassing approach implemented in so-called resettlement villages. In these villages, houses are constructed according to a uniform design for the whole country, irrespective of the nature of the housing patterns of the tribal group for which the houses are built. Within a period of five years the tribal villagers are considered to have become 'modern Indonesians', after which period the resettlement villages lose their project status. At that time the people and villages are integrated into the regular structure of provincial administration.

In this department's official documents, mention is occasionally made of the preservation of 'useful elements of the traditional culture'. In practice,
However, little action is taken to achieve this goal. The only exception is a number of cultural elements which have some external value because of their visual attractiveness, such as traditional architecture, dance, music or clothing.4

Over the past 25 years almost 500 of these resettlement villages have been built all over the country. Some 160,000 people were involved in the implementation of the development programmes. This, however, is only a small part of the total number of people classified as masyarakat terasing.

Though there have been some adjustments in the design and implementation of these projects, the main direction of the development policy has not been altered. The basic premises, objectives and methods of implementation have remained largely unchanged.

Forestry
Tribal people are a 'problem' not only from a social point of view; they are also defined as such by policy makers in the Department of Forestry. The government regards shifting cultivation, their dominant way of practising agriculture, as a threat to forests and protected areas. By cutting down the forests, burning the vegetation and using the land non-intensively without applying proper soil-conservation methods, this form of agriculture is held responsible for the process of deforestation. This in turn leads to serious erosion, sedimentation and disturbance of the hydrological balance in watershed areas. That is why the Department of Forestry is fighting against shifting cultivation in a way reminiscent of the colonial government's attempts to combat it: by replacing it with various forms of permanent agriculture or by engaging these farmers in the cultivation of industrial crops like palm oil and rubber.

Like the Department of Social Affairs, the Department of Forestry has formulated explicit objectives for solving the problem of shifting cultivation (perladangan berpindah-pindah). These are:

1. to prevent the loss of valuable timber;
2. to facilitate the smooth operation of commercial logging;
3. to prevent erosion;
4. to utilize farmers as a labour force;
5. to increase farmers' standard of living;
6. to facilitate the administration of the area;
7. to uproot the nomadic way of life;
8. to provide favourable circumstances for economic development (Team Pusat Resetelmen Penduduk 1980:108).

4 Recently this aspect of preserving cultural elements has become more important because of the booming ethno-tourism aimed at colourful tribal cultures in their original setting. The term 'folklorization', however, seems more suitable than cultural preservation in describing this kind of activity because of its highly selective and decontextualized nature.
It is important to note that not all tribal peoples operate as shifting cultivators in old-growth rainforest areas. Apart from the hunters and gatherers and the sea gypsies who by definition are not involved in shifting cultivation, there are also tribal people who practise permanent agriculture. Still other groups are engaged in shifting cultivation, but in areas mainly covered with grass or shrubs that are devoid of tropical forests.

There are also non-tribal peoples who are involved in shifting cultivation. In Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Irian Jaya members of large ethnic groups may also practise this form of agriculture in areas that are not their homelands. Having settled in forested areas in the outer islands as a result of voluntary migration or government-sponsored transmigration, many people have adopted shifting cultivation as an effective method of land use. Buginese, for instance, originating from southern Sulawesi, practise shifting cultivation in various parts of Sumatra, Kalimantan and Irian Jaya. These activities put such migrants in the Department of Forestry's target group. According to official documents, about six million people are involved in shifting cultivation in forested areas (Departemen Kehutanan 1991).

The policy programmes created for solving this problem resemble those of the Department of Social Affairs. The focus is on resettling dispersed forest-dwellers in permanent villages with permanent agriculture. Activities related to the social and cultural development of shifting cultivators receive less attention and are left to the provincial government.

This programme has increasingly been integrated into the transmigration projects: A larger share of houses and agricultural plots are allocated for people already living in the area, either as the original inhabitants or as migrants. In this way the government hopes to achieve a better integration of local people and transmigrants. Moreover, it is assumed that the local people will be inspired by the sedentary agricultural techniques of the Javanese and Balinese to give up their shifting cultivation practices. This programme has only reached a very small portion of the total number of shifting cultivators. In order to speed up the process, large-scale projects for the cultivation of industrial crops increasingly incorporate these shifting cultivators into their labour force.

Religion

Indonesia has also developed policies towards tribal peoples regarding religion. These policies regard tribal peoples as 'ethnic groups which do not yet have a religion' (suku-suku yang belum beragama). Such an idea is based on the fact that only five religions are recognized as official religions (agama): Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism. In the past few decades a number of religious movements originating from these official religions have also been forbidden. Thus the religious mainstream is clearly prescribed. A striking feature of this
religious mainstream is that none of the five religions are of Indonesian origin; they are all world religions. Soon after Indonesian independence, it became clear that indigenous Indonesian religions (agama asli, see Hadi-kusuma 1993) were not going to be accepted as agama. A decree was issued exhorting everyone to adopt a proper religion, which acted as a strong incentive to initiate missionary activities among the 'people without a religion'. Implicit in this concept of agama are also notions of progress, modernization and acceptance of national ideals (Atkinson 1987).

At the central level, the Department of Religion has a limited programme of activities. It has issued a number of laws and regulations for the operation of missionary organizations. Religious organizations are not allowed to carry on activities amongst adherents of other religions ('Don't fish in somebody else's pond!') and are to refrain from offering goods and facilities to potential converts. Through extension materials and by stimulating Indonesian as well as foreign missionary organizations, this department promotes missionary activities among the remaining pagan people in the country.

This policy is aimed at converting tribal people to one of the officially accepted religions, thereby eliminating traditional tribal religion. By means of an array of coercive inducements and arguments, the nominal acceptance of an official religion can be achieved without serious difficulty, but in many cases new and old religions tend to form separate domains. The traditional religions tend to dominate in everyday life because they are more inclusive (in relation to the use of the environment, for instance). How this situation is handled depends strongly on the missionary organization, which also decides whether syncretic tendencies are to be suppressed or to be accepted as phenomena of a more or less temporary nature. Islamic and Protestant organizations seem to be less tolerant of traditional religious expressions than Catholic or Hindu organizations. Striving for religious purity among newly converted tribal people is a matter of great concern for these missionary organizations. Without this attention, old religious forms might revive or the people might become attracted to another 'new' religion.

The section in the Department of Religion dealing with Hinduism has a position regarding tribal people that is different from that of the other sections. In the past a number of tribal religions initially condemned as 'pagan' or 'primitive' have now been accepted as variants of Hindu Dharma, analogous to the recognition of Hinduism on Bali (C. Geertz 1973). In this way the traditional religions of the Karo Batak in North Sumatra, the Ngaju Dayak in Central Kalimantan and the Toraja in South Sulawesi have now obtained the status of official religion within the category of Hindu Dharma. A process of internal restructuring of the...
religion usually follows official recognition, and there are also a number of requirements to be fulfilled, but the most important aspect of recognition is that the adherents of the traditional religions are no longer considered pagans in urgent need of conversion.

**Unplanned change**

Apart from official policies towards tribal peoples, mention should also be made of other sources of change and influence. Other departments, such as Home Affairs and Agriculture, also exert influence on the lives of tribal peoples through implementation of their pan-Indonesian programmes. The law on village administration, issued in 1979, wiped out all traditional and local forms of village authority and imposed a uniform structure of desa administration (Kato 1989).

In other instances the sources of change or influence originate from unplanned and almost autonomous processes of interaction between tribal groups and neighbouring ethnic groups. These groups often outnumber the tribal people and feel superior towards them. Dramatic processes of change are also initiated by new and large-scale means of exploiting the environment inhabited by the tribal people, for instance through logging or mining operations, the establishment of estates, transmigration settlements, or the construction of infrastructure (such as roads and dams).

Through this rarely monitored process of change, the lives of many tribal peoples can be greatly affected. The way they respond to this process depends on a number of factors: the nature and scale of intervention, the nature and size of the tribal groups involved and the available opportunities to retreat from the affected area. In general, however, these processes are looked upon as the unavoidable and sometimes even desirable consequences of development and modernization; few measures are therefore taken to protect tribal peoples from their influence. In some cases they are even thought to speed up the process of incorporation into the mainstream.

**Responding to international discourse**

In this section I will discuss how Indonesia deals with some of the aspects of the global discourse on indigenous peoples, using a number of examples from different contexts. It is useful to distinguish between the responses of governmental institutions on the one hand and of non-governmental organizations on the other. By discussing these examples I hope to give a general picture of the Indonesian response to this global discourse.

Though international forums have added the problem of indigenous peoples to the diplomatic agenda and have added the status and rights of these peoples to checklists for evaluating development projects, Indonesia did not join this trend unconditionally. The United Nations Year of Indi-
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Indigenous Peoples (1993) did not receive official attention in Indonesia. The government decided to dedicate that year to another theme, namely the environment. Indonesia has also not ratified international treaties and declarations such as the ILO conventions, and it remains unclear whether the global discussion and resulting new resolutions will have direct consequences in Indonesia. The Indonesian attitude is based to a considerable extent on how indigenous peoples are defined and the role the state claims in relation to them. Indonesia insists that no distinction can be made in its population between indigenous and non-indigenous groups, since all Indonesians citizens are considered indigenous, Javanese as well as Kubi, Dayak and Papua. These ethnic groups are regarded as deviations from the Indonesian mainstream culture. The country's own policy will be implemented as long as international treaties are seen as irrelevant to the Indonesian context. In addition, almost all such activities are funded internally. Up to now there has been no substantial funding from external sources for projects directly related to indigenous peoples. Though implementation of this programme is progressing very slowly, and in spite of its complicated nature, the Indonesian government does not encourage outside interference or involvement at the central level due to its sensitive nature. At the local level, however, there is certainly cooperation with organizations with similar aims (integration into mainstream culture), such as missionary organizations or projects to improve education or health care. In many cases these organizations supplement and reinforce the government's 'development and civilization' programmes (see Hayward 1983).

The policy guidelines of multilateral development agencies like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are more relevant than declarations originating from international diplomacy. These guidelines are formulated as conditions in contracts for development projects between the funding agencies and the national governments. The funding agencies insist that projects for which funds are allocated not adversely affect indigenous peoples. The severe criticism directed towards the World Bank with regard to its involvement in transmigration has gradually led to significant changes in the bank's funding policy.6

Apart from adjustments in project design, these new policy guidelines may also lead to a reluctance of individual countries to submit projects for funding to these agencies and to approach less critical agencies instead, or to a tendency to finance such projects from internal funds. This would avoid involving critical outsiders in these affairs, who might demand changes in project aims or implementation methods.

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6 In 1986 the journal Ecologist devoted a special issue to the Bank's involvement in transmigration. This issue, entitled Banking on Disaster, was a joint publication of the human rights organizations Tapol and Survival International. Apart from various ecological problems, special mention was made of the consequences of transmigration for Indonesia's tribal peoples.

7 An interesting example is the role which the World Bank played in the Narmada Dams Project in India. When the Bank's original involvement was heavily criticized by Indian and...
The Asian Development Bank is implementing an interesting project in biodiversity conservation. This project, for which $40 million has been allocated, part of which is a loan, will be implemented at two sites, Flores and Siberut. The project is based on the Integrated Protected Area Systems (IPAS) approach, according to which local people play a prominent role in designing and implementing management plans. Development and conservation efforts are to be integrated into the project's activities.

In the project documents it is stated that until the ADB has officially approved policy guidelines with respect to indigenous peoples, it will follow the practices of the World Bank. Special reference is made to the World Bank's Operational Directive 4.20: Indigenous Peoples. It is obvious that tensions and ambiguities will arise between these guidelines and the structuring of local participation and local forms of management on the one hand, and the prevailing Indonesian regulations regarding the *masyarakat terasing* and national park planning on the other. Moreover, the project is to be implemented with the assistance of a foreign consultancy company which has hired experts whose views and sources of inspiration are largely shaped and influenced by international discourse. Consequently, the preliminary management plan for the National Park on Siberut is still full of internal contradictions; the administrative and legal framework through which the project is to be implemented does not fully coincide with the ADB approach and guidelines (MOF/ADB 1995).

Another small but significant example of the trickle-down effect of international discourse on indigenous peoples within this project is the choice of a local NGO, called YASUMI (Yayasan Suku Mentawai), which is officially translated as the Association of Indigenous Mentawai. This organization fulfils an important requirement for the ADB: it is the official representative of the indigenous people of the island. The choice of the term *indigenous* is striking because this term is never used in official Indonesian documents, but now it is very prominent in ADB documents. Its use stresses the relationship between the people and the island. Implicitly, it also functions as a signal to members of other ethnic groups, like the Minangkabau, and their future involvement on the island.

The use of the word *indigenous* may have been prompted in this case by the idiom and terminology of the ADB project, but there are other examples to be found in Indonesia that also reflect the modern and global discourse. At a recent (1995) conference on modern developments in the province of Riau, it was surprising to notice the differences in terminology between local representatives and official statements in referring to the tribal communities in the area (Chou and Derks 1997). Instead of using the
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word *masyarakat terasing*, the term used was *Orang Asli* of the Malay culture. The tribal people in Riau, like the Sakai, Orang Laut or Petalangan, are no longer looked upon as a strange and backward deviation from Malay culture but as a positive and original element in Malay identity (see Effendi 1997).

The government, however, sticks to its official terminology. It was interesting to see how the head of the department for *masyarakat terasing* of the Department of Social Affairs dealt with this problem at the International Seminar on Indigenous Peoples in Kuala Lumpur in 1993. This conference was held in response to the UN Year of Indigenous Peoples. In his speech, Sri Rachmadi avoided referring to any peoples as indigenous or non-indigenous; he consistently used the term 'isolated and hinterland tribes' (Rachmadi 1993).8

At various places in the country, organizations and institutions have been founded for studying and preserving local cultures. Analogous to centres for the study of the history and culture of the larger ethnic groups, similar institutions have been set up for some of the smaller and less well-known groups. These kinds of initiatives are usually taken by well-educated members of such a group. Very often they have spent a number of years amongst other ethnic groups and have developed a sense of pride in their own ethnic traditions, rituals, history and culture. They want to retain what is still left of their local culture or revive some of its vanished traditions. In some cases these centres turn into the official institution representing a particular group in dealing with the outside world. Recently people connected to the Pontianak-based Lembaga Dayakologi (Institute for Dayakology) and the Lembaga Bela Banua Talino (officially translated as the Institute for the Indigenous Community and Territory Advocacy) spoke out as the official delegates for their groups at international meetings for indigenous peoples.

Foreign criticism of Indonesian policies on tribal peoples has often been harsh. Human rights organizations and anthropologists, and occasionally ecologists, have been very critical. But this body of literature seems to have had only limited success in reaching the responsible persons within the bureaucracy, owing to the kind of language used and the media selected to convey it.

An interesting aspect of this international criticism is the way it is either used or ignored within the Indonesian context. In a meeting with Indonesian journalists, the above-mentioned Sri Rachmadi discussed a

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8 This man is responsible for enormous improvements within his department. During his term he greatly stimulated the interaction between his staff and anthropologists with field experience among the tribal communities. He was also more open to the problems encountered in the course of development activities among these people and was willing to learn from internal and external criticism. A publication programme on the *masyarakat terasing* using the available anthropological literature was started under his guidance (see Departemen Sosial 1989).
number of issues brought up in a book by George Monbiot entitled *Poisoned Arrows*. This book, not for sale in Indonesia, is critical of many issues involving indigenous peoples. Sri Rachmadi cites Monbiot as saying, 'The Indonesian government greatly threatens the masyarakat terasing, it destroys the traditional culture and implements a programme of Javanization in tribal areas through its transmigration activities' (Monbiot 1989:9-10). According to Rachmadi, foreigners would prefer to leave the tribal people in their present state. The masyarakat terasing should be tolerated and be given the right to continue their original way of life. This line of reasoning, however, does not coincide with the aspirations of the Indonesian people, the values of the Pancasila, or the reality of the Indonesian development process. He continues to explain some of the other issues raised by Monbiot, as well as issues raised by critics from Indonesia. He admits that there are certainly elements of truth in this criticism, but that one should not ignore the progress that has been made (Rachmadi 1990).

Interestingly, by using Monbiot's book and citing an example of severe criticism by an outsider (even though Rachmadi could have easily ignored it), the internal criticism and calls for policy change seemed much more justified.

But criticism has not only come from the outside. There has also been severe internal criticism, even from within the bureaucracy itself, on both policies and the implementation of activities. The Department for the Environment has been particularly vocal in airing its critical remarks through the public media. And within the Indonesian parliament, the Department for Social Affairs has been accused of 'big spending with small results' as well as of poorly designed projects.

Over the years, Indonesian anthropologists have been involved to varying degrees in development issues related to the masyarakat terasing, either as consultants, teachers and trainers of local field staff for the departments or as critical outsiders. Some of the most prominent anthropologists of the country, all with degrees obtained abroad and often employed in government service, have participated in discussions on this subject. They use terms such as 'ethnocentrism', 'imposing dominant values', and 'use of force and violence' to describe official policies (see Buddhisantoso 1990).

Some years ago, during the National Day of Social Solidarity, a meeting took place between some of the most important representatives of the Department of Social Affairs and a number of prominent anthropologists (Jakarta, 13 December 1990). Papers were read by officials as well as by anthropologists, and there were extensive discussions on various aspects of governmental intervention and the processes of change among these groups. The Jakarta-based daily *Kompas*, which helped sponsor the meeting, gave the event extensive coverage. One of the topics of discussion was the term masyarakat terasing. Numerous alternative terms, some of
them inspired by the terminology of other ASEAN countries, were discussed. In the end, however, it was decided to stick to *masyarakat terasing*, as all other terms suggested were even more problematic (Departemen Sosial 1990; *Kompas* 1991).

Indonesian environmental NGOs regularly pay attention to the situation of the country's tribal communities. At the national level, SKEPHI is the organization that dares to speak out most strongly on issues related to these communities. Its English-language journal *Setiakawan* contains critical essays on governmental policies and logging and mining activities affecting the lives of tribal communities. In some cases SKEPHI has done more than that. In 1992, for instance, they published a report about Siberut entitled *Destruction of the World's Heritage; Siberut Vanishing Forest, People and Culture*. This publication was largely based on a report by the English organization SOS Siberut, but SKEPHI made the effort (and took the risk) to publish it under its own name.

The relationship between foreign institutions or individuals on the one hand and Indonesian organizations on the other is sometimes problematic. Voices from outside can easily cause irritation on the Indonesian side. And if authorities sense that there are foreigners behind local actions or protests, they may be less inclined to listen. In the end, outside support may turn out to be counterproductive. Dove and Nickum recently reported on a case in which a Dayak NGO urged Indonesian friends to join in a written protest against a logging company, but it also requested not to invite 'friends from abroad to write yet'. 'But let us optimize the appeal from inside the country', the request added. Voices from friends abroad could do more harm than good at that stage (Dove and Nickum 1996). In other words, globalizing a local conflict may also exacerbate the reaction on the part of the authorities and introduce undesirable dimensions.

Representatives of some Indonesian indigenous peoples present their cases at international NGO meetings. Very often these representatives are Papuans or East Timorese living in exile, but once in a while an organization succeeds in inviting a representative directly from Indonesia. These meetings usually result in declarations directed at nation-states or international bodies, or declarations of mutual solidarity. Examples of such meetings with representatives from Indonesia were the Chiangmai meeting in 1993 and the Baguio meeting in 1995.9

There were some Indonesians present at a recent conference in Manila (November 1995) to discuss the Asian Development Bank's draft policy guidelines on indigenous peoples (ADB 1995). There were some Dayak and

9 Both the Chiangmai meeting (18-23 May 1993) and the Baguio meeting (29 January-2 February 1995) ended with declarations of rights issued by the Asian indigenous and tribal peoples themselves. It was also decided that these declarations were to be submitted to the United Nations and other international bodies, agencies and governments. Moreover, these declarations were to serve as a framework for continuing actions by the peoples themselves.
some Papuas, as well as a Jakarta-based NGO for legal assistance functioning as an intermediary for all other groups. But due mainly to the limited degree of organization within many tribal groups and to their unfamiliarity at speaking out at such forums, many voices remain unheard during such meetings. The political climate in Indonesia does not favour this kind of representation either. Groups need to have a strong network and a core of highly motivated and committed people to be active at this level.

**Indonesianization in between localization and globalization**

In the literature, particularly in the critical literature on transmigration and indigenous peoples, authors often use the term 'Indonesianization'. This term is used to refer to the process through which tribal peoples as well as other ethnic groups in the country's outer islands are confronted with norms, values, waves of migrants, and large-scale exploitation of their resources. These people usually lose their authority over the land and its resources to the state, to concession-holding companies and to encroaching farmers. Development policies regarding tribal groups, and the arrival of large numbers of Javanese, Sundanese and Balinese who often outnumber the local people in transmigration areas, are just two examples of this process of Indonesianization. The granting of concessions to national and international logging and mining companies is also part of this process. The state claims authority over these resources, and the revenues flow back to the centre and into the development bureaucracy. Tribal peoples are more and more affected by these large-scale operations.

How are these processes of localization (reinforcing and emphasizing cultural identity), Indonesianization (the promotion and unification of the country's mainstream culture and economy) and globalization (of various aspects of culture and society) related to each other?

It is clear that the process of Indonesianization is not only characterized by the influx of a number of pan-Indonesian elements but also by aspects of the emerging global culture. The development and civilization programme contains some obvious elements of the global cultural flow in addition to the Indonesian cultural flow. If we recall Appadurai's understanding of global cultural flows, it can be said that these tribal peoples are at least partly incorporated into its technical, infrastructural and ethnic dimensions.

The primary manifestation of the global culture is the international economic order, which installs its advanced outposts in the world of tribal peoples through the implementation of the economic development programme, with its cultivation of industrial cash crops, logging industries, foreign fleets of fishing boats, mining in many provinces and large-scale tourist development projects.

In Indonesia the process of development is often portrayed as a national
development process promoting economic and cultural unity, in which natural resources are considered a national treasure. Many aspects of global culture are also being incorporated into Indonesian mainstream culture. In a short time it is no longer possible to recognize them as having originated from that global culture. Specifically Indonesian aspects include increased interaction with other ethnic groups through increased mobility. This is caused by a rapidly expanding infrastructure and improvements in transport. Government-sponsored migration programmes into 'empty lands' (tanah kosong), which are often tribal territories, also add to this increased movement of people.

Another interesting aspect of the global cultural flow is religion. It is certainly true that Indonesia has embraced world religions as its official and dominant religions, but to some degree these religions have been Indonesianized. Differences between religions are striking, however. Hinduism and Roman Catholicism, for instance, allow for more borrowing from the local culture – contextualization, as this is being called nowadays – than do Islam and Protestantism. So to a certain extent these world religions are being localized.

But some very specific aspects that seem intimately connected to global culture – such as a certain degree of secularization, drug addiction, increased consumerism, a growing lack of respect for nature, democratization of the media, pornography and a general weakening of 'traditional' values – are considered to be the major dangers of the penetration of Western culture. The danger is even greater in the case of tribal communities, which are considered to be more fragile in this respect. It is interesting to note, however, that the state is losing control over some of these aspects because of the difficulties of exercising censorship over modern means of communication such as satellite television and telecommunications. The increased interaction between the Indonesian people and the millions of tourists resulting from the heavily promoted tourist sector is also hard to control and brings with it the influx of particular elements of Western culture.

10 Though these issues are often debated in the media and in public by policy makers and politicians, corruption as an aspect of global culture is usually never mentioned. Though corruption is often referred to as one of the evils of Indonesian society, the global culture is not accused of being its source. Somehow policy makers implicitly accept the Indonesian origin of this phenomenon. Among tribal people, corruption is certainly considered one of the features of development projects. Telling stories, fact or fiction, about 'money eating' (makan uang) by planners, officials and implementors is a favourite topic during gatherings among these people.
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