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INDIGENOUS RESPONSES TO NEOCOLONIALIST POLICIES:

“STOP THE POLITICAL GAMES!”

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Abstract

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Summary:

The subject of this study focuses on the idea of indigenous peoples’ empowerment through neocolonial development. The research question of how the Ngada tribe responds regarding their experiences of neocolonialist administrative policies related to the development discourse is answered by applying postcolonial theory and the Foucauldian idea of critique to ethnographic material I collected in Indonesia. I analyzed this material by using narrative inquiry. The thesis statement is that empowerment-oriented programmes which focus on education and tourism cause vulnerability and segregation in the Ngada community.

According to the material, education as a means of development separates the Ngada people from one another in three distinctive ways. It separates couples from each other, children from their homes and families and new graduates from their villages and ancestors. This has had a profound impact on the local economy. Furthermore, although education is very expensive for the locals, it rarely changes their opportunities in the future. Also, the idea of an indigenized curriculum has received a negative response, since such a curriculum could threaten the Ngada people’s cultural continuity.

When it comes to the tourism industry, an unequal relationship between the tourist and the destination community has compounded people’s experience of their own marginality. Contacts between tourists and destination communities have been based on cultural violence, which raises criticism of the tourism industry among the Ngada people. Government support which is keen on developing tourism has made the situation worse, as it has created unnatural hierarchies in the Ngada community. Furthermore, unequal distribution of tourism revenues is a source of concern to many people as it creates conflicts.

The people often respond to development-related policies as a whole by criticizing the government and politics. Corruption and an atmosphere of fear further increase the negative effects. Altogether, the political situation in the Ngada regency is pushing people to rely on their own indigenous cosmology, through which they seek and find their own empowerment.

Subject words: indigenous peoples, postcolonialism, development, empowerment, education, tourism, ethnography, narrative analysis, narrativity

Research method(s): ethnography, narrative analysis

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1 Introduction

In this thesis, I will describe how the Ngada tribe is experiencing neocolonialist development policies in Indonesia and how they are responding to them discursively. The thesis statement is that empowerment-oriented programmes focusing on education and tourism cause vulnerability and segregation in the Ngada community. Economic, social and sociocultural development often mean human development that is not based on humaneness or the free autonomy of man, since programmes under this paradigm are implemented despite the will of the people, but due to the will of the people at the same time. Indeed, the development paradigm has involved either/or discussion where man is either developed and enlightened or underdeveloped and medieval. If a community has chosen an alternative way of viewing the world, this also has meant primitiveness in the eyes of the outsider. Therefore, the community has had to be enlightened from the outside because it is unable to accomplish this alone or because it fails to see the empowering potential of development.

Recently, alternatives for ideas of development have surfaced through postcolonialist theory. As a group, these suggested ideas are highly heterogeneous, focusing on variable themes, groups of people and power structures. Nevertheless, a decolonizing standpoint is a common and central means of addressing thematic matters. This involves trying to view things from the perspective of the subaltern. A postcolonialist approach also often includes a critical take on the phenomenon being researched. From a decolonizing standpoint, strategies of resistance are ways in which struggles take place against colonial reproduction of practice (acting or being) and also against colonial reproduction of knowledge. Many writers have engaged themselves in this struggle (see e.g. Cruz 2012; Solano 2014).

This struggle has meant new understanding of the role of indigenous peoples and power relationships. The traditional way of looking at indigenous communities views them as the ones who are without power, not as the ones who are producers of power relationships. Following Foucault (1980, 122, 188), it is as important to see how power is exercised from below the state apparatus. This does not deny state power, but locates power at many different points and levels. This kind of perspective on power enables attention to be focused on less conventional scientific topics.

There are both methodological and disciplinary justifications for this thesis. Firstly, this study is an example of how ethnography can be used as a means of knowledge production in the field of political science. When ethnography is carried out respectfully and on fair premises, it can be a way of engaging the researched in the research process. This is especially important when trying to give a voice to people in subordinated positions, to silenced resistance and to life narratives. I am aware that this goal cannot be attained fully. Since I am approaching the subject using postmodern language, the words I choose are not the words that a Ngada person would use. Nonetheless, without trying to give a voice to the people themselves, this research would only be a repetitive part of what is already written in histories, reproducing the colonial repertoire deep within Western scientific knowledge production.

There is not only a need for postcolonialist observations in political science, but also for analytical perception of the world in the way I will attempt in this study. In terms of disciplinary knowledge, current political science seems too attached to overtly visible phenomena. With increasing demands on the university for explicit results, analytical attention focuses on phenomena that are socially visible and interesting to the media. Consequently, some phenomena of significance may be left partly without recognition, and some discourses of substantial significance may remain silenced. Without aiming for a truly decolonizing point of view, configurations of power will merely be duplicated.

My personal motivation for this thesis arises from the fact that I have been following the situation in Indonesia for long, and I have been alerted not only to international colonialism there, but regarding internal colonialism as well. As I speak Indonesian, I have been able to follow the Indonesian press, and I have noticed different indigenous groups beginning to call for their rights. Among the outer islands, however, there is an exception to this, namely the island of Flores located next to East Timor. Given the history of the Florenese people, I found their silence interesting and wanted to know how they currently experience their situation. I speculated that although they seem silent, they might share their stories anyway. It crossed my mind that maybe it is not so much that they are silent as that their stories have been silenced.

The structure of this thesis follows the conventional thesis structure. First, I will explain the research question with its background in chapter 2, also describing the material. In chapter 3, I will showcase those postcolonial theoretical discussions which are related to my thesis framework. I will also briefly explain what it means to be critical in postcolonial theory,

basing this especially on Foucault's notion of critique. In chapter 4, I will discuss my methodological strategy and decisions. I will provide a brief overview of ethnography in section 4.1, also presenting the material and giving a detailed description of the fieldwork period. In sections 4.1.1–4.1.4, I will cover the kinds of material that the various parts of my field work produced. After this ethnographic discussion, I will continue by describing the method of analysis in section 4.2. I will focus on narrative analysis, presenting this method on a general level and providing arguments for my choice of method. Finally, I will present the process of analysis from the beginning to the end.

I will present the results in chapters 5–7. I will begin with results in terms of education and the kind of impact it has had on local economies, focusing on the specific questions of indigenized curriculum and school language. In chapter 6, I will present the results in terms of tourism, focusing on two key issues, namely the inequality of encounters between tourists and destination communities and the unequal distribution of tourism revenues. After that, I will provide the last of the results in chapter 7 by means of fabulation. The story will show how the local people respond to political decision makers due to the implementation of neocolonial policies and how they view their own empowerment. I will conclude this thesis in chapter 8 by giving the main conclusions along with a few observations about the limitations of the findings and by providing a few recommendations for future studies.

2 A Research Question Motivated by Neocolonialism

The research question is this: how does the Ngada tribe respond regarding their experiences of neocolonialist administrative policies related to the development discourse? This question arises from the idea of 'development' and passive resistance. In this chapter, I will explain some of the background behind the research question especially when it comes to the situation of indigenous peoples in Indonesia. Whenever we study indigenous communities in Indonesia, it should be borne in mind that Indonesia as a state was a colonialist invention in the first place (see e.g. Philpott 2000, 1–2). There was no East Indies before the colonizer, and as Kertzer (1989, 179) observed nearly thirty years ago, Indonesia is composed of islands which are habited by "totally unrelated peoples." This national entity, like any other, had to be "endowed with a sacred unity and made seen a natural social unit" (ibid. 178). Among other institutions, education united people together as one nation, and even today, the school curriculum is openly nationalistic (see e.g. Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2014).

As a matter of fact, assimilation pressures became worse after independence. For example, schools since then have served a political agenda that carries a vision of strong nationalism (Butterworth 2008, 224). During Suharto's New Order, indigenous peoples were not only regarded as being in need of development, but their lifestyles were deemed dangerous to the health of the various populations, and indeed, dangerous to the entire Indonesian society. In order to achieve this development, the government required everyone to become Indonesian (Cole 2008, 281), although in some areas, Indonesianization had already happened under Dutch colonialism (Waterson 2009, 113). Actually, one can observe a shift in emphasis here from the time when indigenous peoples were merely *exotica*, and thus, irrelevant to the national development (Tsing 2007, 36), to the time when modernization of all the peoples was seen as "the key force for nation-building" (ibid. 35).

After the decolonization project, independence war and subsequent elimination of communists,¹ Suharto professed to be the godfather of development. Suharto's New Order had its prime emphasis on development (Waterson 2009, 117), but this nevertheless was not achievable without stability. The army thus became the most important institution and the broadest political organization in the whole archipelago (Vatikiotis 1993, 60). Colonialization was supposed to end there, but on the contrary, the new legislation effectively enabled the continuation of internal colonialism. As a result, indigenous peoples have continued to suffer not only marginalization, but also "discrimination and dispossession over decades" (Hauser-Scäublin 2013, 7). Actually, great similarities can be seen between the Dutch colonial era and Suharto's regime because both "were ultimately based on force, political demobilization, and a technocratic approach towards the modernization of society" (Nordholt & Klinken 2007, 4).

After Suharto's resignation in 1998, the outer islands of Indonesia rebelled against the government. The situation on the island of Flores was often given little attention in the national and international news regarding Indonesia, however. While the islands of East Timor and Papua raised their demands for independence, the situation in Flores appeared tranquil specifically in the Ngada regency. However, although the conditions may have appeared peaceful from the outside, the indigenous peoples of Flores lived and continue to live under constant pressure *to develop*, with their way of life being threatened by neocolonial

¹ With Suharto's rise to the power, possibly close to half a million people were killed (Philpott 2000, xviii; Waterson 2009, 117).

policies posed by their own government. Even currently, the indigenous peoples of Indonesia have to struggle in order to maintain their *adat istiadat*² thinking, which essentially is about their culture's survival (Göcke 2013, 20).

This has not been in focus after Suharto resigned, however, because the resignation was thought to bring out not only a positive change, but a thorough change throughout society. Many people were convinced of this after legal reforms were made and *Reformasi* took place (Nordholt & Klinken 2007, 1; see e.g. Cahyat 2005). After the period of 1967–1998, few people spoke about the need of problematizing the development. Now after roughly 20 years, there is new interest in this matter, however. I think that emerging violent struggles between *masyarakat adat*³ and government/international business elsewhere in Indonesia has contributed much to this change. Among other things, *masyarakat adat* is combating the on-going robbery of natural resources, pervasive corruption and forced religious conversions.

3 Towards a Critical Approach: Postcolonial Theory and Critical Tourism Research

In this chapter, I will explain the theoretical framework of this thesis. Philosophically, my point of view is critical in the sense of the Foucauldian notion of critique. For Foucault, critique is the ability to evade governmentality and governance, which includes the possibility of not being placed blindly inside binary power relationships (Lindroos 2008, 188). Foucault provides tools for critically approaching the systems, truths and models, by which people are governed. Because truth is one of many alternatives within the Foucauldian critical framework, truth is not merely something that is automatically encountered. Truth is not dictated by some authority, but each truth alternative can be argued and evaluated through these criteria (Lindroos 2008, 188).

In this thesis, I would like to offer a reasonable evaluation of the situation in the Ngada regency with regard to development policies. For me, critique does not mean negativity, but an approach where I try to look at the topic from an unconventional point of view and study whether there might be something that has not been fully noticed before and should thus be

² Indonesian, 'customs and traditions.' The expression refers to the cultural codes and codification of the customary law of indigenous peoples, which are applied within a specific ethnic group. *Adat* (Indonesian, 'tradition' or 'indigenous customary law') as indigenous cosmology includes moral, legal and cultural beliefs and practices as well as indigenous knowledge. In this thesis, '*adat istiadat* village' refers to a village where indigenous customary law is implemented.

³ Indonesian, 'Indigenous peoples'. Literally 'customary law societies.'

discussed. An unconventional point of view means presenting a subaltern understanding of the topic and more particularly, giving a voice to the Ngada people who have previously been regarded as *masyarakat terasing*, or isolated peoples. It is also worth mentioning that historically, development policies have been mainly discussed under the state apparatus.

One should be interested in the subaltern or critical point of view, because the critique is related to the dialogue, in which Western culture is engaged. According to Foucault, the Enlightenment left some factors beyond the realm of reason (i.e. outside proper knowledge) and thereby silenced them. As a result, no room was given for these discourses. Nevertheless, factors that are shut outside society explain the culture as much as those which are accepted within society. (Lindroos 2008, 189.) The Enlightenment gave man the ability to produce objective knowledge, in which the search for truth has led to the creation of ‘institutions of truth.’ Nevertheless, these created Western truths have been violent towards alternative knowledge. (Deacon 2003, 21, 39.) The violent truths should be revealed so that science can thereby rediscover itself. As Stoler (1995, 1) observes, Foucault “[has] prompted us to explore both the production of colonial discourses and their effects.”

In the following section, I will present some postcolonial discussions related to education. The important debate is that of whether education is a road to progress or the deterioration of the local community. The discussion will be related to the idea of development and the interplay between governance and freedom. From this postcolonial theory on education, I will continue in section 3.2 by presenting some concerns related to the tourism industry among indigenous communities. I will also show how education and tourism involve the same kinds of prevailing ideas as modernization and enlightenment.

3.1 Postcolonial Theory on Education

In Foucault’s work, texts which deal exclusively with education are rather limited. Usually, education is mentioned along with other institutions, as in the third part of the book, *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977b). A brief discussion on education is offered also in *Conversation with Michel Foucault* (Foucault 1971), which is a volume that deals primarily with education in relation to the university and the role of professor. In addition to these works, education and social repression are discussed in *Revolutionary Action: “Until Now”* (Foucault 1977a). This book provides some interesting and useful points for this thesis, but it

is not of altogether central relevance. However, Foucault offers much more extensive and applicable analysis under the topic of 'The History of Sexuality' (1990). What makes this book highly relevant to my thesis is that it shows how state racism works through the devices of sexuality and management of individuals, and schools are a central part of this.

The main debate regarding education research and indigenous communities seems to be between those who argue for indigenizing education and those who call for a perspective outside education. Examples of the first kind of argument include *What is Indigenous Knowledge* (1999), edited by Semali and Kincheloe, and *Culture, Education, and Community: Expressions of the Postcolonial Imagination* (2012), edited by Lavia and Mahlomaholo. An example of the second kind of argument is Prakash's and Esteva's controversial and critical *Escaping Education: Living as Learning within Grassroots Cultures* (1998).

Those who argue that there is a need for indigenized education oppose the binary view, according to which indigenous knowledge and Western education (or science) are opposites (Semali & Kincheloe 1999; Lavia & Mahlomaholo 2012). They argue that there are many common reference points between indigenous knowledge and education as well as between TEK (indigenous ecological knowledge) and Western science. Yet, both sides of the debate argue that we need better understanding of the colonial legacy and of the possibility that our views are violent. Most importantly, they argue that these violent views need to be located and contested. In light of this, I think the debate could be summarized as a question posed by Semali & Kincheloe (1999b, 6): "How can we preserve or promote indigenous knowledge without threatening it to extinction?" The solutions to this basic problem offered by the two diverging views are very different from each other.

Prakash and Esteva (1998) understand education as an inherently colonial practice which inevitably changes non-Western commons into modern, developed societies. Education has profound meaning for the local cosmology, because it destructs the living spaces and cultures of the people. This has meant a continuous struggle for freedom: "Those classified and categorized as uneducated, underdeveloped, poor or undeveloped are struggling for their freedom from those who consider themselves to be educated or developed" (ibid. 2). However, it has also been increasingly acknowledged that education has affected indigenous knowledge and indigenous culture (Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti 2013, 13).

In fact, authors such as Aikman (1999), Maurial (1999), June (1999), Semali (1999), Bristol (2012), Mahlomaholo (2012) and Keskitalo et al. (2013) locate the problem inside the schooling system and attempt to develop answers within it. For them, the problem is in the ways that education is carried out and how educational policies are implemented. For example, foreign-educated education planners implement Western curriculums, even though they have little understanding of local life situations (Semali 1999, 113). Western understanding is not helping life in the indigenous communities, since it does not have much regard for their special, holistic relationship with nature (Maurial 1999, 59). Therefore, if a school of greater cultural sensitivity is desired, the curriculum should be holistic and student-centered (Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti 2013, 43).

Hence, these authors call for dialogical education, participatory education, sustainable education, indigenized education and indigenous oral-aural literacy as remedies for the problem of Western-biased education and as a critical basis for the future (Maurial 1999, 60, 62, 70–72; Semali 1999, 95, 111–114; Mahlomaholo 2012). Their main point is that with reasonable deliberation, indigenous knowledge can and should be integrated into the schooling system.⁴ Prakash and Esteva (1998, 16) go further than this curriculum issue. They argue that school as an institution serves the government, and more importantly, that it serves Western values and ideologies, since education has come from the West. Schools are incompatible and unusable for the local community; education serves “the government’s economy and the economy’s government” (Berry 1990, 164 in Prakash & Esteva 1998, 6).

The idea of literacy has been deeply intertwined with development, since both are ways in which the ideal of modern mind becomes viable (Maurial 1999, 60). The goal of the development discourse is human economic and social development, and indigenous peoples are part of this project. For example, although interest in indigenous ecological knowledge has been growing,⁵ the perspective on TEK is still closely tied with this discourse. (Reynar 1999, 287–288.) In fact, TEK has real value and meaning only when it is presented as a part of the discourse (ibid. 288). This is partly because in that context, “cultural factors that do not contribute to economic growth are, in fact, development’s nemesis” (ibid. 293).

⁴ As a matter of fact, there already has been some national experimentation with indigenized curriculums. Institutionally, this has meant change in the education system so that school itself has become a mediator between indigenous and non-indigenous communities. (Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti 2013, 10, 13.)

⁵ This has been related to the environmental discourse (June 1999, 79).

If education is seen as an important supporter of TEK (see e.g. Viergever 1999, 340), it could mean that genuine changes in educational perspectives are possible. According to Prakash and Esteva (1998), however, education cannot reflect locality or promote change. It violates family structures and takes children away from their own communities. In this way, it destroys the very foundations of local economy: that is, both home and community. Moreover, traditional knowledge ceases to be important and is forgotten as the languages of commons are left behind. In fact, for Prakash and Esteva, education has become a kind of *Imago Dei* for mankind. It is all empowering and so superior that it is categorized as a human right, i.e. a need that has to be fulfilled for everyone. (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 1–6, 9, 19–20.) Education is, for that matter, an ambassador of justice (ibid. 20).

“Mobile individuals, like their cultures, escape the marginalization of people going nowhere” (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 3). These mobile individuals, or students, are caught in a circuit of exclusion and integration. At first, children are taken away from their families and local communities and placed in educational institutions. Their lives become limited to a small school area, where social interaction is constrained by different kinds of hierarchies. Actually, they are in the middle of an artificial theatre. They gain academic knowledge that has very little to do with real life beyond the educational framework. After various techniques of discipline, surveillance, evaluations and self-evaluations, they are returned to their society where freedom is waiting for individuals exercising self-discipline. They can begin consuming goods produced by their society, while society, in turn, can consume them. (Foucault 1971, 193–194.) Without this kind of imposed management technique, any individual would be very different.

What does it mean to be or become a consumer of markets? The man of needs was only invented when modern humanity took place. Since then, people have been obliged to fulfil needs for their own survival, these needs being goods and services available on the market. (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 22.) Moreover, human beings themselves change into resources: human resources available for exploitation. Also, all the knowledge these people have, which in this context is indigenous knowledge, is merely a resource (Reynar 1999, 293). Roughly, this means that people will eventually lose the ability to determine their own futures (ibid. 294). In the struggle for freedom from this system, people entrust their future to their traditions of history and the traditions of change (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 3, 5).

There is thus a paradox: education is about the right to liberty, yet it destructs freedom. In fact, it liberates one from traditional relationships and community bonds (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 3, 6, 9). However, June (1999, 84) argues exactly the opposite, basing the view on the prevailing assumption that including indigenous knowledge into school curricula would help indigenous people understand the value of their own communities and the importance of their life style. Through indigenous knowledge, students could compare the utility of community knowledge and school knowledge (ibid. 84), for example. Indigenous knowledge could also contribute to education so that it “could be used to teach language, to explore values” and “to recount history” (ibid. 84).

The issue of freedom is a central theme in the development discourse. Through individual freedom, development becomes possible (Reynar 1999, 292). Yet, if education is about liberty, why does it destroy freedom? Freedom is not for the person; it is not freedom for the sake of freedom. Rather, freedom is for an individual to start functioning as a part of society, and more importantly, for society. In this kind of society, governmental practice consumes freedom and also produces it for that very reason (Foucault 2008, 63, 65). Freedom is then actually the relationship “between governors and governed” (ibid. 63). Institutionally, school is an efficient tool for management in as much as it destroys the autonomy of an individual and oppresses other modes of knowledge (Deacon 2003, 152–153).

What is the purpose of this kind of power? A fully free human being is not foreseeable, which creates a fundamental problem in any union between freedom and governance. The idea of power is to control discourses that are unforeseeable and surprising by nature (Lindroos 2008, 202). The notion of power entails continuous collection of information regarding the individual or phenomenon being controlled (ibid. 201), and the educational system is one of the channels for collecting information. However, understanding education as part of power relationships is difficult due to positive connotations of education. These connotations include concepts like empowerment, freedom, human rights, progress and modernization, all of which are frequently brought out in discussions about education. “The communication of knowledge is always positive,” as Foucault observes (1977a, 219). Power relations are hidden underneath discursive practices, nonetheless (Foucault 1980, 95; see also Foucault 1990, 53–55). The rules of right do limit power, but power produces discourses of truth, and subsequently, this discourse reproduces power (Foucault 1980, 93).

It took centuries to change the negative aspects of discipline into positive ones in order to construct the modern school institution and thinking (Deacon 2006, 181). Education thus emerged for reasons that were not limited to the need to give something empowering to the people. In fact, education was not even about development at first. In the beginning, it was a contested institution offering a strategy of managing people that was only one among others. Traditional accounts of the birth of the education system in terms of different interest groups fail to take the colonizers' disciplinary techniques seriously enough. (Ibid. 178–179.) When discourses are not deconstructed, the underlying relations of power also remain untouched.

It has often been pointed out that modern reason tends to solve problems with the problems themselves, which means that no problem is ever solved. For example, educational problems are solved with more education (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 63; Deacon 2003, 196), technological problems are solved with more technology, and medical problems are solved with more medicine. This kind of reasoning is clearly advocated by June (1999, 85–86). Trying to present indigenous knowledge in a manner that is appropriate for education, he aims for an approach where indigenous knowledge could be categorized in the same way that Western knowledge has been categorized and disseminated among different disciplines and sub-disciplines. Prakash and Esteva (1998, 62) disagree, calling for the need to “wake up from the modern ‘dream of reason.’ ”

To summarize, most of the authors contributing to *What is Indigenous Knowledge? Voices from the Academy* (Semali & Kincheloe 1999) and *Culture, Education, and Community: Expressions of the Postcolonial Imagination* (Lavia & Mahlomaholo 2012), argue that an inclusive and democratic educational system is possible. By contrast, Prakash and Esteva (1998) state that such an institution is only a dream, namely the dream of the colonizer. As a matter of fact, education as a means of development has a long history in the Indonesian archipelago and it would not be wrong to say that the history of education goes as far back as that of colonialism. The overall conclusion offered by Prakash and Esteva (1998) is that education is not a need for most peoples; therefore, we should find new ways of getting off the educational treadmill, so to speak. “How to marginalize the educational system?” they ask (ibid. 51). This a radical question, of course, but I think it is also an important one and valid at this stage of our ‘progress.’

3.2 Tourism within Indigenous Communities

Since interactions between different cultures are an inseparable part of development, the international tourism industry and the development discourse are closely connected. In the neocolonial world, homogenizing tendencies have strengthened. Unifying different peoples from different places is no longer a question of ideology; it is a question of production (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 129–130). I would say that it is also a question of reproduction. Due to globalization, new forms of Orientalism have emerged (Hannam & Knox 2010, 113). Particularly, the East “has been subject to powerful discourses of Orientalism,” and this has had far-reaching meaning to the political order of the world (ibid. 120).

There seems to be an underlying commitment to the idea that tourism is a means to Western development and a Western standard of living (see e.g. Cole 2008). There are at least three common interests between education and tourism, namely development, empowerment and escape from marginalization. Firstly, the mindset behind the tourism industry aims for enlightenment and self-actualization, among other things (Singh, Timothy & Dowling 2003, 3). Tourism is regarded as an important aspect of the future survival for isolated communities (Saarinen 2007), and in the Indonesian context, the government has viewed tourism as a way of furthering regional development (Telfer 2002 in Telfer 2003, 158). Secondly and similarly to education, tourism is viewed as an empowering mechanism. If people are educated and if they have the necessary knowledge, it is easier for them to take advantage of the empowering possibilities of tourism (Cole 2008, 274–275, 281). Thirdly, both education and tourism promise an escape from marginalization, since both have placed the Ngada people on the social map and have thus lessened their marginalization (see e.g. ibid. 278).

Although there has been evidence of positive effects brought by the increasing tourism industry, badly managed tourism has caused serious damage to local cultures and their economies as well as to the environment (Cole 2008; Fagence 2003, 55, 61; Johnston 2005; Singh, Timothy & Dowling 2003, 3–4). Social, cultural and environmental problems felt at the local level can be greater than the value of actual money gained by the community from tourism activities (Singh, Timothy & Dowling 2003b). Tourism especially in indigenous territories is therefore “an act of balance between commercial efforts and success on the one side, and effects such as over-commercialization and cultural losses on the other” (Pettersson & Viken 2007, 177). It has been observed that particularly ecotourism over-commercializes culture, thus resulting in great cultural losses within indigenous communities (Johnston 2005).

In *Understanding Tourism*, Hannam and Knox (2010, 106–123) draw from postcolonial theory to recognize those mechanisms and practices whereby the Other is created. The making of the Other is not a simple process, and it is not created in an instant (ibid. 106). For example, oppressive images of the ‘savages’ have existed long before actual colonialism (Loomba 1998, 58). Actually, whenever one is talking about exotica, one has to remember that “there are always complicated, and historically based, power relations involved in the attaching of stereotypes to both people and places” (Hannam & Knox 2010, 107).

From the tourist’s point of view, tourism focuses on the difference between mundane life and exotica (Hannam & Knox 2010, 106). This is the reason why tourists are so interested in travelling to indigenous communities. However, with increasing numbers of tourists, it becomes more difficult to maintain ‘authentic’ indigenous culture (Fagence 2093, 61), even though the search for cultural authenticity brought the tourists to these resorts in the first place. This is because tourists come to experience only some of the cultural characteristics, thereby leaving other characteristics out of sight (ibid. 61).

Since tourism is about the representation of cultural spaces, it is performative (Hannam & Knox 2010, 73). Sometimes, however, this performative function may lead to oppression. Sissons (2005, 37–60) gives a very powerful reminder of oppressive authenticity in his book, *First Peoples*, by combining the ideas of new culturalism, racism, primitivism and oppressive authenticity. He reminds us that authenticity can be used and is used for racist differentiations between peoples and societies. Tourists come to experience authenticity that factually exists only in the world of images and associations about the Other.

Another thought-provoking aspect of tourism is that being a part of national identity, it creates images of how a state wants to market itself to the outside world (Hampton 2005, 736). Indigenous images have been part of this marketing project, through which Indonesia, for example, is described as tropical paradise. On the official tourism website, the potential future tourist is presented pictures of the Borobudur temple area, tropical islands surrounded by a shimmering, turquoise sea and indigenous peoples in their costumes dancing various kinds of ritualistic dances (Ministry of Tourism 2014). Indigenous images in particular have been “treated as the common property of post-settler nations, field available for use as symbols in the construction of nationhood” (Sissons 2005, 8; see also Allerton 2003, 10). In this process,

cultural meanings are reduced to certain stereotypical characteristics. However, these fantasized images are contested realities (Hampton 2005, 736).

Tourism in Indonesia may have brought previously isolated peoples⁶ to the periphery of the market forces, but it has not brought them democracy or freedom. Decisions related to tourism that affect the communities are made far from the communities themselves. As pointed out by Cole (2008, 272), this is what has happened in the Ngada regency, for example. It was believed that the locals lacked the necessary education for deciding these kinds of major affairs; the people were thought to be too ignorant (ibid. 272). This has led to a diversity of results, but what is relevant in this context is that due to top-down decisions, communities began to change on a non-local basis and continue to do so (Saarinen 2007, 41).

After tourism grew into an international and global industry, a disagreement emerged on whether tourism stabilizes the local economy and creates diversification or whether, in fact, tourism is a cause for instability and local economic crises (Gilbert 1989, 41; Cole 2008). For example, tourism has made local economies dependent on tourism revenues (Fagence 2003, 55). Thus, the indigenous ways of life then become harder to sustain, and the pressure to change and develop grows higher (ibid. 61). Dependency on tourism income is one of the hardest problems that industry creates, since tourism is always international business and therefore dependent on many force majeure situations like global epidemics, wars and natural catastrophes or smaller scale incidents (see e.g. Cole 2008, 283–285). However, tourism is rooted in the belief of continuous and perpetual growth, and thus tourism strategies do not include the possibility of a declining industry (see e.g. Hakkarainen & Tuulentie 2008, 6–7).

The first critical voices on the effects of tourism began to be heard in the 1970s. Before that scientific research has focused on the positive economic implications that the tourism industry was thought to have (Singh, Timothy & Dowling 2003, 6). In the 1980s, there was growing acknowledgment of the profound impacts tourism had on the local level not only economically, but also socially and environmentally (Burns 1999, 331). Ever since the 1950s, the public sector's involvement in tourism planning has changed considerably as well. At first, there was a modest amount of planning, which gradually changed into different kinds of

⁶ Earlier, the concept of *masyarakat terasing*, meaning 'indigenous' as 'isolated peoples' was frequently used in governmental language. *Terasing* refers to something which is exotic and alienated in a way that is curiously different from what one regards as being normal.

strategies and inter-discipline destination management with sophisticated analyzing and monitoring techniques. (Ibid. 331–332.)

There has been little consensus on a desirable path for poorer countries to take in terms of how they should proceed with the tourism industry. Burns (1999) has distinguished two approaches to this issue, namely ‘Tourism First’ and ‘Development First.’ Those who assume the ‘Tourism First’ approach would like to develop tourism to ensure economic growth and to meet the needs of production. The values behind this approach have their roots in the globalization movement and the vision of an emerging global village. The ‘Development First’ stance, on the other hand, has a better understanding of how tourism affects the local environment. It also has more interest in improving underdevelopment and redistributing tourism revenues equally. This stance has its origins in the sustainable human development discourse. (Ibid 329–330, 332–333.) What seems to be common to both perspectives is that there seems to be nothing outside modernization.

As a matter of fact, tourism is not only a part of the development discourse, but also integral to the modernization project. Saarinen (2007, 41, 43) argues that tourism can bring even modernization to the isolated areas, pointing out that the limits of the core and periphery relationship play a major role in tourism activities. It should be noted that the relationship between core and periphery is not a relationship of equals. The periphery has long been regarded as a kind of grey area in need of development: an area which is lagging behind the core’s progress. This inequality is presented clearly in an article written by Jenkins, Hall and Troughton (1999, 49), who observe that communities change into peripheral or isolated communities when their traditional economy fails. Thus, they need economic help from the core.

To summarize, I have presented those tourism debates which are most directly related to my thesis in this section. I have shown how education and tourism carry the same kinds of prevailing ideas. Furthermore, I have described some of the most important effects tourism has on indigenous communities, whether desirable or not. The point of the greatest concern is whether the tourism industry creates diversification or instability, and thus vulnerability, to the local community. Towards the end of this chapter, I have also made a connection between the tourism industry and the modernization project.

4 Creating Fair Premises: A Combination of Ethnography and Narrative Analysis

In this chapter, I will discuss ethnography and narrative analysis. Section 4.1 comprises a detailed description of the field work period. It begins with a description of ethnography, an overview of the field work and a discussion of the problem of field accessibility. This is followed by sections 4.1.2– 4.1.4, divided in terms of the kind of material that the various parts of my field work produced. The material involved participant observation, interviews, group discussions and photography, all of which will be described.

In section 4.2, I will present an overview of narrative analysis, explaining what I mean by the term *narrative* and what is most important in this type of analysis. Then I will briefly discuss why I decided to utilize narrative analysis. Eight main reasons include the demand for holism, the need to gain understanding of the phenomena in question, and the idea of change and locality, among others. Finally, I will describe the analytical process from the beginning to the end. The method of analysis is holistic in nature, taking the material as a whole and recognizing different parts of the story within it as being interconnected. The focus is on how the different narrators experienced the narrated topics, what kinds of tensions emerged and how these emerging conflicts were resolved. As usual in narrative research, change and the functional meaning of narrative are of central importance.

4.1 What Is There for Us in Ethnography?

Since ethnography has its roots in colonization (Clair 2003), at first glance, it might seem that an ethnographic research method is not compatible with the framework of this thesis. Postcolonial theory does challenge imperialism; it “challenges the very existence of ethnography as an imperial endeavour” (ibid. 19). In this section, I will nevertheless argue that ethnography has major potential in writing of this kind and in the field of postcolonial research. At the same time, I will also provide a short overview of ethnography.

Even though one is often reminded of the colonialist roots of ethnography, one should also always bear in mind the politics and history embedded in any research method. A method is always the product of a particular time in history, particular politics and particular philosophical beliefs. For example, from the late fifteenth century onwards, ethnography facilitated the creation of the primitive Other. Indeed, ethnography has been *the study of the Other*, and therefore, it “[has] provided accounts of cultural annihilation, slavery, and torture”

(Clair 2003, 4–5, 18). As dominant discourses affect scientific methods, new ethnographic trends have emerged recently due to neocolonialism (ibid. 13).

Given these opening remarks, ethnography is nevertheless a method with plenty of room for manoeuvring. There are many different ways to approach ethnography, with different alternatives to grasp (Clair 2003, 3, 19). In the ethnographic field, ethnography comprises a group of mutually supportive techniques for approaching various subjects. An ethnographer will participate in the lives of the researched for a good period of time, collecting all kinds of available data (Alasuutari & Alasuutari 2015; Banks 2007, 58; Peltomaa 2013). This does not mean that all the data will be relevant as research findings, however. Rather, the ethnographer will select the most vital and relevant information from the gathered data during the analysis.

Ethnography can take into consideration the culture of the colonized, and in order to do this, it should deconstruct colonizing practices. The decolonizing voice should bring forth those practices inherent in the master discourse, which are not questioned because they are regarded as being natural and normal (Conzález 2003, 80). This should fit the whole research process methodologically, because the function of the ethnographer is to describe the world from the point of view of the group being researched (Alasuutari & Alasuutari 2015). Of course, it needs to be realized that such a point of view can never be fully attained; it is more like an absolute ideal, toward which one strives regardless of the impossibility of the goal. There are also ways of compensating for this limitation.

An ethnographer should always consider to whom the research is giving a voice and on which side the ethnographer himself is standing (Alasuutari & Alasuutari 2015). The question of voice is also crucial in narrative analysis, and it clearly reflects the short distance from the decolonizing discourse to the colonizing one. Self-reflectivity and a critical approach facilitate decolonizing research activities. Furthermore, for an ethnographer to practice research on fair grounds, holistic perception and approach are of great importance in two respects, namely the context of the field (ibid.) and the various aspects of peoples' lives (Banks 2007, 58).

Taking holistic perception and approach into consideration, an ethnographer wishes to observe people from a functional point of view; he seeks to understand what people do as opposed to “what the ‘rules’ of society might say they should do” (Banks 2007, 58). For the purposes of this thesis, ethnography proved to be the most practical way of obtaining reliable

information. I wished to create possibilities of knowing more than what is expressed publically. This does not mean that information collected from other than official sources is by any means neutral. On the contrary, different interpretations of social phenomena will always arouse objections and stimulate discussion. These discussions are one of the main values of critical knowledge production.

I would like to make one more remark on ethnography, since it is not the most usual research method in political science. Ethnography is one way of creating the premises for knowledge production that is just and fair from the point of view of the researched. This is especially important when the original power relationship between the researcher and the researched has been highly unequal. For the purposes of this thesis, ethnography especially in combination with narrative analysis also allows critical standing, while western scientific tradition has not given any true valuation for indigenous knowledge. Ethnography as such is not a shortcut to this, as history has shown, but it does have major potential as a method of revealing some central parts of our violent understandings of the reality.

4.1.1 Overview of the Field Work

In this section, I will explain the choices I made during the field work and describe the relationships with the interviewees, or narrators, that were formed. I collected the research data during a four week journey to the Ngada regency on the island of Flores, located in the Eastern side of Indonesia. Initially, I thought I might settle on either the Manggarai regency or the Ngada regency. I eventually chose the Ngada regency as the research field despite its poor means of communication precisely because I was under the impression that it is one of the poorest areas on the island. Since poverty is a social construction, I thought this might also indicate that the Ngada regency has been a peripheral area from Javanese point of view. Also, the area is very demanding geographically with many active volcanoes, steep hills and thick rainforest, most of which is almost impossible to overcome. This is one of the reasons why it has been depicted as a peripheral region.

This choice involved not only me choosing the Ngada tribe, but also the Ngada people accepting me on their lands to carry out the field work. The process was not self-evident, as the Ngada people are careful about introducing visitors to their ancestors. For example, when I came to Belaraghi village, it was important to ask the ancestors whether I could stay there. To

accomplish this, we all gathered together, forming a circle in the most sacred place of the house.⁷ This was the moment when the ceremony *ti'i ka ebo nusi* could begin. At first, the son of the head of the family took a chicken and crushed its legs, after which he sacrificed the bird with a knife. The blood was carefully collected on a plate to be offered as a greeting to the ancestors. From the plate, the blood was sprinkled onto small, engraved objects where the ancestors were living. After that, the rest of the blood was put on my forehead and on my right hand. Then they opened the stomach of the chicken to see its intestines. In this way, they were able to tell me that the ancestors wished me to stay with them. They also predicted that I would have a good, enriching journey. This was so that after my stay in their village, they would feel alright about letting me go, since I would be in safe hands.

After this ceremony, I was able to begin the field work. During that time, I observed how the village communities functioned and participated in the Ngada tribe's daily life. Moreover, I wrote an extensive field diary and held a number of group discussions and interviews. The interviews were conducted in either Indonesian or English, but the Ngada language was used as well. I also took photographs to study one specific issue related to the tourism industry. These photographs complemented information gathered from the interviews, exemplifying the people's topics of conversation in the discussions we had together, but they also provided some new ways of viewing tourism.

I began the field work in Belaraghi village because I did not wish to begin gathering material from the so-called 'elite villages' that are eligible for funding from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or that are tourist destinations primarily supported by the government. For me, it was important to understand the point of view of those people who are not receiving this support and through understanding, to see and describe an alternative reality. Since Belaraghi village is off the beaten track of tourism, I also stayed in the Ngada tribe's capital, Bajawa, which deepened my understanding of the complexity of the research question. People in Bajawa are usually better educated and have a better economic standing than those who stay in the villages. Almost all of the people in Bajawa came from nearby *adat istiadat* villages, however, which means that they are also part of their own indigenous communities, maintaining close ties to their rich, local heritage.

⁷ This is also the place where the women give birth.

From Bajawa, I made a day trip to another *adat istiadat* village, Bena, which is the main destination point for tourists. I also travelled from the Ngada regency to nearby areas in order to see how the Ngada regency differed from other administrative divisions on the island of Flores, such as Ruteng, Ende and Sikka. The Ngada regency appeared poorer and seemed to lack basic infrastructure and sanitation especially outside the tribe's capital. In Belaraghi village, there is no basic sanitation, no electricity, no running water, and for that matter, no clean drinking water. The local people cultivate their land by the slash-and-burn system which also marks their annual growing seasons. The final product of this cultivation system is red rice, and it is the most important food for the Belaraghi people.

The people I interviewed comprised both men and women from various social classes and age groups, ranging from the age of 21 to the age of 57. Most elderly people are illiterate and have never attended school (e.g. Tan et al. 2013, 522). All of the people I interviewed in Belaraghi village cultivate cash crops, but their relative income is very low, considering the fact that Flores is one of the poorest regions of the Indonesian archipelago. In the tribe's capital of Bajawa, I interviewed four people on their experience and work in the tourism industry. These four people also belonged to their indigenous communities. Due to tourism revenues, however, they appeared to be much better off economically than people in the villages. They had phones, stereos and computers, for example.

The duration of my visit was rather short in view of the overall importance of the topic. This was a practical matter, however, since an Indonesian visa on arrival was limited to four weeks at the time. This made it more challenging to visit the outer islands because travelling there can be slow and sometimes very difficult. This is one thing that affected my journey, but other kinds of issues related to field accessibility arose as well. As a matter of fact, field accessibility is one of the biggest obstacles an ethnographer counters (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007, 41). It involves having to find how to get inside a community and how to build a relationship of trust with the people being researched.

Furthermore, a new person and a new situation can significantly affect life in a community so that the people will behave differently than they would otherwise. Naturally, the community will give the researcher a specific role, but this role does not have to be accepted as such. The ethnographer can have his own view of it (Peltomaa 2013). This means that the researcher cannot merely settle into the role of researcher, but has to be something more (ibid. 55).

Participation in the daily activities of a community means that the relationships formed with interviewees have to be taken into account in a very particular manner by the ethnographer. The roles of both the researcher and the researched also change from moment to moment, and this variation may affect the research findings. Thus, the ethnographer should consider his own role and research position openly and critically. (Alasuutari & Alasuutari 2015.)

An ethnographic position is twofold. Firstly, the researcher has to try to resemble the people being researched, while remaining outside the community at the same time. Secondly, the community should be neither too familiar nor too distant. (Peltomaa 2013.) For me, it would not have been possible to become too familiar with the community during the brief field work period. Altogether, my position as interviewer was not an easy one, especially after the Ngada tribe's resistance of neocolonialist policies became more explicit to me. I did not wish to abuse local knowledge, but to engage briefly with the tribe's struggle. Thus, it was crucial for me to know how they would like me to approach the research topic. This was also necessary because I came not only from a different culture, but the dominant white culture with a very different kind of colonial history and colonial memory. Thus, I felt that the primary interest for approaching the people should be cultural sensitivity, followed by the need for research material and research findings. Moreover, cultural sensitivity means that I should take a critical view towards my own thinking.

4.1.2 Participant Observation

Martti Grönfors (2011) has identified three levels of observation, where the researcher's activities change by degree. These levels are pure observation without participation, participant observation and disguised (covert) observation. It was clear from early on that I aspired to be part of the Ngada people's life and to participate in their lives as much as possible. Thus, my field work was based on participant observation. I had three reasons for choosing participant observation with one of them being purely practical. Since I ate their food, slept in their premises and took some of their precious working time, I wished to give something in return (i.e. give a helping hand in their daily life). The other two reasons pertained to my thesis. Firstly, without trying to be part of their community and life, it would have been impossible to understand their experience. Secondly, it was vital for me to participate, since I had to go there without reading anything about the Ngada tribe beforehand. There are very few (if any) books written about the Ngada people. Even at the beginning of

the field work, I found this to have been a good thing nonetheless because I wished for an experience of the most authentic kind.

Interactions in a participant observation setting should always take place on the terms of the people being researched (Grönfors 2011, 52). Actually, compliance with this general rule led to a number of things. The most important one of these was that I was accepted as a participant in their *upacara*,⁸ and participated in their cult of ancestors. Secondly, I was part of their profane life. We gathered food and fished freshwater crayfish. I washed clothes by hand and set out meals which were served on the floor. We climbed coconut trees and mountains, and we walked down to the valleys to cut some plants. In all these instances, whether profane or sacred, I was part of their social community. We laughed together and discussed important matters as a group. I listened when they wanted to express their concerns, and I answered if they wanted to know something about Finland, the Sámi community or the overall situation of the Sámis in Finland. They were as much interested in indigenous peoples in Finland as I was interested in their life.

Although a researcher should strive to influence the flow of events as little as possible (Grönfors 2011, 52), my being among the indigenous group influenced the daily life of the community. I was treated as a guest, which means that the people I lived with had to perform their roles as hosts and hostesses. They cleaned the premises, made extra food, served dinner, *et cetera*. At first, I also gathered a lot of attention. This came as no surprise, since I appeared quite different from everybody else and carried all kinds of goods the people had not seen before. Thus, it is clear that the community could not have functioned as though I would not have been there. Nonetheless, this was mainly a good thing. People said they felt that they had someone from the outside for discussions: someone who wished to understand their situation. Having said this, I should mention that I also encountered opposing views. For example, there was one person who became irritated when he realized I was discussing something with others. Basically, this was an issue of trust, seeing as this person came from elsewhere.

It was especially important for me to take notes on the difficult topics whenever recording a discussion was not possible. This is common in ethnography where written accounts from the

⁸ Literally, *upacara* means ceremony. However, the term used in anthropological literature is *ritual*, and for this context this latter meaning is more correct. On the island of Flores, *upacara* is a ritual, which is strictly based on the cult of ancestors, including a communal feeling of belonging to the ancestral lands.

field are a central part of participant observation (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 2001, 352). Likewise during participant observation, I took field notes describing my experiences. I also wrote down ideas and questions that puzzled me while staying in the community. Later on, these field notes became vital because through them, I was able to return to the experience more fully while writing the thesis.

4.1.3 Interviews and Group Discussions

I did not make recordings of all of the group discussions I had with the local people because it seemed that in some instances, the recording process might have steered the discussion and left some important topics untouched. Indigeneity remains a sensitive subject in Indonesia, and politics can be a taboo in people's minds. My decision not to record everything was nevertheless something of a compromise in the sense that sometimes things which seem to be of little relevance at the time of a recorded session may prove to be important later. I made recordings of ten interviews and group discussions all in all. These lasted from thirty minutes to two hours depending on how long each discussion continued. Of the interviews that were not recorded, I wrote detailed descriptions and field notes.

Because my intent was not to impose too many restrictions on the narrators' approaches, but to examine the stories constructed in Ngada society, the body of interviews constituted a broad thematic ensemble. I did not assume a very central role in the interviews and discussions except in one interview. The reason was that if the interviewer, in his search for 'relevant' information, interrupts the narrator, it may hinder the narrator's storytelling capacity (Mishler 1986, 74). In general, the strength of my role seemed to change according to the setting so that during the participant observations, I was more actively on the same level with everyone else than during the interviews.

People were very keen on sharing stories of their experiences, and most of the time I just listened to whatever they were telling me and whatever they felt was important. People knew the reason for my visit, and the leader of the family or the clan usually just gathered everybody together for some discussion. Group discussions were not as much my idea as the family's or clan's initiative for sharing their stories with me. Consequently, there was only one interview where I had specific questions prepared beforehand, and I organized it just before leaving the Ngada community. At this point, I already had quite a specific view of the

Ngada community, their life, their hopes and concerns. During this final interview, my intention was only to clarify some things that remained uncertain or puzzling to me.

There are advantages and disadvantages to group interviewing, since the participants can either stir one another's thoughts and memories to life or control or suppress them (Grönfors 2011, 63). Because I did not intrude too much in the discussions, I was better able to see the power relationships between the people. For me, it was not problematic for someone's point of view to be challenged or for someone to remain quiet. I was interested in how the group developed the ideas they were discussing, which ideas were challenged and why. The roles that different narrators had were interesting to observe because they also had an effect on the overall outcome of the discussion. In the end, the answers to questions of who knew what and why they had this information revealed many things I would not have known otherwise.

Later on, I realized that it would not have been sensible or even possible to pose exact questions in the villages immediately. It would not have been sensible because I would have heard little more than what I already knew I wanted to know. Mishler (1986, 68) argues that "serious attention to stories as topics for investigation makes us re-examine some of the core presuppositions and aims of standard interviewing practice, where respondents' stories are suppressed in that their responses are limited to 'relevant' answers to narrowly specified questions." In light of this, it seems likely that had I asked questions immediately, the people would have answered by saying things that I wanted to hear. They would have discussed the topics I wanted to discuss. However, this thesis is about them, and so I wished to give them the freedom to express their concerns however they felt best.

If I had asked specific questions from the start, not obtaining any results could have been even more likely than obtaining blind results. The ways in which I would have formulated the questions at first would have been unsuitable. Firstly, I soon realized that it was very difficult to talk about time with people from the Ngada tribe, since they have no such notion. In other words, there is no past, present or future. Everything is here and now. For example, our ancestors are living with us at this very moment. The universe is a coherent cycle, not a linear line with a beginning and an end. This also means that change is a very difficult topic for the people to grasp. What is change when we live in a timeless world? Secondly, I noticed that everything too abstract or too specialized was impossible for us to discuss together. The things we could discuss were either very practical or highly holistic. Thus, I encountered a

problem that has been encountered by many others, namely that of how to approach a completely different cosmology from the Western scientific paradigm. Is it even possible, and if so, what are the limitations and realities that have to be accepted? Answering these questions is beyond the scope of this thesis, however, and must be left to future studies.

4.1.4 Photography

I utilized photography to gather material on one specific issue. Even on the first day of my field work, there seemed to be an underlying problem related to tourism and inequality caused by the tourism industry. In fact, it was one of the first things people began discussing with me, although at that point in time, I was almost a stranger to them. As I talked about this issue with the people, Bena village was brought up from time to time. I decided to take photographs of the poorer Belaraghi village, and when I left, I went to Bena village for comparison so that I could see what had been mentioned by the people. In Bena, I took numerous photographs in order to examine how the villages differed from each other. I did not have much time to spend there, so photographs replaced some of the direct observation. Luckily, I was able to share and discuss some views with people from Bena later on.

The photography for this thesis belongs in the second strand of visual research in Bank's (2007, 7) categorization, whereby the social researcher creates images, such as photographs, to document and analyze the phenomenon being researched. According to Banks (ibid. 3–4), there are two main reasons that provide incentive for social scientists to incorporate photography into their methodological tool box. Firstly, since images are found in every society, visual methodologies are available throughout the social sciences. Secondly, photography may provide new insights which would not be accessible by other means. Banks does have slight reservations regarding the latter one of these two reasons, contending that the visual research process and its findings are distinctive. (Ibid. 3–4.) Nonetheless, it seems that using visual materials may enable one to observe something that would otherwise not be found in that particular instance.

As a research method, photography has its roots in anthropology and it has been used in ethnographic research for long (Chaplin 2005). This is because of the many advantages it is claimed to provide. These advantages include giving a representation of practice, explaining issues and human performances which cannot be easily described in a written account and

giving a deeper understanding of the context while situating the performance in a wider spatial and temporal setting (Halford & Knowles 2005; Chaplin 2005). Despite its great potential, photography does not have a beautiful history, however. In the nineteenth century, differences between individuals were objectified and quantified through new visual technologies. Banks (2007, 23) gives an example of this, as shown below.

Drawing on pre-Darwinian ideas of biological evolution, some early anthropologists sought to typologize human societies on an evolutionary scale, arguing that some societies were closer to an original, or 'primitive,' form of social organization than others. With the rapid spread of photography the idea grew that it might be possible to correlate these social differences at the level of individual morphological difference.

This took place in the context of ethnographic research and included projects that were supported by the government (ibid. 23).

The above example relates to the problem of photographic realism, since photographs may not tell the whole truth (Chaplin 2005). When I selected the photographs for the analysis, I tried to select pictures which I thought described reality in the best possible way. Of course, the selection was based on my own idea of what represents reality. Because my ideas tend to be subjective and culturally limited, I took steps to make the selection more arguable: firstly, by asking the Ngada people what they wanted to have photographed, and secondly, by choosing pictures based on the people's topics of conversation while participating in group discussions. Even so, it was impossible to take a picture which would have included everything. Some things simply were beyond the scope of pictures. This limitation was possible to compensate by describing the context carefully.

Despite the reservations mentioned above, according to Chaplin (2005), photography can be seen as evidence. After all, it does consist of representation. As Christmann (2008, 6) says, "[Photography] is a visual system of representation, by way of which the visibility of an object not being present is produced." Through this special system, a peculiar kind of reality is created. What Christmann (ibid. 6) calls 'photographic reality' is not an objective reality as such, but gives an impression of it. I interpreted the photos I took through this concept: in other words, by understanding the kind of reality the photograph creates.

4.2 Understanding Meanings: The Narrative Paradigm

Increasing interest in narrative analysis can be traced back to increasing valuation of qualitative research methods and to the paradigmatic shift from realism to constructivism. Narratives problematized modernist rationality and gave an alternative to prevailing quantitative measures. After the narrative turn of the 1980s and subsequent emphasis on language, narrative analyses have increased in most of the social sciences. (De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2011, 18–19.) Furthermore, “there is increasing recognition of the importance and usefulness of narrative analysis as an element of doing ethnography” (Cortazzi 2001, 384).

Despite this increased interest, there is still considerable variation between different approaches to narrative. One of the most common ways is to understand narrative as a text type, viewing it structurally (Schiff 2012, 34; De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2011, 1). The various parts come together in a common plot which is presented in linear form (Sintonen 2015; De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2011, 1–2). For me, this structural view seems too narrow because it excludes many possible ways of understanding and thereby appears simplistic. Also, poststructuralist narrative researchers “have argued that either/or categorizations of narrative are problematic” (Schiff 2012, 35). Furthermore, the structural approach regards narrative as having universal characteristics (De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2011, 2). This seems to leave little room for understanding culture and its effect on interpretation.

According to the broad theoretical perspective, which is more suitable for this thesis, narrative can be seen as a mode; that is, as a way of looking at the world and making it comprehensible (Schiff 2012; De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2011, 15; Bruner 1990). Narratives can be considered as cultural tools, “by means of which human beings give meaning to their experience of temporality and personal actions” (Polkinghorne 1988, 11). The ability to give meaning to experience is the reason why social scientists have been interested in narratives (Schiff 2012, 35). In this ability lies also the power of narrative. Thus, it is not in its truthfulness that narrative has the power, but in its verisimilitude. (De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2011, 16.) This verisimilitude is achieved by making understandable an exception to what has been canonized (Bruner 1990, 49–50).

There are no strict rules to narrative analysis (Tamboukou, Andrews & Squire 2008). The analysis can be roughly divided into two possible ways of performing it. Firstly, the analysis

can focus on classifying pre-existing narratives, or alternatively, it can focus on producing narratives out of the research material, which is how the analysis for this thesis was performed. (Polkinghorne 1995, 6–9.) In the material, the voices of the indigenous group are articulated in a form of oral heritage and story. This does not mean that the discussions were in narrative form; in fact, here one can see a difference between narrative and story.

The data will not settle into a narrative structure automatically. Rather, it is the task of the researcher to build a coherent continuum from the data (Sintonen 2015). Furthermore, the various segments are not always presented in some specific chronological or logical order, and thus, the researcher must construct a justifiable order during the analysis phase (ibid.). This means that one has to be able to read the research material and to explain the particular way of reading. My task as an interpreter of the discussions and photographs was both important and difficult, since I had to reconstruct coherent narratives out of different kinds of stories told by different peoples with different perspectives.

Naturally, the data in itself does not provide any results. Rather, it has to be interpreted using theoretical instruments. Paul Ricoeur recognized that only interpretation enables the understanding of symbols, metaphors, actions and texts (Garcia 2008, 73). With the help of language, people can structure and produce reality because language itself includes the possibility of searching for similarities and differences. Language is representative, and in some way, it always produces and reproduces its object. Thus, different interpretations are never objective or independent from the interpreter. (Sintonen 2015; Tamboukou, Andrews & Squire 2008, 6.) The subjective nature of interpretations does not mean that any interpretation is as good as any other, however. The strength of an interpretation can be evaluated through the coherence of the argumentation and self-reflection.

4.2.1 Why Narrative Analysis?

Since narrative analysis has become an increasingly popular method of analysis among ethnographers, there are also accounts of why narrative analysis has been regarded as such a fine instrument for opening ethnographic material. Cortazzi (2001, 385) presents several major reasons that are worth mentioning here. Firstly, narrative analysis highlights the meaning of experience. Secondly, it allows representation of voice and human qualities. Finally, narrative analysis regards the research process itself as a story. (Ibid. 385.) All of

these points add meaning to human reflectivity, which in turn enables more respectful and transparent writing. Beyond these basic reasons to conduct narrative analysis, I have five further reasons as well.

The first of these reasons is that there seemed to be a clear demand for holism. This became evident once I had become acquainted with indigenous cosmology which by its very nature is holistic. Although an attempt to approach an indigenous understanding of life from the Western scientific paradigm is not without problems, since it will tend to break the holism of indigenous knowledge, an appropriate means of analysis will provide compensation for this. Here, careful choices and decisions made by the researcher are of the greatest importance.

The second reason pertains to the idea of social change. When it comes to the research question of how the Ngada tribe responds regarding their experience of neocolonialist administrative policies related to the development discourse, it is clear that this also includes the idea of change. Neocolonialist administrative policies have an impact on something, whereby change occurs, and that something is created for response. A narrative approach is reasonable because it can be helpful for trying to understand social change (Tamboukou, Andrews & Squire 2008, 1). Stories are a central part of social memory and attached social meaning. Through them, change is owned, conceptualized and made meaningful.

The third reason why I concluded that narrative inquiry is an appropriate way of studying the research material is that I have wished to delve a bit deeper than the surface. By utilizing narrative inquiry, I have been able to get closer to people who are in a subordinated position in their society and whose stories of silent, yet innovative resistance should be told and shared with other indigenous communities. In other words, by using narrative inquiry, I have been able to approach the locality, which is the fourth reason for my choosing narrative analysis. Methodological decisions do not automatically mean just and emancipatory knowledge production, however. For example, Paul Atkinson has questioned “a simplistic tendency on the part of some researchers to treat the narrative form as empowering and as having recuperative benefits for interviewees” (Atkinson 1997 in Brannen 2013).

Of course, the narrative method is not without its challengers. The traditional method of survey interviews has regarded stories with caution particularly because “they are difficult to code and quantify” (Mishler 1986, 69). This may create not only dilemmas of interpretation,

but also unequal power relations or ideological bias as well (Fox 2008, 345). Research always creates some kind of power interplay; it is not and cannot be above power. For example, it could be asked what the researcher's ethical position is while trying to benefit from the narration, or what kind of (power) relationship there is between the researcher and narrator (ibid. 346). I have taken these concerns seriously; I have emphasized the need to draw precise interpretations from the material.

To summarize, narratives out of the experienced world in the Ngada regency are produced in this thesis with sound argumentation. There are eight major reasons why I decided to conduct a narrative analysis. The first three highlight the meaning of experience, allowing representation of voice and human qualities and regarding the research process as a story. The other important reasons are the demand for holism, the desire to reach the substance of the matter and the idea of change and locality. At this point, I would like to add one final reason, which is the compatibility of narrative analysis and ethnographic material in that both of them can be utilized to gain insight into alternative realities (see e.g. Tamboukou, Andrews & Squire 2008, 1). As a means of knowledge production, both narrative analysis and ethnographic material enable emancipatory points of departure.

4.2.2 From Understanding Structures toward Understanding Social Change

After ethnographic field work, it was time to begin the analysis. First, I transcribed all the recordings. Then I created a table by giving each sentence from the recordings a row of its own. Reading the field work diary, I noted paralanguage and paid attention to the accentuation, volume and velocity of the narrator's voice as well. Furthermore, I underlined all central concepts used by the speaker. Central concepts basically referred to narrators' topics or what they were emphasizing. Through these common plots, the stories got their specific meanings (Bruner 1990, 43).

I located five main topics that had been discussed numerous times. I marked these topics as categories, since a repetitive contextual element may point to a key theme in a given material (Phoenix 2008, 67). The categories were politics, tourism, education, religion and nature. Politics was a kind of subcategory of education and tourism because when people had been discussing the tourism industry, they had usually also been talking about politics and implemented policies. Religion and nature, however, had often been discussed as physical

responses to changes occurring in the physical and psychological environment. Although religion and nature were different categories, they were often difficult to distinguish from each other, since nature included performative religious memory. These five central themes which organized different sequences in a story formed the basis for further analysis.

I analyzed not only how some specific situations had been experienced and interpreted, but also how the Ngada tribe had responded to these incidents. In order to answer these questions, I needed more tools, however. This meant that even though I had begun performing the analysis on the structural level, this stage mostly served the purpose of sketching out the material. Eventually, social change rose to being the primary level of analysis. In light of both the research orientation and material, neither chronological nor spatial modelling would have been appropriate. Non-temporal sequencing meant that I linked different parts of individual stories together on the basis of attributes, not on the basis of time frames. Within these different attributes, I tried to find similarities and differences.

In-depth analysis began at the individual level because I had discussed matters with individuals who in turn had discussed things with each other, and in doing so, had elaborated on the various topics together. I sought to find out how the narrator had claimed to have experienced incidents listed under the narrated topic, what words had been used for the description and what had been emphasized. Because the discussed incidents had created changes in the people's environment, I had to ask how each narrator had responded to these changes. In both cases, I focused on the referential meaning. Recounting something and experiencing it cannot be used as synonyms, however, since many things affect what we choose to say about something (Schiff 2012, 37–38).

I was not interested in the factuality of the narrated topics or individual statements as such. Even though life stories are based on empiricism, they are not purely facts. Narrative also brings together imaginative perceptions of past, present and future (McAdams 1996, 307). As a matter of fact, one of the central features of narrative is that it does not lose its power on the basis of factuality (Bruner 1990, 44). Due to this, whenever there were conflicting stories, I was more interested in the reasons for the conflict and the things that contributed to the complexity of the issue at hand. With this kind of orientation, I did not get locked into the conflict, but was able to examine the relationship between narrative and anti-narrative.

I needed to highlight the context, since this is important for narrative analysis. Otherwise, I would not have been able to take cultural meanings into account. I asked what kind of symbolism and intertextuality was linked to each segment being analyzed. I also asked in what instances and in what ways the community had brought these out. This helped me to distinguish cohesive and dispersive factors in Ngada life. The question of context highlights the fact that narrative is always created in a social setting; it is spatial. Moreover, narrative is not merely about speech; it also has “concrete social meanings” (Schiff 2012, 40). In connection with context and community, I included locality. This brought interesting aspects of power and context to the analysis as well, which were some of the most difficult things to grasp. The interpersonal function of the story and its power relationships, both of which were constructed in a social setting of different narrators, had profound meaning to the overall setting. Thus, precise interpretations were crucial. As I noticed this, I was able to give more emphasis to the interactions between narrators and also to the silenced narratives.

As mentioned earlier in section 4.1.4, I interpreted the photographs through the concept of photographic reality (see Christmann 2008). Otherwise, I examined the photographic material by means that are commonly used in narrative analysis. Firstly, I asked what usually can be seen in a given picture. Then I asked what I saw in the picture based on my own experience and cultural knowledge. In this way, I was able to locate the symbolism, which had a profound impact on the meaning conveyed by the photo. In connection with this, I also tried to discover something about the context (i.e. long-term history) and to describe it along with any background factors (i.e. short-term history) I could find. Finally, I put everything together by asking what kinds of stories the photos told.

In this section I have provided a brief discussion of the process of analysis. I began performing the analysis at the structural level, but I continued to more detailed in-depth analysis by focusing firstly on the individual level and then on the community level. During the analysis, I also highlighted context and the ideas of referential meaning and social change. After analyzing the field notes and interviews, I continued to analyze the photography, which gave me new possibilities of approaching the topic. I analyzed the photography through narrative analysis, focusing on meaning and context.

5 Subaltern Counter Narratives on Education

In this chapter, I will recount the most coherent story related to education from the Ngada tribe. I will begin with a story of the undereducated, which was compiled together from different narrators who told similar stories. After this story, presented in section 5.1, I will discuss the overall experiences the people have of the national educational system in section 5.2 and the questions of indigenized education and language at school in section 5.3. In the final section of this chapter, I will deal with education, biopower and the question of ideology behind educational systems.

For the benefit of the reader, I need to explain how the story in section 5.1 will be presented. This explanation pertains also to portions of the research material presented in sections 5.2–5.4 and sections 6.2–6.3. I have classified the material by numbering 15 narrators starting with *N1*, whereby *N* means narrator and the digit after it distinguishes the narrator from other narrators (e.g. *N1*, *N2* and *N3*). Unless mentioned otherwise, the examples of the research material presented in this thesis are all from the recorded interviews, all of which were held in English or Indonesian. I translated the Indonesian portions quoted in this thesis into English, trying to preserve the original meaning and tone. For sake of clarity, three dashes (---) mean that words that were spoken have been left out of the quotation, while an ellipsis (...) means that the narrator paused during the discussion for some reason.

5.1 A Story of the Undereducated

I left for school when I was 7 years old. I had to leave because nowadays the government says that children must go to school. Yes, I was very young, and the road to school was long and in poor condition, so I was not able to visit my mother very often. We spoke Bahasa Indonesia at the school, but with the other students we used the Ngada language, which made it a little easier to withstand the homesickness. While I was at school, my mum stayed at home working in the garden in order to earn money for my education. She had a very rough time, because my father had died. She was alone with four sons, all of whom deserved a good education.

It was a big thing that I got to go to school because my mother has never learned to read or write. Education is very expensive, however, and here on the island of Flores, we are very poor. But even if you don't have the money ... you must think about the future of your children ... your children must go to school. Unfortunately for us, mum's money ran short in my case

and so my education ended soon. Already when I was 10 years old, I went back to the village to slash-and-burn and to find food from the rainforest with my mum.

To earn some money, we cultivate cash crops, and entertain tourists. We also try to do work in the city to pay for education. I walk a journey of more than ten hours to the nearest town every time I work outside my home village. Nevertheless, you can always go back to your family after you have raised some money. Those of us who manage to get enough money buy a scooter; then it's easier to visit home from school. Whenever we have enough money, we can also go to the village situated down the hill and buy some fish, cigarettes and also some 'moke.'⁹ It is only a walk of two or three hours to that village, and nowadays, I actually go that distance easily by scooter.

I haven't needed that many of the skills taught in school, but at least when any tourist comes, it comes in handy to know how to write. This is because we have to notify every visitor to the tourism administration. Furthermore, learning to speak Indonesian really opens some opportunities. If you're lucky and get to travel beyond the Ngada tribe area, Indonesian is the only common language we share with others. Well ... of course, not everybody visits outside the tribe's area. I haven't had a chance to go anywhere, but I know one person who moved to work in Kalimantan. Education offers the possibility of becoming a cleric by profession, but not everybody here can become a priest. Many of the educated people have to leave because they don't find a job here.

5.2 Current Educational Realities and Impacts on Traditional Economy

In this section, I will discuss some of the most commonly shared experiences of education. I will show the kind of impact that education has on the economy of both home and community. The core argument is that education divides the community in three distinctive ways. Firstly, it does this by requiring money, which means that since paid work is only available occasionally outside the indigenous village, spouses usually live in different villages or towns. Secondly, children attending school move away from home at an early age, and some relatives like grandparents usually live with them. This has a profound impact on the *adat istiadat* economy. Thirdly, once a person has been educated, he has no working

⁹ Ngada language, local liquor.

opportunities in his original community. This means that not more than a handful of people remain living in the *adat istiadat* village.

Nearly half of the population on the island of Flores never finish primary school or even begin school (Tan et al. 2013, 52). Even today, getting a higher education is difficult because it requires a lot of money, and people in the outer islands are sometimes very poor, as shown by the quotation from the research material given below.

N1: *There was a school, but when school continued, we couldn't pay. Only primary school. -- We had a primary school here. We wanted to continue to secondary school, but we had no money. We should have paid, but I was alone.*

N10: *Here, people have to—when you go to secondary school—you have to ...*

N1: *—Pay!*

N10: *... pay.*

N1: *Pay, pay! It's expensive! Secondary school starts, and it's two hundred, three, four hundred, five hundred, six ... how much already? A very expensive school.*

Interviewer: *And books ...*

N1: *Books are expensive. I was alone. I had children and nothing! The government didn't ... didn't help; just ... We wanted to continue, but there was no money.*

Through education, children who were previously desired as a young, capable workforce and joy to the community are now more of a burden. Furthermore, since people need money to pay for the education, there is not as much money left for animal sacrifices. This has a direct effect on the relationship with ancestors and the opportunities of young people to learn the language related to the rituals.

Since education is very expensive, people usually do not earn enough money from cultivating cash crops and entertaining tourists. People from villages are forced to work in the nearest towns to earn more money. If there is no money for a scooter or there are no roads, the long distances from home to work have to be travelled on foot. For example, I talked with one individual who said he has to walk twelve hours every time he goes to work. Thus, he spends two whole days walking every time he is in need of cash. All the time he spends outside his community is also time away from his family and his work on the plantation and garden.

One of the ideas behind indigenized education is that if community-based indigenous knowledge is integrated with the education system, indigenous peoples learn to respect their

heritage more (June 1999, 84). In light of the research material for this thesis, this idea seems worth challenging by asking why people need education to find and recognize the knowledge they already have. In the words of Prakash and Esteva (1998, 3), it is through education that “children learn to leave home, not to stay home.” This becomes true in two different ways. Firstly, as schools are sometimes located far away, children have to leave home, which means that these children are brought up outside their *adat istiadat* villages. They are not learning the knowledge passed down from their ancestors, but the knowledge given by their teachers.

Secondly, for the few who manage to finish their secondary or high school education, job markets are not located near their *adat istiadat* villages. In fact, jobs are often located thousands of miles away on different islands. I came across this many times, since people from different villages gave similar stories of how some of their siblings had become educated and then had left to work elsewhere. They had never seen these people again, because there was no possibility of returning to the home villages. This raises the question of how education could embrace indigeneity and locality if it divides the community in this way.

School has a major impact on the daily life of village communities, depending on how far the school building is. In Bena, there is an out-of-school-education building (*Pendidikan Luar Sekolah*), but there is no school in Belaraghi. This means that children must move away from home already at the age of seven years. Moreover and more importantly, it also means that these children are not available work force. It becomes a problem in those villages where people still make their living like their ancestors did from the surrounding nature and according to the yearly seasons. There is always pressure to gather enough wood, to hunt enough meat and to have a good harvest. The meaning of this can be understood better through some statistics. In Keligejo village, there were 1,092 inhabitants in 2014, and 237 of them were at school (Kabupaten Ngada 2015, 17, 27–28). This meant that one out of five available for workers were missing daily. This clearly illustrates the damaging impact education has on the economy of home and community (see e.g. Prakash & Esteva 1998, 6).

The impact on the local economy is so great that it is evident in the children’s lives as well. When these children come back from school on holidays, they have to go to work, to find food from the rainforest, to harvest crops, *et cetera*. This is evident in Belaraghi village, since every time some young person comes back home, he or she goes straight to work. This is probably why whenever I asked Ngada persons of the younger generation about their

childhood, the first things they remembered were school and work. Also, it should be borne in mind that school does not eliminate everyday problems. For example, food is a problem also while at school, as shown by the quotation from the research material given below.

N4: *When I went back to school I moved there alone. I tried to find pigs for food. Outside school hours, I already worked on the plantation by myself because my mother was trying to earn money so that she could buy some fish.*

When school takes this much away from communities, it seems that it should provide some future security. Unfortunately, as in the case of Flores, there is no work for better educated people. This is firstly because education does little to benefit daily life in the villages: there simply is no need for a formally qualified work force. Secondly, well-paid jobs are rare and mostly found in the fields of administration or religion, where the career opportunities are open only for people who can afford it and have a bit of luck as well. This means that “*the masses must settle for minimum wages or unemployment*” (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 6). However, a person can become unemployed only through education just as he can become poor only through acquiring some money. There is no notion of employment and unemployment in the villages because everybody has work and everyone is needed.

Primary school education does not contribute to the well-being of individuals very significantly, or at least there is no clear connection between education and the standard of living. For example, there was a person, who had had to drop out of primary school. How this person described what happened after that is shown below in a quotation from the research material.

N4: *I continued on to fishing from the sea. Fishing. Then when I was eleven years old, I worked on the plantation with my mother, using a chainsaw already.*

Even finishing primary school does not change people’s future possibilities greatly. They do the same things they have done before, still working to acquire the basics for living. This is the reality for people whose education has promised them change through empowerment.¹⁰

Education divides the village community and breaks family ties while tying also the parents of children being educated to searching for alternative means of making a living, such as

¹⁰ For example, according to UNESCO, “Literacy is a fundamental human right and the foundation for lifelong learning. It is fully essential to social and human development in its ability to transform lives. For individuals, families, and societies alike, it is an instrument of empowerment to improve one’s health, one’s income, and one’s relationship with the world.” (UNESCO 2016.)

entertaining tourists. This is something that cannot be over-emphasized, since dependency is one of the key outcomes created by education. Education leaves people dependent on external financial help and market forces, external industries and job markets, external ideologies, philosophies and political will. When indigenous communities are destroyed, villagers become dependent on diplomas, because their capabilities are not recognized without papers (Prakash & Estava 1998, 6, 27). When the very foundation of the local economy no longer exists, people fall into vulnerability. From that time on, they are dependent on economies and organizations that they are unable to provide for themselves. (Ibid. 6.)

These realities are often suppressed in the academic discussions. Discussions related to education are filled with the discourse of certainty, where education is essential for prospering nationhood and cultural continuity (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 11). So apparently, awareness of the destructive impact of education on indigenous communities has not lessened its attractiveness (ibid. 63). For example, Amitav Acharya (2015, 125), professor of international relations and UNESCO Chair of Transnational Challenges and Governance at the School of International Service, makes the relevant claim shown below.

If these young Indonesians are able to make a substantially positive contribution to Indonesia's economy, Indonesia could see record rates of growth in the decades to come. But they will not reach their potential unless the government ensures that they can all enjoy an improved education system that prepares to take on skilled jobs.

As this view shows, educational objectives seem to focus on aspects of economic gain, leaving less attention to cultural meanings. This also shows how Western values continue to prevail in the educational environment. (Mule 1999, 230.)

Of even greater importance is the content of Acharya's view. Two observations can be made about this. Firstly, Acharya says that people should contribute to the national economy regardless of their situation through proper careers so that the state can flourish. Secondly, since this is possible only by improved education, the government should provide such education. Clearly, this leaves little or no attention to the realities of the people living on the outer islands of Indonesia. It also highlights one of the greatest problems that the Ngada people and other indigenous societies around the world are facing today. Regardless of having been colonized by the state and harnessed to the workings of the dominant discourse, indigenous peoples should by no means merely obey and remain silent, but should also contribute to their colonizer's well-being.

In this section, I have discussed the kinds of impacts education has on the local economy, and I have argued that education separates people from one another in three different ways. Firstly, it separates couples from each other. Secondly, it separates children from their homes and families. Thirdly, it separates new graduates from their villages and ancestors. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a thorough discussion of reasons for why the educational institution works in this way. Suffice it to say on a general level that the answer can be found somewhere in the combination of the development discourse, freedom and administration. Modern freedom where people can pursue the benefit of their society is not possible in a village of such strong mutual dependency (Reynar 1999, 292).

5.3 Specific Questions of Indigenized Education and Language

In this section, I will discuss the question of the language of indigenous people and the question of whether educational material should include local knowledge. As a whole, this is related to the Local Content Curriculum (LCC) policy that was implemented in 1994 throughout the archipelago (Bjork 2004, 247). At its core, there is the idea that 20 percent of educational content in all primary and secondary schools should be decided on a local basis and be of local relevance. There were three prominent goals in the LCC. Firstly, individual teachers gained the authority to plan and implement new curricula. Secondly, as these curricula would be developed locally, they would have more links to local conditions. It was hoped by the government that as a result of this, LCC would allure students to continue on the school path and lower the number of dropouts. (Ibid. 247, 250–251.) Even if the program has had very limited impact on the local level (ibid. 251), it is an important matter because it indicates the direction taken under national and international pressure.

Some of the Ngada people said that they do not need indigenized education, and they wished that indigenous traditions and knowledge would stay separated from the school curriculum. Despite LCC, the most common situation is that the *adat istiadat* teaching has nothing to do with school knowledge, while school teaching has nothing to do with local teaching. Life at school and in the village differs to the extent that they form two completely different institutions with different kinds of functions, truths, communities and languages. Furthermore,

elderly people said that ancestors and *kepala kampung*¹¹ are the only qualified teachers of indigenous knowledge, *adat istiadat*. Indeed, they have a rich heritage of *adat istiadat* education that guarantees the continuation of their culture from one generation to another.

Problems nevertheless arise when there is a conflict between school knowledge and local knowledge. A clear example of this is that the younger generation claimed that they and their children are puzzled about scientific knowledge, since it goes against local *adat istiadat* knowledge. At school, children encounter the knowledge and skills of the rest of the world, and according to what I heard, they have to consider how to understand and resolve a conflict that sometimes seems overwhelming. A common attitude is that scientific knowledge is proper knowledge of a universal nature, while the knowledge of indigenous people is knowledge built within a culturally conditioned framework affected by numerous factors, starting with ethnicity (Prakash 1999, 158).

It is an understandable concern that knowledge offered at school and the knowledge of indigenous people have to compete with each other. If children learn to value school knowledge more than the heritage of their own, the continuity of the culture diminishes. The knowledge of indigenous people is the lifeblood of the people; it is not a commodity of monetary value (Viergever 1999, 333). The health care and food production of these people is dependent on the production of the people's own knowledge. Thus, knowledge in itself is not as important as the systems that enable the production of that knowledge. (Ibid. 336–338.) In the name of international solidarity, it would be important to value diverse means of producing knowledge instead of trying to prohibit them or merge them together. Assimilating knowledge means assimilating people; it is the integration of certain conditions of cultural preservation into a dominating culture.

The question of school curricula was important in discussions we had on education, but aspects related to language and its associated heritage proved to be important as well. The Ngada language is crucial for the identity and culture of the Ngada people. According to them, it is *bahasa asli*, an indigenous language that is spoken nowhere else. Without a specific language, ceremonies could not be carried out and the relationship with the ancestors would change. One person said that during ritual ceremonies they speak the local language,

¹¹ The oldest male in the village.

but its special vocabulary is something that is not very familiar to many people. Normally, only the oldest male knows it, and thus he is the one to transmit the special vocabulary to younger generations. I was told that this learning process is not an easy one; the vocabulary must be learned by carrying out the various ceremonies.

The people argued that if the Ngada language would disappear, their whole culture would die as well. Nevertheless, they clearly felt that the position of their language is secured, since it is used on a daily basis and because it is taught by their parents. People speak with each other in the Ngada language, and Indonesian is only used in schools, whereby its role in the people's lives is limited to school hours and occasional interactions with other indigenous tribes, as shown below in a quotation from a discussion held in English.

N9: *Bajawa language we don't need to learn, because this from our mother, from my parents. We only learn bahasa¹² language. School they have lesson bahasa, but not in local language. That's why now, local language, I think for us, not possible to lose, because from our mother. (Sic.)*

The possibilities of maintaining the local language depend not so much on the government's educational programs as on local conditions like the status of the language (Aikman 1999, 22). Even if the overall position of the native languages in Indonesia is not good, it appears that the Ngada language has a solid foundation for ensuring its future continuity.

The possibility of getting an education in the language of the indigenous people can be regarded as one of the key aspects of decolonialization (Aikman 1999; Mule 1999, 232). In the Ngada regency, this notion is challenged, however. In fact, when I was there, it was strongly emphasized that the Ngada language should not be used as the language of schooling. At least four different reasons can be traced for this. Firstly, as the Ngada culture is based on oral heritage, there is no need for Ngada reading skills. Secondly, teaching Ngada in school could also threaten the whole future of that language, because ancestors and parents would lose their significance as teachers and tutors. Local language is taught through various kinds of *upacara* and other performative actions that involve everyone. In a classroom environment, language would lack meaning because there would be nothing, to which it could be attached. Thirdly, incorporating the local language into the school curriculum would be cultural violence, and it could impoverish linguistic systems of meaning. Fourthly, one

¹² Indonesian, used in reference to the Indonesian language.

important aspect of the language issue is that if it is desirable to provide instruction in the language of the indigenous people, the context of the language in the classroom has to be considered. Without indigenous performative cosmology, it is impossible to give meaning to the indigenous language (cf. Butterworth 2008, iii).

At the same time, the people feel it is important to speak, read and write Indonesian. These language skills learned in school are respected for many reasons. One of the most important of these is that by using Indonesian, the people are able to maintain good relationships with other regencies on the island of Flores. People on Flores speak many different native languages depending on the area, so there is no other common language except Indonesian. Even within the Ngada community in a relatively small area like between two villages, there are many different dialects which differ substantially from one another. Although the Indonesian language is a colonialist invention, it is now one of the most prominent tools for uniting the different indigenous peoples across Indonesia.

Indonesian also provides new work opportunities on the outer islands. Education provides opportunities for change: opportunities, no matter how haphazard, to step from local economy to national or global economy. With this development, people earn better salaries and are able to send money to support their families. Although family members said they miss their relatives and are afraid that they might never see them again, money is desperately needed to provide a good education. Thus, the promise of accessing the economy (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 8) is one of the core reasons why Indonesian is highly valued as the language of school. As to why it is important to access the economy, I would say that accessing the economy by getting an education makes it possible to pay for more education.

In this section, I have discussed the specific questions of indigenized education and language. I have reported that the Ngada people's attitude toward indigenized education is negative, since they feel such a policy might threaten their cultural continuity. The people contend that using Ngada in school would endanger the special meanings of the language, because it would lose its performative function and it could impoverish the linguistic systems of meaning. Furthermore, they hope that the language used in education would continue to be Indonesian, since Indonesian language skills unite indigenous peoples together and make it possible to work outside the Ngada regency.

5.4 Education in the Hub of the Practices of Power

This section will deal with the kind of civilizing mission education has had during and after the doctrine of Javanization. Education has been a means of eliminating the imagined primitiveness of the Other. By acknowledging this, the discussion in this section will valorize the relationship between colonialism and education. It will also point to reasons why people have responded in the ways that were discussed previously in sections 5.1–5.3. Finally, I will close this chapter by providing a few more examples of responses to highlight the complexity of the matter at hand.

At the beginning of the 20th century, education was available primarily for colonialists and the children of wealthy families. Eventually, careers through good education became possible, continuing to this day especially following the decentralization policy after Suharto's resignation. Overall in Asia, enthusiasm for decentralization began during the 1980s and swept across the continent during the next decade (Bjork 2004, 248). This new authoritative system moved authority to sub-national levels and was occasionally driven by neoliberalism. Consequently, local educators today have the possibility of deciding school practice, and they have greater authority over the curriculum and financing. (Ibid. 346–248, 250.)

When I asked the people what has changed after Suharto's resignation with regard to education, they often could not give an answer. They explained that the national government is so far away that any changes can hardly be noticed in their daily lives. However, two persons did feel that the Javanese culture is not as dominating as it used to be. The struggle of indigenous peoples against Javanization binds them together politically. Javanese culture was the one regarded by Suharto's regime as real Indonesian culture. The aim was to Javanize the whole archipelago through various kinds of programs like *transmigrasi*, relocation and forced transmigration of Javanese people to the outer islands.¹³ With these programs and with the help of the superior Javanese culture, Suharto tried to civilize primitive, isolated peoples and get them under governance.

I believe this is closely related to racist state discourses, since state politics in Indonesia have long maintained strong divisions between *masyarakat terasing*¹⁴ and *masyarkat Indonesia*¹⁵,

¹³ As a result of these programs, indigenous peoples were drawn away from their homes, and their lands were destroyed. The World Bank supported this destruction with large investments. (Parfitt 2002, 144.)

¹⁴ Indonesian, 'isolated peoples.'

or to put it in more extreme terms, between *orang asli*¹⁶ and *orang Indonesia*.¹⁷ Through the racist discourse, the state is able to detect enemies within state borders (Stoler 1995, 28). According to Stoler, Foucault viewed these racisms of state as tactics to create biological enemies of the new society of binary oppositions (ibid. 59). For Indonesia, indigenous communities have represented internal enemies. They have been regarded not only as a threat to the health, productivity and longevity of ordinary people, but as a serious threat to the national unity and to the state itself. Biopower, in its management of life, allows for the elimination of what is considered abnormal to improve the quality of what is considered normal (ibid. 81–82, 84–85).

It seems that education can be used as a means of eliminating the threat of imagined primitiveness. Already during the 19th century, the colonizer recognized that in order to take advantage of the possibilities of education, children were dependent on their moral upbringing. In the words of Stoler (1995, 108), “[It] was in the domestic domain, not the public sphere, where essential dispositions of manliness, bourgeois morality, and racial attribute could be dangerously undone or securely made.” The environments and circumstances where children grew up became part of the governmental concern. In Suharto’s Indonesia, the destruction of indigenous villages was legitimized through the assumption that without the influence of their villages, indigenous peoples would become civilized, and the new circumstances in the cities would wipe away their nativeness. An interesting coincidence that one might notice is that education in Indonesia today takes children away from the influence of their home and transfers them from their villages to the more civilized environment of the towns.

Especially indigenous peoples and nomads have always been a source of concern to the state and government. When people live in defined spaces (spaces to study, to eat, *et cetera*) they are more easily governable and they form populations; their bodies and actions are easier to survey, calculate and evaluate. Through these processes, they change into consumers of markets, and hence, consumers of their own freedoms. In this regard, statistics have been a useful tool for the government, since from that point of view it has been possible to create entities above the family: that is, populations (Foucault 2009, 141). Culturally, these kinds of

¹⁵ Indonesian, ‘Indonesian society.’

¹⁶ Indonesian, ‘native person’ with a quality of something savage.

¹⁷ Indonesian, ‘Indonesian person.’

techniques of governance and evaluation, and increasingly, of valuing and revaluing personhood as well, are alien to indigenous peoples.

This can be seen clearly in Indonesian school books and teachers' materials, where not only children are educated in the schooling environment, but where children educate their parents after returning to their villages.¹⁸ The family is not a model of good governance anymore; it is an instrument for governing people (Foucault 2009, 141). When it comes to techniques of power, it is discipline that "regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault 1977b, 179). Governing is not an end in itself, however. Rather, it aims to "improve the condition of population, to increase its wealth, its longevity, and its health" (Foucault 2009, 141). The role of education in this process should not be underestimated because education is precisely the institution that gives people knowledge to serve as a foundation so that the government can carry out the process of development smoothly.

It should be noted that regardless of the existence of local content in a curriculum or the language used in teaching, educational institutions exercise power over the lives of children (see e.g. Deacon 2003, 152–153). In this process, small children are removed from their communities and placed in a new environment under new authorities to be given new, civilized knowledge. The language used for teaching is the new language created and approved by the colonialists. Equipped with this knowledge and these skills, the children return to their villages where the achieved competences are not needed (cf. Foucault 1971, 193–194; Prakash & Esteva 1998). More and more, the Ngada community has to live with the reality of this and discover different means of survival.

These discourses of power were not born in a vacuum, but drew from existing ideas and exploited linguistic structures that were already partially in existence. State racism did not arise out of nowhere; it was "the historical outcome of a normalizing society," which emerged "out of the technologies of sex" (Stoler 1995, 35, 53). These technologies were series of tactics that "combined in varying proportions the objective of disciplining the body" (Foucault 1990, 146). Sex as a part of the political technology of life became a governmental concern to be applied to the regulation of populations (ibid. 145). It allowed not just access to

¹⁸ Today, much of this school material is found on the internet (see e.g. Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2014). The teachers' materials are especially useful, since they articulate very clearly what is to be expected of the students and how their performance at school and at home should be evaluated.

the body, but also to the species as a whole; after all, the new technology was about global masses (ibid. 146; Foucault 2003, 242).

Thus, biologizing race emerged along with the discourses of biopower, and this took place already during the seventeenth century (Stoler 1995, 68). What is important, of course, is that all this came about through the interplay of various discourses of power, but there is even more to it than that. If we consider the assimilation policies in Indonesia, such as forced transmigration policies or civilizing education, they all were and continue to be widely supported, not only by the aristocracy in Indonesia, but also by the West. This might raise the naive question of why this violence is accepted. The answer could be that racism is part of the biopolitical state, as it is a major responsibility of the state to prevent degeneration (ibid. 134). However, this question is of greater value in the sense that it reveals where the attention of the people is being directed. The interests involved with this enable political intervention in nearly everything, since power is exercised through the common good (Foucault 2008, 45). For example, Suharto's Indonesia could decide from the top down what was good and what was bad for which area (Vatikiotis 1993, 96).

Because of biopolitics, man's natural processes developed a diversity of economic and political problems that had to be defined and regulated. Biopolitics also enabled political interventions in a whole group of phenomena that probably could never have been fully prevented from being manifested. At this point, it is of the greatest importance to recognize Foucault's third intervention trend of biopolitics related to humanity, where not only people, but also their environment and their relationship to that environment, are subject to definition and regulation. (Foucault 2003, 243–245.) A good example of this kind of policy can be given from the Manggarai regency, located next to the Ngada regency. The villages of the indigenous people there were pulled down and transferred closer to civilization both during the Dutch rule and in the name of Suharto's development policy (see Allerton 2003, 4; see also Arizona & Cahyadi 2013, 48–49).

The purpose of this policy was to regulate health and life expectancy, among other things, since the villages of the indigenous people were regarded as poor and unsanitary environments for the healthy growth of the children. Furthermore, national development of the infrastructure and industry was regarded as being more important than social factors (Arizona & Cahyadi 2013, 48). Because of this policy, the people's special, spiritual

relationship with their immemorial lands, which is also the objective criterion for the definition of indigenous people, was broken. At this point, education stepped into the picture as well because it was through education that uncivilized minds were to be transformed into civilized ones and underdeveloped bodies into developed ones. However, this was not only a question of what an acceptable way of life might be, but it was also a question of discourse: for example, discourses of parenting or tropical hygiene surrounding the notion of racial membership (Stoler 1995, 11).

Education has been at the hub of power practices, defining not only the life of communities but also the corporeality of individuals. Development, civilization, progress and literacy have been fundamental parts of the unidirectional modernization process (Maurial 1999, 60–61). It is also worth observing that the World Bank has participated in funding the educational system for indigenous peoples (Hauser-Schäublin 2013, 11). All of this has taken place even though the indigenous people already have their own educational systems and traditions. From the colonizer's point of view, it has been necessary to deny that the indigenous peoples' knowledge is a legitimate form of knowledge of significance, since power and knowledge are inseparable when power defines knowledge (Maurial 1999, 64). Recently, indigenous peoples have begun to claim their own power, and this has meant that valuing their own learning mechanisms has gained momentum. Attitudes towards the national education system as such are not negative, but criticism of educational policies is rising.

If education is viewed from an ideological perspective, a question arises as to the connections of these educational policies. Suharto elevated *Pancasila* to be the leading ideology of the state, and it continues to play a strong role in Indonesia. *Pancasila* ideology has been above all critique; it has been the undisputed foundation (Schmit 1996, 183). Indonesia, the home of thousands of indigenous communities, has suffered a great loss of cultural meanings due to ideologically driven *Pancasila* politics. The ideology includes five principles, namely belief in one God, just and civilized humanitarianism, a united Indonesia, democracy guided by wisdom through consultation and representation and social justice for all Indonesian people (Vatikiotis 1993, 95). I will now present three principles of this ideology, all of which have had a substantial effect on education. The order of presentation will begin with the First principle and continue directly to the Fifth one. After that, I will go back to the Third principle, discussing it last because it demands a little more attention than the others do.

In terms of education, the First principle provides for the encouragement of a monotheistic religion in schools. As far back as 1979, Atkinson observed that belonging to a world religion in Indonesia means stepping into modern citizenship spiced with a cosmopolitan and nationalistic attitude (Atkinson 1979, 688 in Grumblyes 2013, 86). It seems that little has changed over the past forty years in this regard. An example of this can be given from Belaraghi village where the children attend the school in St. Paukate, which is *sekolah tanpa agama*, meaning ‘a school without religion.’ *Sekolah tanpa agama* does not mean that religion is somehow meaningless in the school environment, however (Grumblyes 2013, 95). Children learn not only moral values in school, but religious ones as well. For example, in the Wana area, it is mandatory for children to attend schools that provide an education with Christian values and traditions (ibid. 93).

This has to be interpreted by taking into account the official line, according to which the Ngada people are Catholics. One might find it disturbing that at the same time the Ngada people regard themselves to be animists. For the people, Catholicism is not connected with the community or with togetherness or continuance as *adat istiadat*, it is merely one of those things that happens to exist. I noted this difference of meaning in the words that people used when speaking about their ancestral ceremonies and catholicism. For example, the quotation below shows how one narrator explained villagers and members of other villages gathering together for an ancestral ceremony.

N1: *They come when there is a ceremony. If this is the case, we slaughter a buffalo and a pig. This is if they allow us to welcome them; if they wish to be together and if they would like to have a ceremony.*

Later, the same person speaks about catholicism, as shown below.

N1: *I have already joined to the church; I have already been baptized. You have to join the church. There is not too many protestants, so we accept catholicism.*

Animism is something which is essential to the people in the sense that if one fails to take care of the business with ancestors, injury could befall that person. At the same time, however, it is completely up to the individual whether to participate or not. Essentially, a person is free to decide on the kind of relationship it would be desirable to have with the ancestors. By contrast, catholicism is something which is not given by the ancestors or by the community, but brought from the outside. It is not mandatory, but people have been under serious pressure to be baptized ever since the 1800s. Catholicism has become accepted, but it

remains without any real meaning for the locals. Thus, it is clear that even though the Ngada people are officially registered as Christians, religion for them means *adat istiadat*.

Pancasila's Fifth principle of social justice for all the Indonesian people has been the supporting pillar of the Third principle of the ideology of the united Indonesia, which was the most important principle especially under Suharto's regime. Social justice for all Indonesian people includes the idea that for one to be entitled to constitutional social justice, one has to be Indonesian. This means several things. Firstly, it means that people who do not qualify as being normal Indonesians have to be transformed into such. Secondly, this Indonesianizing takes place by effectively removing all traces of 'backwardness' and everything regarded as being abnormal. Thirdly, it is deemed better for people who fail to meet this standard of normality to be allowed to die in the Foucauldian sense of the word (see e.g. Lindroos 2008, 189; Stoler 1995, 85).

Education has been a means of normalizing people who live in the margins, and it has therefore been of central importance to the normalizing society. More precisely, it has been one of the key elements of the colonial repertoire (Prakash & Esteva 1998, 39, 43). The technique of normalization has been used to reduce undesirable normalities. Thus, it is not created through the relationship between norm and variable, but through the relationship between different normalities (Foucault 2009, 89–90). In this context, undesirable normalities are the commons who are not contributing to the economy of the government and therefore not assuming the role of consumer in the national or global market.

This is clearly related to the Third principle of the ideology of a united Indonesia, which has had a profound impact on education. It was under the Third principle that indigeneity became dangerous. Firstly, it became dangerous to the state, since indigeneity is usually viewed in opposition to nationality. Secondly, it became dangerous to the nation because ethnicity was regarded as a factor separating the people and causing conflicts. Thirdly, it became dangerous to the indigenous peoples themselves from two points of view. From the governmental point of view, indigenous peoples were dangerous to themselves because they were unable to rise to the level demanded by modernity and to discover themselves. From the indigenous point of view, evidence of the danger of being indigenous could be found in several massacres and

genocides across Indonesia, which targeted indigenous peoples.¹⁹ Dangerousness has meant a continuous denial of indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems which the national educational system has strived to replace.

The strong subjective ethnicity of the Ngada tribe, whereby they feel solidarity toward each other and recognize existing common interests, is precisely what has been denied on the level of national government.²⁰ In this sense, the potential for assimilation provided by education in the Ngada regency has not been realized. Thus, even though education creates harsh realities for the locals, it can also help to create the identity of Florenese ethnicity. People with higher education continue to identify themselves with the Ngada community. This Ngada identity can be used in calls for independence, and the feeling of political togetherness may contribute to resistance of greater unity and cohesion. In fact, the starting point for indigeneity in Indonesia derives from resisting settings of unequal power (Grumbly 2013, 97).

An example of this can be given from the Ngada people's tribal capital which is home to the better educated individuals. One can always find some bold individual there, who is resisting the system of corruption and the neocolonialist empire. Educated people living in the capital told me that they are needed because they have acquired not only an education, but also knowledge of how to fight back, since now they are aware of the constitution and indigenous peoples' rights. These individuals are ready to die for the better future of their indigenous communities, and they said they will never be silenced. They said they will stand protecting the locals no matter what the government does or how it generates fear. Vltchek & Chomsky (2012, 150) have observed something similar elsewhere in Indonesia, saying that "most people are reluctant to speak; others are becoming brave, accusing the regime with desperate determination". This has divided people into two sides, namely those who are for the government and those who are against it. It seems easier for educated people to decide which side to take.

Without knowledge, it is difficult to defend rights. Paradoxically, it appears that very low educational goals may help the government to colonize indigenous peoples, and as a matter of

¹⁹ For example, on the island of East Timor next to Flores, 100,000 to 200,000 natives of East Timor became victims of genocide at a time when the population of East Timor was approximately 800,000 people (East Timor Government, 2012).

²⁰ According to the official line, all people in Indonesia are indigenous, and the different ethnicities are a result of Dutch colonialism (Tsing 2007, 34). This is one example of how the state disqualifies some kinds of knowledge and creates hierarchies of knowledge (see e.g. Stoler 1995, 77).

fact, “it seems that there is a purposeful design to keep the population in the dark and in a state of submissiveness, using both the inadequate educational system and excessive religiousness” (Vltchek & Chomsky 2012, 205). Thus, the difficult question is whether insufficient education explains marginalization (Grumblyes 2013, 93) or whether it is education itself which is the explanation (Prakash & Esteva 1998). With regard to the national curriculum, however, it is difficult not to notice the aspect of assimilation when reading ethnographic material or considering nationalism and the significance of *Pancasila* in current Indonesian society.

I would like to conclude this chapter by observing that it is time to acknowledge and recognize the relationships between education, the political game and the power discourses. Education has served as an instrument of subjugation, and one that has hardly been neutral (see e.g. Semali 1999, 98). As mentioned earlier in this section, the power discourses have been created over a long time. From an ideological perspective, Indonesian education is related to *Pancasila* principles that have functioned as justification for the removal of anything that has been regarded as being abnormal. From the colonizer’s perspective, these principles have been beneficial, however, since it has been necessary to deny the significance of the knowledge of indigenous peoples in order to complete modernization.

6 Growing Tourism Industry: Inequality Follows Tourism

What kind of story is the ethical tourist’s story? This was a question that I paused to ponder many times while collecting ethnography and meeting people who complained about problems brought by tourists, despite the monetary income. In the first of two stories presented in sections 6.1 and 6.2 respectively, I will provide an overview of the kind of reality that greets the average tourist in the Ngada regency. This story is based on three sources. Firstly, there are quotations from a text compiled by the Tiworiwu village government and *Pengelola pariwisata Bena*. The text was posted on the bulletin board of the tourist information center in Bena village when I was there. Secondly, there are several accounts I heard from the people of how tourists generally travel in the area and what services are provided to them. Thirdly, there is a comparison of photography from the villages of Belaraghi and Bena. The latter of the two stories (see section 6.2), depicts an average day of a villager in Belaraghi. The story is based on what I heard from the Belaraghi villagers and on my own participation in their daily life. The purpose of these stories is to shed light on the

great contrast between the experience of a tourist actualizing a mental image authenticity and the kind of life one can actually have among indigenous peoples.

Following these stories, I will show how tourism contributes to growing inequality in two respect, namely between the tourists and the Ngada people and between the Ngada villages themselves. The meeting of tourists and indigenous people is based on inequality, in which the tourists are superior to the receiving villages on at least two levels. Firstly, tourists have material superiority. Secondly, tourists have the superiority of a certain cognitive tradition based on the scientific worldview. Furthermore, tourism revenues in the Ngada regency are distributed unequally, and government policies have made this problem even more acute.

6.1 Walking in the Tourist's Moccasins

Usually, tourists stay in a hotel in the tribe's capital, Bajawa. It is a hotel with running water, electricity, a beautiful Western breakfast and wooden furniture. From the hotel lobby, they will book a guide and the next day this guide will take them to the desired destination. Most tourists go to the villages of Bena or Wogo because both are accessible by a car. It is only 15 kilometers from Bajawa to Bena, and so it will take only half an hour for tourists to get to their destination.

When arriving at Bena, an exclusive tourist information board will give the tourist a greeting of the following kind: "Dear valuable visitors, --- Sao Information Center is established to be part of our efforts to be always developing in providing services to your presence." From the shop, you can buy refreshments like nice beer if you're thirsty or coffee if you are feeling tired. There is also candy for your children to enjoy. Here in Bena, you as a tourist will have a great authentic experience, and you will see traditional houses made by electrical tools. Because of tourism and especially with government help, our locals now have money to make their houses more durable and luxurious than ever before. There are no holes between the planks; houses have straight walls, roofs and floors. You can also see other improvements, such as satellite dishes outside main buildings, good kitchen hardware and fine clothing. The government has been especially helpful to this village, since there is a school for the children.

Besides traditional housing, you can also see traditional carvings and 'ikat'.²¹ Actually, you will find 'ikat' hanging on the clothesline in front of every house. It is like an 'ikat' exhibition ready for you to enjoy. We recommend that you to buy some 'ikat' because it adds to your authentic experience. As you know, 'ikat' is very special for the Ngada people, and by wearing 'ikat', you can feel some of that speciality.

Being an enlightened tourist, your visit naturally will be about awareness and knowledge. During your excursion, you will learn about the Ngada housing policy and see cultural relics from Ngada ceremonies and sacrifices. If you are lucky, you may get to witness one! This will also be the moment when your 'ikat' purchase will come in handy, since during the ceremony, "it would be better if you can apply a sarong for your dress." This way when you leave the village, you will leave one more unique experience richer than you came.

"Tourists visit Bena is a usual thing for us, and that is the reason why we want to develop ourselves through interactions with you." As a guest, you are very valuable for the people; it is for their development that you are here. Furthermore, you should have no worries in this village, since your safety is ensured. For example, animals are kept tied with metal chains so that they will not bother you. There is also a water hydrant near the tourist information center in case of fire. Following the visit, you can return safely to your hotel, after which you can refresh yourself in a nice, warm shower. Why not top your day with a great, full plate of bourbon chicken in a nearby restaurant with your friends?

6.2 Alternative Pathways

You wake up in the morning at 5 a.m. to the crow of the cock. You get dressed and go outside to the back of the building and start preparing breakfast for your family despite bad weather and darkness. This is done without any expensive kitchenware on a stone table next to your wild hogs, chickens and dogs. You fetch water from the river so you can make coffee out of coffee beans you have grown, gathered and dried. You have to be careful with the water, however, since it is not drinkable as it is.

After making breakfast and sharing it with the others, you start your daily work. You go gathering vegetables and roots to use for making your dinner. Your son will go fishing fresh

²¹ Ngada language, 'waving.' *Ikat* is the Ngada peoples' traditional clothing.

water crayfish, which is forbidden, since this is a protected area by government order. Despite this, you are not too worried, since there are no officers around. However, you do worry about the mice, which took your harvest last year. You also wonder if there is enough wood until the next season or whether you should gather more. It is the rain that worries you the most, however, since there has not been much of it, and this will have an effect on your harvest, as rice needs heavy rain.

You continue your work anyway like your ancestors did from early morning till late evening. You check that your plantation is in good condition; you gather food and walk for hours down to the valley and all the way back up the hill in the heat of the scorching sun. When the heat makes you tired and thirsty, you may rest under a coconut tree and get some coconut milk from a tree. Fresh coconut milk is very nice; it refreshes you and renews energy.

When you have enough food for dinner and enough wood to make a fire, you place the gathered items in a wooden basket and carry the basket on your head when returning to your village. You walk through your village, observing the surroundings. Everything in this village makes sense, everything is built for its special purpose, and everything here has its own name. As you place the basket on the grass in front of your house, you see someone coming from the valley. This person comes with greetings from your husband and from your two youngest children attending school. You ask the person to join you for dinner, which is an invitation anyone will happily accept.

The sun sets as you begin cooking dinner. Your oldest son came back from the rainforest with some fresh water crayfish. He says that he also tried to hunt down a parrot, but the bird managed to escape. He lightens the oil lamp so that it is easier to prepare the meal and eat. Finally, when the dinner is ready, you, your son and the guest remember the ancestors together. After that, it is time to talk and laugh.

6.3 Encounters with Indigenous Destination Communities

In this section, I will deal with the encounter of the tourist and indigenous destination community as a social relationship, and I will present some core cultural impacts that are created by this interaction. I will also describe the kinds of concerns that were expressed by members of the Ngada tribe pertaining to tourists (as individuals). Focusing on concerns

stems from the fact that the interviews and group discussions tended to bring out critical voices. This does not mean that local views regarding tourism are primarily negative. Rather, it means that many of the problems related to this theme seem to keep returning either directly or indirectly to the unequal relationship between tourists and indigenous communities.

The story of the Western tourist is not one that is necessarily beautiful or ethical even today. Rather, it is a story based on cultural violence where the culture that is deemed to be of lower value is viewed as though it were an art exhibition or entertainment. When tourists come to a village community, their background knowledge based on their typical education is such that they are in no position to imagine being on a par with the community they are about to meet. Tourists may reduce the meaning of indigeneity to notions of a natural way of living, but they do not know what the 'natural' way of living they are seeing means. On the island of Flores, tribal villages are displayed as authentic indigenous villages, but almost all the people on Flores are indigenous, including the people living in the cities and towns. This might raise a question regarding these social constructions whether the indigenous people living in Bajawa are less authentic or less indigenous than the people in the tribal villages. As Sissons (2005, 61) points out, "[It] is too often assumed that indigeneity is an essentially rural condition."

It would not be wrong to say that mutual learning between tourists and destination communities was not taking place in the Ngada regency when I was there. The problem articulated by many people was that tourists fail to understand the life of the local people. Some said that tourists can be very indifferent and thoughtless sometimes, as shown by the quotation from the research material, given below.

N13: *Tourists are not bad or evil; they just don't think ... for instance, they take pictures without permission.*

N1: *Tourists don't know or understand. They just come, take pictures and then go.*

A common feeling seems to be that the people desire more respect for local customs and beliefs because after all, that is what tourists come to see. Evidence of the effects of tourists' indifference is evident not only in accumulating levels of trash, but also in the people's attitudes throughout the area. For this reason, I asked the people in Bajawa to compile a checklist (Appendix 1) for tourists as to what tourists should bear in mind when they visit.

Johnston (2005, 98) has noted that the general attitude of tourists seems to be one of "we've paid, you deliver," and this holds mainly true also in the Ngada regency. The problem is that

tourists often come to the area only to confirm their own stereotypes. These stereotypes tend to have sexist undertones, since *adat istiadat* villages are merely objects of fantasies and means of satisfaction. Drawing from Edward Said (1978), Hannam and Knox (2010, 108) maintain that the Orient as a social construction is a place where tourists “can contemplate their fantasies and desire outside their own boundaries of normality.” When this process is finished, the tourist destination itself becomes the fantasy because it is a representation of the Other (ibid. 108–109).

Performativity is an inherent part of the tourism experience, and tourists have their own ways of playing their role. They are seeking to be entertained, and among other things, they are expecting to have opportunities to photograph exotica. However, this tourist behavior is not innate; rather, it is acquired (i.e. learned). (Hannam & Knox 2010, 76.) There is no special reason why a tourist should be allowed to step into people’s homes or to take pictures of them while they are taking a bath. There is nothing in the natural order of the tourism industry that necessitates the attitude of “we’ve paid, you deliver.”

One example of this acquired behavior in the Ngada regency is that tourists pay to see the ceremonies of the local people. The ceremonies are thereby modified from being holy services to being sold services. As a matter of fact, witnessing ceremonies is one of the main ‘must sees’ for tourists (Johnston 2005, 97–98); it is part of their ‘authentic’ experience. Thus, if we ask whether the sacred is for sale, as Johnston does in the title of her book (ibid.), the answer in the Ngada regency is affirmative at least in some places. This has a negative impact not just on the tradition itself, but on the material culture as a whole (Hannam & Knox 2010, 45). However, this is a highly contested reality especially beyond the main roads of tourism. It would be a mistake to claim that the people only walk according to realities brought in or given to them from elsewhere.

Actually, some places in the Ngada regency have received tourism very differently from how it has been received, for example, in the village of Waé Rebo, located in the neighboring Manggarai regency. According to Allerton (2003, 13), the rising interest of tourists and government officials in Waé Rebo “has strengthened villagers’ sense of themselves as possessors of authentic Manggarai *adat*.” By contrast, some people in the Ngada regency felt that their traditions, their social memories and use of the land from time immemorial have been turned into cheap entertainment. For example, ceremonial clothing is sold to tourists

who have not internalized the significance and history of the clothing. This differs from Cole's (2008, 278) earlier observations of Bena village where she found that "as tourists have shown interest in the villagers' lives, the villagers have developed a self-conscious awareness of their traditions." It may be that the situation has changed since 2008, or more probably, that there are many parallel narratives of the same topic among the Ngada people. The most critical voices I heard were not from people originating from Bena village, but from people who had witnessed the changes from the outside.

It seems to be particularly problematic that tourists are interested in certain cultural experiences to the extent that other aspects fail to be noticed and are left without support. During a discussion that was not recorded, one woman had a highly critical comment, as presented below.

Due to tourists, people in Bena can no longer practice their traditional means of making a living normally. Each Ngada village is specialized in the production of a certain indigenous cultural artifact or thing. For example, in Belaraghi village they weave baskets, while in Bena village they sew 'ikat'. Nowadays, there are so many tourists in Bena, however, that they keep 'ikat' on display only for the tourists and have to make their own clothing at night.

Regardless of whether the situation is this polarized in reality or not, the story above shows how tourism could impact local culture. Because *ikat* is an item which can be made into a product that sells easily for a good price, it has been one of the main things that Bena is featuring for tourists. This is happening at the expense of many other important cultural things, both material and immaterial. Of course, people could buy wooden baskets from Belaraghi village if the villagers would start producing such baskets for tourism purposes. Although it would not be easy to commercialize baskets, these items are not meant to be commercialized, sold or bought anyway. They may be given as gifts, but not with an expectation of being given something in return. Commodification is, in fact, a political question, "as it shifts objects and spaces that were formerly thought as free and communal into the economic domain of scarcity" (Hannam & Knox 2010, 38–39).

The example above also reveals one of the aspects of vulnerability created by tourism. Firstly, when the focus is only on commercialized goods, the remaining cultural items may be changed into museum pieces (Fagence 2003, 61). The artificial culture will reproduce only those culturally valuable items which attract tourists. The outcome of this kind of creation is a

false reality that is nothing more than entertainment. (Ibid. 61.) This will eventually lead to great cultural losses (Johnston 2005). The situations in Bena and Wogo villages are not this serious, since the tourist numbers are still relatively small, limiting the impact of tourism. Nevertheless, there does seem to be a trend clearly pointing to increasing vulnerability.

Not only are cultural artifacts at stake, but belief systems as well. I am giving special attention to this matter at this point because it is not something that is mentioned very often in academic literature. Yet, it is an issue of importance to indigenous peoples. The problem originates with tourists coming to experience some beliefs in the Ngada regency and wishing also to witness the presence of a certain religion. Hence, the Ngada area is being marketed especially as a tourist destination where ancestors are shown honor. At the same time, all beliefs not included in this category simultaneously begin to turn into cultural anomalies.

What does it mean for a belief to turn into a cultural anomaly? It means that the belief changes into a source of shame and a sign of backwardness. It turns into a secret, into something that cannot be mentioned aloud. This became very explicit to me after I heard one striking story. In the Ngada regency, ancestral lands are lands that are inhabited not only by the ancestors, but also by various kinds of spirits. People are particularly afraid of one spirit, named *Gorilla*. *Gorilla* lures children into the rainforest and chops their heads off. People told me that just recently, three children had gone missing in the rainforest and they had never come back, and that it was this *Gorilla* who had taken the children. Other similar stories were told around the area: all of them stories of places where one should not go alone or places where one should not go at all.

Ancestors are discussed quite often, as it is one of the things that both the locals and the tourists naturally connect with the indigenous way of living. Compared to spirits, ancestors seem to be an easy subject. It was only after I had known one particular person for four days that she went on to talk about spirits and *Gorilla*. Even then, this woman began speaking about it by cautiously exploring the topic. Faltering, she kept searching for words in a whisper. She kept looking to see how I would react. Since I had no wish to appear overly reserved, I asked her why she was appearing and sounding this way. The woman explained that she was afraid of talking about the matter, since I might judge her and her beliefs or think that she was stupid. I encouraged her by saying that earlier in history, people in Finland also believed these kinds of things, and that it was no cause for worry or concern. She

acknowledged what I said by replying, “Yes, but that’s different; we still believe it today!” To her, belief in spirits was not something that belonged in the past or the time before science.

This reminded me that she had earlier mentioned how tourists do not always respect local beliefs. To my mind, this immediately raised the question of why the tourism industry finds ancestors, but not spirits, to be an acceptable part of indigeneity. I will not attempt to delve further into this issue, since it is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis. What is of relevance, however, is that the thoughts expressed by this woman illustrate the problematic relationship between foreign tourists and the Ngada people. It is an example of how tourism can raise the significance of certain belief systems while lowering that of others, thereby creating a hierarchy of beliefs. Because some cultural aspects fail to fit into the mental image of authenticity, they change not only into museum pieces, but into silenced realities.

The problem is that indigenous peoples are expected to have some essentialist characteristics, which define and explain their indigeneity. Examples of such characteristics include tribalism, primitivism or anything that suits one’s cultural stereotypes. This essentialist characterization as an authentic picture of indigenous tribes can become oppressive, and as Sissons (2005, 37) notes, “[Indigenous] authenticity is racism and primitivism in disguise.” Among other things, this means that authenticity can be used to separate peoples from each other. If indigenous peoples are understood as being of an authentic kind, they are also expected to look the part; after all, they just represent the Other to use. In turn, this means that one has to be either a settler or indigenous, and in this way, authenticity works through exclusion. Indeed, racism in indigenous authenticity reproduces the boundaries between indigenous peoples and settlers, and this distinction has to be reproduced continuously. (Ibid. 37–39.)

Not all of the problems between tourists and their destination communities are caused by tourism focusing on certain cultural artifacts, however. In itself, cultural exchange that is overly oppressive or intense can threaten the Ngada culture in the future. Tourists bring along all kinds of goods: both material commodities and immaterial ones like Western knowledge and technology. These become available to the locals through interactions with outsiders like me. In terms of knowledge exchange, this could be mutually constructive. However, the problem again stems from the fact that the encounters between visitors, or more specifically between tourists and indigenous people, are not equal.

Naturally, the local people wish to become acquainted with whatever goods the tourists happen to bring along with them. For example, the people of Belaraghi were interested in nearly all the supplies that I had with me. In fact, they seemed to be overwhelmed with everything because most of my things were entirely new to them.²² To mention two examples, a whole family would gather together to read books I had, even though most of them could not read any English or understand it, for that matter. They read for hours, and they wanted to study the pictures printed on the pages. The people were also delighted when I gave some balloons for their children and introduced several dice which could be used for playing games. To mention one more example, I carried a recorder for the purposes of this thesis, but none of them knew that someone could actually record speech with an item like that. I explained what the item was, and let them try it for themselves.

These kinds of occurrences are some of the things that are involved with going to places like the one I described above, and they are natural in that sense. Unfortunately, the examples above also bring out some of the problems which these kinds of human interactions can create. A visitor always has something new, something unimaginable, something which is beyond the reach of the local community. Given enough money and enough interactions, however, the various kinds of foreign goods like phones and computers become available to the community. For example, Bena has been subject to tourism development since the 1970s, and the new generation has both the desire for and the means with which to buy modern technologies introduced by both the government and tourists.

The people's views regarding commodities received through cultural exchange seem to be polarized, as shown below in a portion of a discussion held in English.

Interviewer: *How do you see these changes like ... you know ... phones and all these modern technologies?*

N9: *I think for --- our culture, of course no good. No good. Because now, also, for example in my village, before they make traditional house, and they change model house --- like crazy city, and now they change again to traditional. So for me, it's no good for us. Ya, I think now also, young people also, it's good; for them it's good. For them it's good because everything easy, easy; they communicate and everything easy. But for the culture, for my culture, I think very bad for us and traditions. (Sic.)*

²² In Belaraghi, interactions with outsiders have been relatively rare in times past; after all, the village was founded only a few years ago.

On the one hand, these commodities simplify life, but on the other, they threaten the culture.

I am inclined to believe that this problem stems from how the commodities are viewed by the young Ngada generation. The ungracious fact is that especially white man (*orang putih*) as a tourist will embody affluence and development in the eyes of local people. It was mentioned of white people and Europeans in particular that they are *sudah maju* and *sangat kaya*, which mean ‘already developed’ and ‘very rich’ respectively. One should also be aware that tourism in itself is the privilege of the privileged. It is a type of industry that is specialized in serving the privileged and meeting their demands. While tourists coming to the area have flown possibly from the other side of the world to experience the Orient, local people cannot afford to travel even within their own country. When young members of the Ngada tribe see tourists, they see products that embody this *sudah maju* dream; products that embody those already developed. When a local person accumulates enough money to purchase a phone, a small piece of the European and of the Enlightenment is gained along with the phone.

Some members of the Ngada tribe oppose this constructed world of mental images, as shown below by a quotation from a discussion held in English.

N7: *Villagers go to the farming land every day with this small pot and they then feel happy. And even one day they eat only one banana and then they feel happy; smiling for day, the whole day. --- Even though they don't know what is pizza, they don't know what's hamburger ... just one banana and one boiled potato, they smile for day. --- Maybe in Europe, generally, people feel ... feel proud if they have Mercedes-Benz or Nissan or Harley Davidson. Here, if a family have a horse, we really proud of the horse. It's the same; value is the same like you have Mercedes or Harley Davidson. *laughter* (Sic.)*

I am inclined to believe that if cosmopolitan tourism did not lead to rising inequality between different value systems, tourism as a phenomenon along with its impacts would be in better harmony with localness.

Although concern was expressed in the Ngada regency regarding increasing exchange generated by tourism, the people hoped that tourists would bring them something. They wished especially for the kinds of gifts that would tell them something about the tourist's country or origin. Food would also be valued because this food could be shared by tourist and local alike. These kinds of gifts would provide an opportunity for the local people to become

acquainted with the tourist's culture, whereby the meeting would involve greater reciprocity. After all, tourism should be about mutual learning (Singh, Timothy & Dowling 2003, 3).

This kind of mutual learning cannot happen if tourists are unable to take local conditions into consideration. Especially the trash that tourists leave behind may be a threat to the Ngada regency, since the people live on nature's own terms without any means of processing huge mountains of trash (see Appendix 1). The tourist information center²³ in Bajawa refuses to do any business on Friday because the day is reserved for their green campaign. Special concern was expressed about all the non-biodegradable plastics, as shown below in a quotation from the research material.

N15: It's also about future life. You cannot imagine having future life with the river full of plastics --- It's very simple; you can imagine it: we live out of nature and then ... it would be fatal.

On Fridays, the workers from the tourist information center collect garbage for three to four hours and plant new trees. Naturally, they try to get as many people as possible to participate in their campaign.

The problem is that tourism is not about the destination community *per se*; rather, it is all about the tourist; it is all about the privileged; it is all about the wealthy. Tourism to exotic places is about the self; it allows "quasi-imperial self-reflection and self-discovery" (Hannam & Knox 2010, 116). What happens to the Other, however? When Sissons (2005, 37) combines together the concepts of authenticity and racism, it explains the situation in the Ngada regency. Moreover, the notions of authenticity in themselves are not the only ones that create contradictions. The whole new industry which has been developed around this authenticity creates them as well. From ecotourism to companies specializing in tribal tourism, there is a whole web of industries built on a foundation of racism and violence. These industries attract people who wish to see how cultural factors explain the balance between the hierarchies of world cultures.

Things are made all the worse in areas like the Ngada regency where people have a very limited power of decision over tourism. Decisions are made far away by the government, and since this is all about development, no one bothers to ask for the opinions of the local people.

²³ The local tourist information center was founded in the spring of 2015 as part of the Swisscontact project.

Moreover, as Johnston (2005, 84) has pointed out, tour operators are not interested in how local people feel; instead, they test the satisfaction of their clients. They are interested not in the social aspects of tourism, but in the economic possibilities that tourism entails. I think a whole new approach to tourism is needed: a shift in focus from the tourist to the destination community; from economic dimensions to the social world.

To summarize the discussion in this section, the topic has been the unequal relationship between tourists and the destination community, which compounds people's experience of their own marginality. This is in contrast to Cole's (2008, 278) observations, according to which tourism has reduced the isolation of Bena and Wogo villages, since it has brought new contacts from around the world that bring social benefits to the locals. Cole continues to say that tourism has had a positive impact on peoples' self-esteem (*ibid.* 278). However, the crucial point here is not the number of contacts, but the kind of contacts tourism has brought. It seems that in light of the material for this thesis, the contacts are based on inequality and cultural violence, which raises criticism of the system among villagers. Through interactions with tourists, people in the villages also see how much better off the tourists are, and sometimes they feel overwhelmed.

6.4 Unequal Distribution of Tourism Revenues

In the previous section, I discussed the kinds of concerns related to tourists that were brought out by members of the Ngada tribe and the kind of impact that encounters between tourists and indigenous people have had on the culture. In this section, I will proceed gradually from tourists to tourism; in other words, from individual encounters to a more general level.

Because tourism is about the economy, it needs to be asked what kind of effect this developing industry has had on the local economy. In order to focus on the distribution of tourism revenues, I will compare my photography from Bena and Belaraghi villages. I will also discuss in-group favoritism and the sharing culture of the Ngada people. Based on this discussion, I will also make a reasonable evaluation of the overall meaning of the tourism industry in its present state.

It seems clear that revenues from tourism in the Ngada regency are distributed unequally and contribute to increasing inequality between people. This pertains both to income brought by a single tourist, and more generally, to programmes created by the government for the

development of tourism. On the part of a single tourist, this can be seen in the kinds of material goods are left in the area after the tourist leaves, for example. Commonly, visits to villages begin with the tourist hiring a guide from the tourist hotel. Often, this guide is from villages where the economic situation is better than in other villages. This means that wages earned from tourism return to villages that already enjoy a better economy. When tourists arrive at a village, which generally is not the guide's village of origin, they are seldom ready to pay any more money. They see the village; they take pictures and leave. If tourists are served any food, the fee can be 50,000 rupiahs, for example, which is the equivalent of approximately three euros at the time of this writing. This shows how much tourists are prepared to pay for an 'authentic' experience among indigenous people. With this money, the head of the household probably not only pays for the served meal, but also saves part of the money for the education and health care of the family's children.

People can get money from the tourism office for running their households. The Ngada people have been promised that with increasing tourism, they also will rise from poverty to afford better education, health care, *et cetera*. Unfortunately, tourism creates opportunities only for some communities. The government, being a great supporter of the tourism industry, supports only a few of the villages. As it is, groups classified as authentic happen to also benefit from state social and welfare services (Sissons 2005, 53). This is by no means a simple process. An authentic group on the island of Flores, for example, should not be 'too authentic'. Each community should first undergo transformation as though in accordance with an authenticity scale. During this process, aspects that appear authentic to outside viewers are retained, while other 'irrelevant' aspects are eliminated. The consequences of this are felt as increasing social and economic inequality between the villages.

Social and economic inequality is clearly evident in the daily lives of the people, for example, in the infrastructure, sanitation and building facades of Bena and Belaraghi villages—and somewhat surprisingly, the relationship between villagers and natures. In Bena, there is a school, shop and tourist information center along with basic sanitation and all kinds of infrastructure like electricity, running water and satellite dishes. Also, the road to Bena has been improved because of tourism, and subsequently, villagers are able to go to the nearest city using motorized vehicles, which shortens the traveling time considerably. The villagers can work in the tribe's capital city and return home to their families every evening. People in Bena also wear high quality clothing.

In contrast to this, Belaraghi village is not accessible by car. Even basic sanitation is lacking. There is no drinkable water, hygienic lavatories or sewerage. The bathing place is a space of approximately two square meters, cast with concrete. A concrete vat of water, covered with moss, covers about half of this space. Furthermore, bathing after dark could be hazardous at least when I was there because there were two or three poisonous spiders of approximately 15 centimeters in length living in that small space. It is nevertheless the only place in the village to bathe after a whole day of working. I also observed that the people wear old and sometimes broken clothing, and that they do not have any of the nicer things that people in Bena have.

The most obvious difference between the villages of Bena and Belaraghi is in the appearance of their building facades. Since all the buildings in Bena have been built with electrical tools, the outcome of the construction is even and quite luxurious compared to the buildings in Belaraghi village. To provide an example, only some months before my arrival in Belaraghi, the roof of the house where I stayed had begun to leak so badly that no one could sleep inside. By contrast, the houses in Bena are clearly more durable because there are no cracks in the walls or floors, and the structures feel sturdier. These houses have not been built by traditional means, whereby they differ distinctly from otherwise similar houses in Belaraghi.

There seems to be yet another difference between the two villages, namely that of the people's relationship with nature. Belaraghi village lives in accordance with the seasons and the natural cycles of day and night. People go to gather food once a day, and every evening this food is shared with the other members of the clan. This is why when I arrived first there, it appeared that there was no one in the village; everyone was working in their gardens, their plots or in the rainforest. Animals in Belaraghi, such as dogs and cows, roam freely and appear well kept. This is significantly different from Bena village where a noticeable number of the women in Bena were weaving cloth to sell to tourists, and all the animals were chained. Dogs had only one or two meters of space and ducks had even less than that. These animals seemed to have only skin and bones, and I observed that they had no food or water during the day with a temperature of 40 degrees Celsius. The sight of this was striking to me, since animals are highly valued in the Ngada community. After all, they are regarded as signs of a good livelihood and are often intended as gifts to the ancestors.

As Allerton (2003, 5) observes with regard to Waé Rebo, situated in the Manggarai regency, an ‘authentic’ village has undergone substantial transformations and improvements in order to be regarded as a “fully pristine tourist attraction”. I think the same could be said of Bena village. This not only shows how the same place can evoke diverse views between the government, tourists and indigenous people, but also turns attention back to the question of oppressive authenticity. Indeed, traditionality has become the flagship of tourism in Indonesia. For example, images of traditional houses “have enormous importance in state-sponsored representations of Indonesia” (ibid. 10; see also Hampton 2005, 736). Sometimes these improvements have had funding from the West (Allerton 2003, 9). This might seem disturbing, since development workers, foreign operators and other sources of funding do not necessarily understand the symbolic meanings behind the artifacts.

It was disquieting to observe that tourism revenues are distributed so unequally in the Ngada regency, and that consequently, a certain kind of friction has been created between people. For example, one person who spoke with me about the benefits of tourism was known within the community as a kind of traitor. People felt that this person was unsuitable to be heard in the context of my thesis because it had been rumored that this person lied and withheld important information. As rumor had it, the person was interested only in gaining personal affluence and in fraternizing with the nasty colonizers. It was also regarded as seriously offensive that this person had failed to show appropriate in-group favoritism.

In this context, in-group favoritism works like a mutually accepted ring, functioning through the workforce network. For example, when a tourist arrives in the area and asks for a ride, the driver of the vehicle knows of a good hotel that happens to be owned by a friend. After the tourist arrives at this hotel, the hotel owner knows someone who is a good guide. This guide, in turn, receives the tourist on the following morning with a greeting to the effect that there is a very nice place to have lunch. Of course, this restaurant happens to be owned by a friend of the recommending guide. This kind of chain will continue for as long as the tourist is in the area. In this way, it can be ensured that income brought by the tourist is distributed more equally among members of the community. In the case of the person who seemed to have a bad name, the disapproval of the community seemed to have been caused by the person deciding to do everything alone for personal gain and for the benefit of the immediate family without extending in-group favoritism to other members of the community.

Cole (2008, 275) observes that in those communities, where “monetary exchange is a relatively recent phenomenon, villagers fail to accumulate capital. There is often pressure from relatives to redistribute gains from tourism, and/or a desire to gain prestige from the conspicuous public display of wealth, such as donating livestock for rituals.” In my experience, I find the expression “conspicuous public display of wealth” somewhat inaccurate, but Cole does bring up an important point immediately before that about the redistribution of gains from tourism. Based on my experience in the Ngada regency, I would amplify this by saying that displays of wealth are part of the redistribution. The Ngada culture, as all Florenese cultures for that matter, is a collectivist sharing culture. By ‘collectivist sharing culture’ I mean that sharing is not only a matter of social prestige, but also part of maintaining the culture.

For example, in order for a clan to get a shrine in its village, it needs to provide enough offerings to the ancestors. These offerings are not, par excellence, a display of monetary well-being. Rather, they are a means of sharing food and ensuring the well-being of the community. In this way, the community takes care of itself and in Cole’s (2008, 280) words, “strengthens networks.” During ceremonies, members of the community show honor to their common roots, and they can eat valuable delicacies like horse or water buffalo meat. At these events, young people gain knowledge shared by their elders and learn to know their ancestors.

Among the Ngada tribe, the notion of ownership differs from the Western notion of ownership. The people acknowledge both private (personal) ownership and collective (clan or village) ownership. Regardless of the form of ownership, what is of the greatest importance is how much a person or clan is able to share and help other members of the community. This creates opportunity for mutual enjoyment of privately acquired property. If somebody still succeeds in acquiring wealth, this may lead to resentment between people and diminishing community cohesion (Cole 2008, 280). This state of affairs in the Ngada regency seems to be contrary to what Sissons (2005, 15) suggests, since he finds it possible that the more an individual participates in national or international economies, the more it involves participation in the culture of indigenous people. This is cause for concern because the Ngada community and its culture are very tight, and everything is based on a sense of togetherness. Tourism revenues may lead to community dispersion especially if they continue to grow.

Government support is regarded in two ways due to its effects involving increased inequality. People are happy to be receiving assistance, but they feel that the government should help them equally instead of through the current system, which they find to be unfair. Of course, for the government, tourism is all about making money. In fact, “it was the economic promise of tourism which brought new recognition to these ‘backwards’ structures and practices” (Klenke 2013, 156). “Tourism loomed large in the modernization scheme of the New Order regime, as it was hoped that it would not only attract an international public, and thus, foreign money, but also national visitors for the sake of postcolonial nation-building” (ibid. 156.). Nevertheless, people who participated in discussions with me questioned whether the government’s tourism policies have been good or of help to the local people.

As Cole (2008, 272) and Scheyvens (2003, 232) have pointed out, there is evidence suggesting that increasing growth in the tourism industry does not necessarily mean benefits for those in poverty. There are various reasons behind this outcome, including political and socio-cultural factors (Cole 2008, 272). In this section, I have presented similar findings of revenues from tourism being distributed unequally, thereby increasing inequality between the people and between the Ngada communities. This is evident especially in the comparison of the villages of Belaraghi and Bena. Furthermore, it seems that even the present governmental system is causing the Ngada tribe to become dependent on exchange and support from the outside. In particular, dependency on revenues from tourism brings about a vulnerable community because the sources of income are unstable and uncertain. Nevertheless, all of this seems to come back to the issue of education in that mandatory education goes shoulder to shoulder with alternative means of income, such as tourism.

Both education and tourism are all about development. They bring to the forefront the right of people to develop themselves. In Indonesia, it has been desirable to coerce even the furthest indigenous communities to take the road to modernization and development (see e.g. Steinebach 2013, 73; Klenke 2013, 151). In fact, people have had what is called the right to development (Declaration on the Right to Development) ever since 1986. Why does development not seem to suit the people? The normalizing discourse is often characterized by stark polarization, and it functions through domination that uses the rhetoric of rights as its trump card (Stoler 1995, 65). Indigenous peoples are experiencing this domination, and they are resisting. For example, people in Indonesia have few opportunities to choose their own

futures, even though the system professes freedom and democracy. The more these people seem to have rights, the greater their limitations become.

7 The Moment of Empowerment

This chapter will be devoted to telling a story dealing exclusively with the state of politics in Indonesia and the empowering possibilities people find in their own *adat istiadat* systems. It describes the kinds of responses that failed policies related to education and tourism, but also to development as a whole, have elicited in the Ngada regency. In my opinion, telling stories of oppression regarding this specific issue is telling only part of the matter, however. This is why the following story will also highlight the people's own empowerment and their reliance on their rich cultures, from which their power derives. The story is based on material I collected during discussions with the local people.

You are interested in questions, for which we have no single response, and the expression of which is equally varied. Therefore, allow me to listen to my own intuition, as I tell things as they seem to me. Freedom of thought and speech in Indonesia are but freedom in name only. Only 'adat istiadat' is true freedom for us; it is our resource and reality; it is our memory of our history and the promise for our future. We are who we are, but we are who we are to ourselves only. Solitude in the midst of transformations in government and governance continues to prey on our community. As all ignore our cries, as all turn a blind eye to our reality, no one helps; no one listens. So do not be surprised if government and politics rouse negative feelings. Whenever we need help, the government does nothing. And whenever we do not need help at all, it helps us unequally and on non-ancestral premises. Its decisions fail to take local factors into account, and governance still has authoritarian nuances.

You probably know that we have this thing called local autonomy, but do you know what it means? It means that there exists corruption on every level of society. Please, do not take this as an expression of distrust toward the 'kepala kampung or 'kepala désa,'²⁴ as I do have great respect for both. Nevertheless, we are not fools around here, so we can see that local autonomy has brought us little respect from the government. Let's be honest; yes, for once let us be honest and say that our problems are useless to the government, although naturally, local leaders wish to maintain their relationship with the government. Money is the key to

²⁴ Indonesian, Head of the villages.

maintaining this relationship, or like they say, "I'll be your friend as long as you give me this and give me that."

That is why I say politicians are full of selfishness and greed. When they meet the ordinary people—that is, us—they are as arrogant as ever and dishonest even while looking you straight in the eye. So many lies and disappearing paradises! And they don't do anything about it. That is why I say the government is just thinking about the small picture; they fail to see the whole. Yes, that is the problem with the Indonesian government; everywhere in Indonesia, the government and parliament: everything is plain bullshit, if you know what I mean; just thinking about money, money and money. So, if you want to know about our politics, there is really only one thing I would like to say: our leader is an arrogant dictator, and he is carrying out really bad policies.

You need convincing, do you? Well, let me break this down for you. The government is planning to build a new road to Belaraghi. Do you know what their excuse is? They say this road will be good for the people. They say it will make the lives of the villagers easier, but do you know what I say? I say that is bullshit! Belaraghi people do not want that road. There is a protected rainforest there; it shouldn't be destroyed by anybody! There are many birds and animals living in that rainforest. Yet, they want to open a new road ostensibly to make it easier for villagers to go to their farming land. I say that's crazy; villagers go to their farming land every day anyway. The last time before elections, they came to the village promising money for this new road, which will actually destroy the rainforest. That's not their forest; it is the forest of the local people. So this kind of agenda is bullshit, and we were against it because we know how our government typically does things.

Well, the government leaders have done this sort of thing before. While they're in office, they are not interested in what is happening in the villages, but when election time comes, all of a sudden they start visiting villages. Then they go from village to village. So, now local people wonder what the government is going to do five years from now. The leaders speak about the common good only because they want to be re-elected. They come and say, "We're going to give you seventy million rupiahs for the new road," and although they never say we should re-elect them, that is the idea behind it. That is also why I say this is stupid. If you really love your village and your community, start from your heart. Give something from your heart and not because there is an ulterior motive behind it. If you are the leader, it must be from you

heart because you are the leader. Whatever you do, people will follow. Too bad our leaders have tongues that promise everything and hearts that promise nothing.

I am saying this is what our government is like because I know about it—and not only do I, but many other people know as well. Everywhere in Indonesia right now, all the parties are the same, the parliament is the same, and the government is the same; the police is also the same because it's corrupted. The police will support whoever has a lot of money, even if it's wrong men. This doesn't mean that the founding principles of our society are undemocratic, of course. Regional autonomy has made despotism less likely, and there were substantial changes even before that. Before the current democratic system, if you were from the ruling class, you could make any kind of decisions whatsoever, and people would still follow you.

The new model works so that there is always someone to assume the responsibility. For example, if there is a problem in the clan, people will ask the 'kepala suku'²⁵ to make a decision. If the 'kepala suku' cannot make the decision, then the 'kepala kampung' will find a solution. If this solution is no good, people can turn to the 'kepala désa.' Yet if the government has a problem, they just send someone to take care of it. It's so easy for them—unlike the 'kepala désa,' whose work is too hard with too many conflicts waiting to be resolved. Furthermore, village representatives and state authorities are in unequal positions with no respect for our representatives by the government. For example, village representatives and state authorities don't earn the same amount of salary, and the 'kepala désa' gets paid only once in three months with no pension plan.

The bottom line is that because politics are not helping us to find anything, I don't believe politics is the answer. Nowadays, there are too many parties in Indonesia, all them saying next to nothing. Before, when the village chiefs had all the power, they also knew the circumstances, on which they based their decisions. Now, popular parties will win even though they don't know anything about the diverse situations on the local level. The distance between central Java and the Ngada regency is just too great. Indeed, the general feeling with us is that the government and governance are so far away that it is hard to understand implemented policies. The democratic channel for individuals to be heard is very limited—

²⁵ Indonesian, 'head of the clan.'

and yes, in a way you could say that sometimes we feel ourselves powerless facing all the changes. Yet, this does not mean we would give up; no, we will never give up.

Of course, the situation here in Bajawa is a bit better than in some other places. At least we know what kinds of decisions are being made. Things are not as good in the villages, and we, the people living in Bajawa, are trying our best to help villagers to make sound political decisions. We are helping them; not brainwashing them. It's like giving a bit of a hint; but you know, the problem actually is not so much with people not knowing about the various decisions. The problem is that some changes are carried through despite people's opinions—like this new road to Belaraghi, for instance. The position of indigenous lands has still not been secured. Why is the government so interested in our rainforests anyway? If these are taken from us, we will turn into blackened warriors on foreign ground; we will become strangers to ourselves. Maybe the government sees money on our lands. Yet to us, our land is more valuable than the purest gold.

What could we do in this situation? There may be many right answers, so I don't see a single one that would make all the others wrong. I don't take absolute knowledge as a foundation for anything anyway; stable answers or confidential promises are not the things from which I would search for truth. It's not that I shun knowledge, but creative people are always alert and full of wonder, aren't they? It should be remembered that even if this world doesn't give reasons for everything, we can still give alternatives. What does it mean to challenge something then? I will tell you! The walls that we have erected, these mountains that should keep us in our places, appear real. Yet, are they actually real, or are they too real to be real? You remember the time when all the birds disappeared, or at least we thought they did. When the time was right, they came back. The birds were just hiding in the rainforest, and we had to search for them. We're in the same kind of situation now; we have to go searching. Things are just more challenging now because we don't know exactly what it is, for which we are searching. We don't even know precisely where to look.

Don't worry, though! Our cultures are not endangered, so there is no need for tears. We do not need empowerment from anybody, and especially not from our government. We are already empowered by our 'adat istiadat.' People do have to be empowered by the power they are able to create of themselves, you know! The ceremonial areas and situations are always very symbolic, and it is through these that power is manifested in the Ngada regency. The

government cannot even begin to compete with 'adat istiadat!' 'Adat istiadat' manifests through the body of each individual, and more generally speaking, through the entire life of the individual. 'Adat istiadat' unites generations, Ngada villages and all the Ngada people across the Indonesian archipelago. In fact, gathering together is what 'adat istiadat' is all about. The village as the 'adat istiadat' center brings all the people together because they have the clan shrines and the main houses in the villages. This means that whenever they want to make an offering or have a ceremony, they must go back to their own villages.

What I'm trying to say is that no matter what happens, our people will stay joined together. The ties to the land always bring people back to their own villages. Our worldview has its foundations in our belief in 'makaraga',²⁶ and everything that happens is interpreted on this premise. The meaning of an ancestral ceremony is so profound in our culture that when someone says anything about a ceremony, the community responds immediately. Especially during 'Reba,' relationships are tightened as good friends fight the ceremonial battles and share meals together after. 'Reba' as a whole also needs strong community involvement to be carried out successfully. For instance, you have to gather enough food like rice and dozens of animal offerings ranging from 'khaba'²⁷ to 'gana.'²⁸

'Reba' starts in Bena village at the end of December and lasts for two months, moving from village to village. In this way, it joins all Ngada villages together in a mutual 'upacara.' Sometimes people from locations far away travel to their original villages to experience the ceremony, maintain their ties and honor their heritage. The meaning of 'Reba' should not be underestimated even for those people who have moved away. It is usually difficult to practice animism beyond the limits of the immemorial ancestral lands because the stories live only through the symbolic objects and places.

This age is not an age for us, however. I long for the day when the vision of greatest perfection will manifest in this divine world: the day when moonbeams dance with the tide, the day when this world of ours is fully and harmoniously whole. On that day, the silence of peace will move across continents, falling over both land and sea. I dream of this standing next to the gate to my yard, now hued with silver as the moon has risen, emanating light to all

²⁶ Ngada language, 'ancestors.'

²⁷ Ngada language, 'buffaloes.'

²⁸ Ngada language 'pigs.'

dreamers, enchanting their powers and minds; enchanting all effort of will—and hope finds a place in my soul. More than anything, the world is so beautiful that we should take care to understand it right. Perhaps one day we will all walk together as one, although I do have to wonder why such a great dream keeps merely flickering like glimpses through cracks in the clouds. It comes and it goes; often, it goes into hiding, disappearing completely from view.

People come to visit our villages, but they don't walk together with us. My guestbook is open, nevertheless. You do know that, don't you? It's just that it's empty: empty even though the people who come here climb ten thousand feet and go to great trouble. Yet, I never see their real faces, I never hear their real names, and I never get to touch their real hands. That's why my guestbook is empty. It's like standing in the dark: even though you can't see me, I'm here anyway. I haven't gone anywhere. I'm waiting; waiting patiently. Time has come and time has gone, and there is more time to come. Like sand sifting through an hourglass, no one can stop it; it passes whether you notice or not. Maybe I will still wait for real people, although I fear none will ever arrive. They don't know me from their hearts, so how could they ever like me? Yet if they managed to come with a smile and a heart-felt greeting, I'm sure I would smile back at them, too.

As you have seen, I have no praise for the haughty, no bowing to kings. The world has no leader or god with all the answers—that's why. If those people would just once come to the gate of my yard and open it without my having to go out of my way to do it for them, they would see their truths and beliefs in all their vain grandeur falling and disappearing from view. For now, we are on different sides with them searching for answers and me searching for questions. Yet, I do know that were they to look into my world, not even with the eyes of a white man would they choose lies from among other lies.

Oh, someone is coming! We have to stop talking. I know I should never be heard, but when I am, I am honest; very honest. I will never give up or say I'm afraid as long as whatever I do is about kindness and equality. I do have some enemies because I'm so critical, but I never criticize people. I just criticize their policies. I am a member of the Ngada, and I have my rights. I have the freedom to criticize, although sometimes the Indonesian government does get rid of critical voices. If that should ever happen to me when I have criticized something that's wrong, I'd not be too worried about being shot. Now, I must go, so I bid you good night. It is time for you to continue the story.

8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I will discuss the limitations and reliability of these findings, involving both the field work period and narrative analysis, in section 8.1, and present the key findings of my thesis in section 8.2. In this context, it will be impossible to present a detailed account of all the factors that may have had an effect on the results. Therefore, I will focus on a few of the most essential factors. The results have been affected by the language barrier, my foreignness and dissimilarity to the indigenous people and my subjectivity, among other things. Finally in closing, I will provide a few recommendations so that the topics which have been discussed in this thesis could be elaborated further in future studies.

8.1 Discussion on Reliability and Generalizability

One of the factors affecting reliability is that the language used in the discussions with local people had to be changed according to the situation. In Bajawa, I conducted interviews mainly in English. However, in the villages, people mostly spoke varying degrees of Indonesian, whereby English could not be used as the main language of social interaction. It was sometimes difficult to understand elderly people, since they spoke both Indonesian and their own tribal language, the latter of which I could not speak. Sometimes I had to ask for clarification, and there were a few times when I even had to ask the younger people what their parents or older relatives had meant. This naturally improved my understanding and interpretation of the material I collected, but it also demonstrated one of the practical problems caused by the language barrier.

Any language in itself is a system of such complexity that using more than one language in one sitting will certainly leave something not said or understood especially if the interviewees are not fluent in the language that they are speaking. Challenges related to language were also evident during the analysis stage, since although language can be translated, many of its connotations and metaphors may be untranslatable. Versatile language use also posed a challenge with regard to the kinds of quotations from the material that could be used when presenting the findings. It was of the greatest importance to protect the anonymity of the people taking part of the discussions. This is why I have not included the original material as

an appendix, and I have tried to avoid quoting words that would include too much personal information about the speaker.

In addition to language, another factor that had an effect on the results was that I arrived among an indigenous people from the outside. Especially the fact that my background is European affected the way in which I was treated initially. Even today, a white person in Indonesia, especially in places beyond the main islands, is regarded as being not only wealthy, but far better off than everyone else in other respects as well. In the beginning, I was treated as though I had been made of glass. The people seemed concerned every time I decided to do something or happened to be out of sight. Fortunately, this changed after a few days. They took me to the rainforest so that I could work with them, and thereafter, I began to participate in their life like anyone else.

My European background affected also my understanding of the topics being discussed. For me, it was especially difficult to understand education because the peoples' words and attitudes were in clear contradiction with everything I have been taught. People tried to explain the situation to me, but at first I had trouble understanding them. Then I realized that I have to be able to open my own thinking, to decolonize my own mind in order to understand. If a person's mind is not decolonized, cultural sensitivity has very little to offer, and any critique offered by that person will automatically be flawed. I think researchers and writers would do well to critically engage in decolonizing their minds. It is difficult to accomplish, but it is also highly rewarding if one is striving for fair and just knowledge production.

My role and subjectivity affected the research even more extensively. For example, as an interpreter during the analysis stage, I could not escape my own subjectivity. Narrative analysis is based on interpretation, whereby knowledge or understanding gained by means of analysis is not only partial, but also variable over the course of time (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber 1998, 10). As Bruner (1990, 61) has noted, "[We] interpret stories by their verisimilitude, their 'truth likeness,' or more accurately, their 'lifelikeness.'" We have to be selective with regard to what is included in our scheme of reality. We cannot take in all impulses as they are, but have to select certain ones because otherwise our world will not appear comprehensible. We gather so much information from our environment that we have to create mechanisms like archetypes to simplify the information flow.

Generalizability is always a difficult matter when one is dealing with the social world. This thesis shows potential problems experienced by indigenous peoples and also some responses to those problems, but not as much general tendency of neocolonial policies to have an impact. This thesis also provides an example of community cohesion and struggle against possible dispersion. The findings should not be automatically generalized as being applicable to other indigenous groups, not even to those living on the other sides of Flores. All indigenous groups are heterogeneous entities; they differ from each other. There are also great differences within the communities themselves, as I experienced in the Ngada regency.

Nevertheless, I was able to verify that the stories holding the tribe together are not merely individual utterances, but that similar stories are being told all around the Ngada tribe. It was also explicitly brought out among the tribe that these stories keep the tribe together. The existence of similar views from one Ngada village to the next shows that the people have both a highly homogeneous, publicly expressed view about their future and a mutual understanding of the challenges they should meet. This does not mean that no competing views could be found on an individual level. One of the reasons why this research material does contain stories of great consistency is that my research question drew attention to the collective level. It should also be borne in mind that a collective, publicly expressed view is hardly the whole truth or only truth of the matter. Rather, the truth of the matter depends on what has been agreed (Bruner 1991, 4).

In this thesis, I have presented some argumentable interpretations of the research material along with narratives that express social realities. It can be deduced that the narratives say something about the life of indigenous peoples in the midst of social changes. Nuances of further possible (anti-)narratives can be found not only in the material itself, but also in the greater Ngada experience. Considering the brevity of the time I spent with the Ngada tribe and the limited amount of material I was able to collect while there, I maintain that the narratives presented in this thesis are the most prominent ones related to neocolonial policies implemented in the Ngada regency. Because the narratives concern the future of the whole Ngada tribe, thus they should be given further attention in the course of future studies.

8.2 Key Findings

If the research material is viewed as a whole without analytical orientation, it could be said that the stories of the indigenous people have moved from tranquil times of timelessness to modern times where Indonesian governmental policy stipulates the rhythm of life for the indigenous people. Under this pressure, the people rely on these memories from times of timelessness as well as on communication with the ancestors. In the Ngada regency, taking care of politics through means of the hereafter keeps the community together. It joins families to clans as well as villages to other villages, and it joins past and future generations. Occasionally, it brings back people who have moved elsewhere long ago. Although education separated people from each other, *adat istiadat* brought them back together again.

When considering the findings related to education and comparing them with the literature, it is evident that the situation in the Ngada regency did not fully correspond with the marginalization of education as presented by Prakash and Estava (1998), but neither was it in complete agreement with the findings of Lavia and Mahlomaholo (2012) or Semali and Kicheloe (1999). The Ngada people are not entirely satisfied with education; they experience it as a burden, even though education is regarded as important for learning Indonesian. Especially, the idea of indigenized education raises opposition. The people wish to keep the educational system and the knowledge production of indigenous peoples separate regardless of the conflicts involved. Based on all the discussions I had with people in the Ngada regency, it seems to me that incorporation of the language of the indigenous people into the educational system would be an act of violence toward cultural forms of significance. At the same time, one might wonder if coercing the indigenous people into another reality and/or to express themselves in ways that are inappropriate is more an issue of school as an institutional problem than of language as a conveyor of information.

Due to the presence of education, people in the Ngada regency have to earn income from tourism, which involves the risk of villages changing into souvenir attractions. This comes close to Sissons' (2005, 37–58) warnings of oppressive authenticity. The unequal relationship between tourists and villagers endangers valuable memories and *adat istiadat* conventions, and this is why local people in the Ngada regency wish for greater respect from tourists toward local views. The cause of the greatest concern with regard to tourism, however, is that it creates conflicts between different villages. In the research material, tourism appears to evoke mainly critical voices because rising conflicts tend to lower community consensus. In

the long term, this may endanger *adat istiadat*. *Adat* is created based on community consensus, and if *adat* becomes endangered, the fundamental principles of the culture will be endangered as well. Similar conclusions are reached by Johnston (2005), who claims that tourism is a threat of unprecedented magnitude to the cultures of the world.

Education and tourism are means of fulfilling the dream of the colonizer. An example pertaining to the theory, educational research and material of this thesis is that education today apparently has the same mission as Catholicism had before: that is, salvation of people from the destiny of being what they truly are. The overriding discourse involves undereducated people needing to be rescued and empowered so that they will see their own freedoms and begin behaving economically, and thus, logically. Tourism brings out these goals of the colonizer. Even today, we see the Other as underdeveloped, undereducated and impoverished. Yet at the same time, we fail to see the Other's alternative and complex ways of viewing their life and passing down knowledge. Furthermore, we pay no attention to the richness of its culture. Consequently, when empowerment is offered to the Other from the outside, it results in vulnerability, and when cohesive measures are taken, they result in segregation.

Among other factors, it is unsuccessful policies for the development of the region, which has led to people responding angrily to politicians. At the end of each interview, I asked what the people would decide if they could decide on any single matter in government. The message of the replies was unanimous: "I would stop the political games." In fact, the discussions brought out that the people associate politics with colonialism and abuse. They feel that the government has no respect for the representatives of indigenous tribes. Indigenous elites want to maintain good relationships with the government, and government maintains this relationships with money. Things have not been made any easier by corruption running high on every level of society and people continuing to harbor fear of government officials and politicians.

As Sissons (2005, 21) observes, it appears that the development discourse together with the politics practiced by the indigenous people's elite is endangering an alternative way of understanding the world that has developed over thousands of years. The fact that the development discourse poses a threat to indigenous communities does not mean that their alternative reality will actually disintegrate. The situation in the Ngada area does not involve

oppression alone. It also involves finding new means of keeping the community together. Mostly, it involves resistance and building new forms of power relationships.

The fact that people will present highly critical views despite their fear probably points to how frustrated they are with the situation. They wish to rely on their strong Ngada community and they share their stories about life under a neocolonial government with me, regardless of all the risks involved. Overall, I found the situation to be similar to what I had speculated when I first met the Ngada people: they were only seemingly silent. If someone is interested in their story and prepared to listen without interrupting, they will show how their silence changes into a richly nuanced celebration of their community narrative and joint resistance.

The Ngada people are fighting back and determined to ensure the continuity of their culture in spite of the development policies. In the Ngada regency, especially *adat istiadat* emphasized the feeling of togetherness and the importance of the people's lives, social experiences and memories. It also connected them with a feeling of continuance and protection. Thus, the Ngada people have retained their uniformity while remaining multicultural despite the mounting pressure. Pluralistic is manifested in every aspect of their lives. It is the government that has failed in its dispersive neocolonialist policies. It has failed to develop the underdeveloped. Naturally, this comes down to the need for nations and states to identify and acknowledge their racist roots. Without this process of acknowledgement, there can be no creation of truly non-racist policies.

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Appendix 1. Suggestions given by members of the Ngada tribe on how encounters between tourists and indigenous people could be made mutually respectful and constructive.

1. Even if you have paid the guide for your tour, give a small donation for the village as well. People use it for village projects. Also, any gift from your home country will be highly appreciated.
2. If you are offered food, you should accept at least a small amount of it. If you have food with you, remember to offer it to others as well. Sharing is very important to us.
3. Always ask for consent before taking a photo. How would you feel if we came to your home to take pictures without asking? Also, do not enter houses without being invited.
4. Wear polite clothing. We understand that it might be a hot climate for you, but avoid wearing shorts, miniskirts or anything too revealing.
5. Do not kiss or hug each other in front of the locals.
6. Do not litter. We have no capacity to process huge mountains of trash.
7. Be humble and try to understand our way of life.
8. Keep smiling and say hello to villagers when you meet them. A positive and cooperative attitude will make the encounter pleasant for both of us.