

09 PH

P194



**NARRATIVE BOUNDARIES, NATIONAL HORIZONS:  
THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY IN AMAYA,  
MALUKU TENGGARA, INDONESIA.**

By

**Sandra N. Pannell**

Discipline of Anthropology  
The University of Adelaide

Submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

February 1991

## CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	viii
Statement	x
Acknowledgements	xi
Notes on Orthography and Abbreviations	xv
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Linguistic and Anthropological Overview.	5
Continuity and Change.	11
History or Myth?	15
Thesis Synopsis.	22
<b>CHAPTER 1: THE SETTING, 1986 - 1987</b>	<b>29</b>
Introduction.	29
Damer:	32
Climate and Physical Environment.	32
Administration, Access, Facilities and Island Demography	34
Economic and Subsistence Activities	49
Amaya:	52
The People.	53
Village Diversity.	59
Village Facilities and Physical Layout.	72
Conclusion.	83
Notes.	85
<b>CHAPTER 2: "PREVIOUSLY WE FOLLOWED OUR MOTHERS": CULTURAL CONTACT, COLONIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY</b>	<b>87</b>
Introduction.	87
Making History.	92

CONTENTS (continued)	Page
The Period of European Colonialism.	97
The Second World War: A Period of Transition.	129
The Post-Colonial Period.	135
Conclusion.	143
Notes.	148
<b>CHAPTER 3: "NOW WE FOLLOW OUR FATHER": THE CONTEMPORARY CONSTITUTION OF SOCIAL GROUPS IN AMAYA</b>	<b>152</b>
Introduction.	152
<u>Uma</u> as Physical Structures.	154
'Sleeping in One House'.	155
'Children of the Ancestors'.	157
Reciprocal Identities: Sharing Substance, Names and Space.	176
The Social Construction of Relatedness.	191
Conclusion.	199
Notes.	203
<b>CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORY OF AMAYA: NARRATIVES OF DIVERSITY AND CONTINUITY</b>	<b>206</b>
Introduction.	206
Collecting and Constructing the Past.	210
The 'History' of Amaya:	218
Version I.	218
Version II.	230
Comments.	236
Conclusion.	253
Notes.	255

CONTENTS (continued)	Page
<b>CHAPTER 5: THE 'CHILDREN OF THE PLACE': RANK, RESIDENCE AND MARRIAGE</b>	<b>257</b>
Introduction.	257
Social Classifications in Amaya.	259
<u>Mahno</u> , <u>Uhro</u> and <u>Ota</u> .	264
<i>Soa</i> : The Debate.	276
<u>Ono</u> : The 'Children of the Place'.	280
Marriage.	290
'To Marry Outside'.	292
Affinal relations: Actual and Classificatory.	293
'To Marry Inside'.	298
Negotiation and Mediation:	299
Case 1.	305
Case 2.	311
Case 3.	316
Comments.	319
Conclusion.	321
Notes.	323
 <b>CHAPTER 6: THE BODY POLITIC: ENGAGING THE METAPHORS OF THE STATE</b>	 <b>325</b>
Introduction.	325
The Body Politic: <u>Lato</u> .	328
Imagining the Nation-State.	334
Hierarchies of Unity:	347
<i>Kepala Desa</i> : The 'Village Head'.	350
<i>LMD</i> : The 'Village Consultative Committee'.	359
<i>LKMD</i> : The 'Village Maintenance Organisation'.	368

CONTENTS (continued)	Page
The Body Politic: <i>Desa</i> as a Metaphor for Community.	382
Conclusion.	385
Notes.	388
<b>CHAPTER 7: THE FALL OF THE 'KING': RITUALS OF RESISTANCE AND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY</b>	<b>389</b>
Introduction.	389
Ritual Strategies:	392
The Fall of the 'King': The Village Cooperative as a Metaphor of Local Resistance.	393
Purchasing the Store: The <i>LKMD</i> as a Hegemonic Trope.	397
<i>PKK</i> : The Construction of Women as Corporate Bodies and National Symbols.	407
The Exchange of Labour and Time: <i>Trop</i> and other Work Groups.	420
Strategic Rituals:	438
Narrating the Past, Legitimizing the Present: The Erection of a New Ancestral House/Community Hall.	439
The Spectacle of Simulation: National Independence Day Celebrations.	445
Conclusion.	460
Notes.	463
<b>CHAPTER 8: 'BEHIND THE STONE WALL': THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN AMAYA</b>	<b>464</b>
Introduction.	464
Our Ancestors were 'Hindu': Objectifying and Distancing the Past.	467
'Behind the Stone Wall': The Protestant 'Ethnic' in Amaya.	474
A History of Origins: Protestantism and the Dutch Reformed Church.	475

CONTENTS (continued)	Page
The Dutch Reformed Church in the Netherlands East Indies.	481
The 'Indies Church' and the Establishment of <i>G.P.M.</i> .	485
<i>Gereja Protestan Maluku</i> : A Brief Introduction.	491
<i>Gereja Ebenhaezer</i> : The Organisation of Space, Time and Social Relations in Amaya.	494
The Architectonics of Protestantism: Shaping the Religious Landscape.	496
The Temporal Ordering and Structural Organisation of Protestantism.	505
Social Relatedness as a Protestant Construct.	522
The Church as an Utopian Concept.	526
Generating Contradictions and Inconsistencies.	530
The Power of Belief: Controlling Resistance and Deviancy through the Idioms of the Church.	535
Conclusion: The Conjuncture of Church and State.	539
Notes.	542
<b>CONCLUSION: NARRATIVE BOUNDARIES, NATIONAL HORIZONS</b>	<b>544</b>
Introduction.	544
Fighting with Words.	546
Competing Narratives.	552
The Bright Lights of Utopia.	556

CONTENTS (continued)	Page
Narrative Boundaries, National Horizons.	561
Conclusion.	565
Notes.	566
 <b>REFERENCES</b>	 <b>567</b>
 <b>MAPS:</b>	
1.1. Map of Maluku indicating position of Damer.	36
1.2. Map of Damer indicating position of Villages.	40
1.3. Map of the Territorial Domains of the Villages on Damer.	47
1.4. Map of the Physical Layout of Amaya.	74
 <b>TABLES:</b>	
1.1. Climatic Data for Saumlaki, 1984.	33
1.2. Population Size, Density and Physical Area of the 8 <i>Kecamatan</i> which Comprise the <i>Kabupaten</i> of Maluku Tenggara, 1984-85.	35
1.3. Population Statistics for the Vilages on Damer for the Year 1986.	43
1.4. Territorial Area Claimed by Villages on Damer, 1986.	44
1.5. Population distribution for Amaya by Age and Sex, 1986.	54
3.1. Household Size In Amaya, 1986-1987.	157
3.2. <u>Mayawo</u> Kinship Terminology.	194
5.1. <u>Mayawo</u> Affinal Terminology.	293
6.1. Details (amended) of the Village Development Programme in Amaya, 1985/1986.	370
 <b>DIAGRAMS:</b>	
5.1. The Spatial Demarcation of <u>Ono</u> and the Territorial Associations of <u>Uma</u> and <u>Marga</u> Groups (approximate) within the Confines of the Village of Amaya.	285
6.1. Indonesian National Coat of Arms.	341
6.2. The Structure of Local Government According to the Directives of the 1979 Village Government Legislation.	348

## ABSTRACT

Broadly speaking, this thesis is an ethnographic study of change and cultural continuity within the context of the south Moluccan village of Amaya. Set against the historical background of European colonialism and Christian proselytisation, the thesis examines the articulation of Mayawo cultural identity within the ideological context of the modern Indonesian Nation-State. More specifically, the thesis is concerned with exploring the social and political engagement of various discursive forms in the construction of identity and the legitimation of authority in Amaya. In this connection, I argue that the politicization and conflation of history and identity is an important dimension of both the (re)production of local culture and, paradoxically, identification with the national culture.

In their previous encounters with the alternative ideologies of Christianity and mercantile colonialism and more recent engagements with the hegemonic aspirations of Indonesian nationalism and modern capitalism, individuals and groups in Amaya have re-negotiated and re-invented a number of cultural forms and practices. The historical dimensions of this thesis, therefore, are shaped by a consideration of certain perceived transformations of Mayawo cultural forms and practices emerging from the encounter with the colonizing forces of the Dutch East Indies Company and the Dutch Reformed Church. In this connection, I discuss how relatedness, rank and group affiliation continue to be regarded as fundamental in the construction and articulation of individual and social identity; an indication of the social importance placed on maintaining cultural 'traditions'.

Following the discussion of social change and primary social forms, I turn to consider how the 'traditional' past is ideologically reproduced in a radically transformed present. I argue that the epistemological and ontological basis of identity and notions of cultural continuity are ideologically grounded in the thematic and episodic content of local historical representations. These narratives about the origins of social groups in Amaya largely deny the historical and changing nature of Mayawo culture and, in doing so, tend to freeze the identity of a person in a particular epoch of knowledge and practice. In this regard local origin narratives, as metaphors of continuity, ideologically function to preserve and legitimate social identity, political authority and cultural difference.



There are other discursive forms, however, apart from local narratives, which serve to verify particular modes of being and political organization. In the contemporary context of Amaya, I argue that notions of cultural continuity are supported by and reproduced through the appropriation and subversion of the rhetorical and fictional devices proffered by the State and the Church. In the course of the thesis, I examine how the logic disseminated in Mayawo 'historical' narratives defines the symbolic and practical parameters for the articulation of State and Church forms as well as constituting the primary referential point for the differential organisation and ordering of local social relations. In turn, I also consider how these 'traditional' hierarchies verify the social and political fictions upon which the State and the Church are founded.

The conjuncture of the State and the Church with the logic disseminated in local 'histories' also produces conflict and contradiction. Increasingly, people in the village question the central exegetical function of local origin narratives in relation to social ontology and local politics. I argue that resistance, in this context, is constructed and articulated primarily in utopian terms. For the disenfranchised members of the community at least (low ranked individuals, women, immigrant families and youths), resistance to the control exercised by high ranking individuals is primarily expressed through participation in Church activities and State-sponsored, community based, development programmes. In this connection, the State and the Church, insofar as they provide 'new spaces' for the construction of identity and the articulation of social relations and, in doing so, gather up inconsistency and contradiction within their unified and transcendent symbolic forms, constitute the referential loci of the utopian imagination.

In Amaya, however, the imaginative function of utopia intersects with the integrative function of local ideology to produce what is pathological in both - dissimulation. Within the confines of the village, the disenfranchised are necessarily committed to recognizing and reproducing the strategies and schemes of the hierarchical order empowered by local historical narratives. Away from the village, the thesis concludes, the power of local 'histories' to inform social action is severely diminished, if not negated, by the existence of other discursive forms. For a number of the disenfranchised residents, leaving the village for the 'bright lights of utopia' represents the only socially legitimate means of rejecting the categories empowered by local narrative forms, albeit for an alternative system of values which is just as discriminating and hegemonic.