



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

By

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## ABSTRACT

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

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

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



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

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

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

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University. To the best of my knowledge and belief the thesis contains no material published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. I consent to this thesis being made available for photocopying and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

Sandra Pannell

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## NOTES ON ORTHOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS

For the purposes of clarity and ease of reference, throughout this dissertation I underline words from the indigenous language vnyola Mayawo and italicize both Indonesian and Ambonese-Malay terms.

In terms of the practical orthography I developed while attempting to document the unrecorded language of vnyola Mayawo and which I have used throughout this study, the indigenous phoneme /ch/ is pronounced as a glottal aspirant, as in the gaelic word 'loch' [loh].

Abbreviations of kinship terms are as follows:

M = mother

F = father

D = daughter

S = son

Z = sister

B = brother

W = wife

H = husband

## INTRODUCTION

In one of the few direct references to the wider socio-political context, the Dutch anthropologist F.A.E. Van Wouden in his dissertation *Types of Social Structure in Eastern Indonesia* (1968), reports "the disintegration of the ['socio-familial'] system" which, he observes, "appears everywhere to be already far advanced" (*ibid.*:85). Van Wouden attributes this 'disintegration' to the "the influence of western culture" and suggests that "western influence...works rather to disintegrate the old than to construct anything new" (*loc. cit.*). In conclusion, he remarks that "very little can be said at present about the possibility of regeneration, and as little about the way in which this might be effected" (*loc. cit.*).

I have chosen to focus upon these passages from Van Wouden's thesis, rather than on his treatment of marriage and social classification, as is usually the case (cf. Fox 1980a), because these negative images of cultural decomposition and uncertain futures with little hope, if any, of cultural revival or re-invention reflect a common and long held anthropological point of view that situations of cultural contact are nearly always ones of loss and destruction on the



part of the indigenous cultural group. Indeed, it was suggested when I informed others of my decision to do research in Maluku, that Christianity and colonialism had effectively destroyed the cultural identities of many of the peoples of this region. If culture did persist in these forgotten 'islands of history' (Sahlins 1985) then it was to be found in such things as 'lineages', 'asymmetric alliances' and 'dual sovereignty'.

However, my experience with one particular cultural group in 'eastern Indonesia'<sup>1</sup>, some fifty years after the publication of Van Wouden's work, have led me to question many of the assumptions which underlie what are essentially oversimplified and Eurocentric visions of the region. In the course of my stay in the village of Amaya I came to rethink my understanding of the nature of the encounter between local cultures and contemporary social and political conditions; about change and the relationship between change and cultural continuity; and about what is culture and how is it represented. These issues and others arising from them form the basic problematic and starting point of this study.

Broadly speaking, this thesis, based upon approximately 16 months fieldwork conducted between May 1986 and December 1987<sup>2</sup>, is an ethnographic study of change and cultural continuity within the context of Amaya<sup>3</sup>, a remote coastal

village of approximately 585 people located on the NNW coast of the island of Damer, in the Maluku Tenggara region of the province of Maluku, eastern Indonesia. The inhabitants of this village, at the most inclusive level, identify themselves as Mayawo which, literally translated, means the 'people of Amaya'.

The village of Amaya is an appropriate context for the study of cultural contact, change and continuity. Like many other villages on the fabled 'spice islands' of Maluku, Amaya has a long and, at times, violent history of colonial rule by the Portuguese, Dutch and English, respectively. Since the Second World War and the emergence of the modern Indonesian nation, the social, political and economic horizons of the Mayawo universe have expanded considerably. Education, improved transportation, and radio, to name but a few social and technological innovations, have served not only to incorporate the people of Amaya within the nationalistic framework of the Indonesian republic but have also functioned to connect them to wider systems of reference.

While historical colonialism, Christianity and capitalism together occupy significant symbolic spaces within the Indonesian Nation-State as well as constituting an integral part of life in Amaya, I suggest that for the people of this village their encounter with these alternative forms is not

simply one of total conversion or direct resistance but is characterised by a complex dialectical process of subversion, appropriation, negotiation and innovation. To describe the situation in Amaya (or any other village for that matter) as constituting a "disintegration of the system" (Van Wouden 1968:85) is, I would argue, to view Mayawo culture through the lens of western imperialism.

This study, therefore, explores the ways in which different groups and individuals within Amaya participate in and identify with those aspects of their ever expanding world constituted outside the parameters of what is locally defined as 'tradition' (i.e. hnulcho/adat). I argue that the social and cultural construction and articulation of identity in Amaya is part of an on-going political process in which local beliefs and practices are reproduced as part of what is socially fabricated as a distinct and continuous culture. More specifically, the thesis is concerned with exploring the social and political engagement of various 'historically'-oriented discourses in the construction of identity and the legitimation of authority in Amaya. Among other things, I argue that the ontological basis of Mayawo cultural identity and the epistemological foundations of local notions of continuity are culturally (and ideologically) grounded in the thematic and episodic content of local historical representations. In contrast, local perceptions of social

change and 'alterity' (Lewis 1989:179) are linked to and informed by the discursive forms generated by the State and the Church. In this connection, I suggest that the politicization of identity and the conflation of the logic which is disseminated by these various narrative forms is an important dimension of both the (re)production of local culture and, paradoxically, identification with the culture of nationalism.

### **Linguistic and Anthropological Overview**

In 1935 van Wouden wrote, "for the chain of islands joining Timor and Tanimbar ... we possess no information" (1968:85). Since the original publication of van Wouden's (1935) comparative study, there has been a number of anthropological monographs published on the cultural groups of this area (see de Josselin de Jong 1937, 1947, 1987). The bulk of this material, however, is based upon relatively short periods of research, ranging from a few weeks to a few months. As Frank Lebar (1972) rightly points out, virtually no extensive research has been conducted in the area known as the 'southwest islands'<sup>4</sup> and the material that does exist is, by and large, of a general and generalizing nature. In this connection, Lebar concludes that the "southern Moluccas remain among the least known regions in all of Indonesia"

(1972:110).

While in the past decade or so there has been a renewed interest (anthropologically and linguistically speaking) in the 'southwest islands', reflected in an increase in the number of publications and manuscripts on or referring to this area, with the exception of detailed ethnographic research by Jakobus (1979) on Leti, Moa and Lakor and van Dijk and de Jong (1983) in the Babar archipelago, Lebar's comments still largely apply. This thesis, therefore, is partially aimed at redressing this situation.

Commonly referred to as one of the "south-western islands" (Tersteege 1935; Kennedy 1962; & Lebar 1972) of Maluku, the island of Damer receives passing mention in a handful of articles. It is this lack of 'useful information' which Van Wouden laments in his study of social structure in 'eastern Indonesia'.

Several variations of the name Damer, as it is officially known, occur in the literature. These include, Dame (Wallace 1872), Damma (Kolff 1840; Bassett-Smith 1893), Dama (Riedel 1882), Dammar (Dalton 1980), Dammer (Molengraaff 1916; Holleman 1943; Klerck 1975) and Damar (Tersteege 1935; de Josselin de Jong 1947; Coolhas 1960; Kennedy 1962; Lebar 1972; Macknight 1976; Chlenov 1980; Wurm & Hattori 1981;

Collins 1984). Regarding the name 'Damer', the *Kepala Desa* of Amaya told an interesting story of how the island was named. According to him, the island was named after a Dutch man called Domer who visited the island in the seventeenth century. "In time", the *Kepala Desa* said, "Domer was transformed to 'Damer'". In the language spoken in Amaya, the island of Damer is known as Asomo.

The most detailed accounts of cultural life on Damer itself are provided by the scholar and one-time Dutch Resident of Amboina J.G.F. Riedel (1886) and the English ship's surgeon P.W. Bassett-Smith (1893). Riedel describes in some detail customs on the eastern side of the island in the late 19th century at a time when local religious beliefs and practices were still an integral part of everyday life. Bassett-Smith, reporting some ten years later, provides sketchy information on such things as 'language', 'weapons', 'customs' and 'ornaments and dress'.

Apart from Riedel's and Bassett-Smith's early descriptive work, the anthropological literature on Damer is confined to cursory references only. Sneeuwjagt (1935:58-64) notes that sago, bananas, coconuts and breadfruit are important staples on Damer. In an article on animism in the south-western islands, Tersteege (1935) briefly discusses cultural similarities between Damer and the nearby islands of Leti,

Luang, Sermata, Kisar and Romang. Holleman (1943:382) observes that the people on the islands of Teun, Nila and Serua maintained relations with families on Damer. The Dutch anthropologist J.P.B. De Josselin de Jong (1947) mentions warfare between the peoples of Damer and the villages of Arwala and Erai on Wetar. Coolhas (1960) refers to a passage from a letter written by a Dutch official in 1654 which draws attention to the presence of a great number of islands south of Damer. Klerck (1975) briefly mentions the expulsion of the English from Damer in the late 1600's while MacKnight (1976), in his analysis of Makassan trepangers in northern Australia, reports the failure of a Dutch trade goods store on Damer in the mid-seventeenth century.

Damer is further mentioned in a number of articles devoted to regional languages (Chlenov 1980; Wurm & Hattori 1981; Collins 1983 & 1984). In the absence of any detailed linguistic study on the island, much of the information available concerning local languages is derived either from second-hand accounts or partial word lists compiled by Dutch colonial officers. The tentative and inaccurate nature of these sources is largely responsible for the incorrect assumption that the population of Damer speaks a single Austronesian language (Timor and Islands sub-group) with distinctive northern and southern dialects (Wurm & Hattori 1981). Information received from local people, together with

my own observations, clearly indicate that the population of Damer actually consists of two distinct Austronesian language groups, respectively located on the eastern and western sides of the island. In this connection, Riedel, as early as 1882, reported that two languages were spoken on Damer. According to Riedel (1886), the inhabitants of the villages which occupy the eastern side of the island spoke a different language from that spoken by the people of the three villages located on the western half of the island.

When compared to other regions in Indonesia (e.g. Bali, Sulawesi, and Java), the ethnographic literature on the cultural groups of Maluku generally is extremely limited. Prior to the early 1970's, the majority of studies were compiled by either Dutch missionaries (e.g. Drabbe 1923, 1925 & 1927; Geurtjens 1921), scholars (e.g. de Josselin de Jong 1937 & 1947; Renes 1977; Van Wouden 1968) or officers of the colonial government (e.g. Holleman 1943; Riedel 1886; Sneeuwjagt 1935; Tersteeg 1935). Recent ethnographic research in the Halmaheras (Ishige 1980; Platenkamp 1984 & 1988; Visser 1984 & 1988), on Seram (Ellen 1978, 1983 & 1988; Valeri 1980 & 1985a), Ambon (Bartels 1977; Chauvel 1984), Kei (Barraud 1979), Tanimbar (MacKinnon 1983; Pauwels 1985), Aru (Spyers 1985), and the Babar group of islands (de Jonge & van Dijk 1987), however, has significantly changed this state of affairs and contributed to a greater awareness and



understanding of the cultural, and to a lesser extent, historical specificities of the region.

Generally speaking, anthropological studies of Moluccan societies can be divided into two broad theoretical categories; those that are concerned with documenting and analysing 'traditional' practices and beliefs and those which adopt a broader perspective, and attempt to deal with the changing historical, political and economic conditions of local groups.

Van Wouden's thesis and most of the earlier studies can be placed in the first category together with a number of the more recent works (e.g. Barraud 1979; Ishige 1980; Mackinnon 1983). In these accounts, local cultures are viewed as authentic only insofar as they maintain 'traditional' practices. Culture is presented as a timeless collection of structures and prescriptions, alliances and oppositions where individuals are unified in terms of composition and outlook. Ethnography, in this sense, is more concerned with preserving the traditions and customs of those who are constructed as, to use James Clifford's phrase, "endangered authenticities" (1988:5) than with coming to terms with the reality of the so-called "disintegration of the system" (Van Wouden 1968:85).

These traditionalist views of culture are being challenged by a growing body of literature which addresses the problems and issues posed by colonialism, Christianity, cultural contact and change. In the Moluccan context, Chauvel's (1984) and Bartel's (1977) studies of contemporary Ambonese Christian and Moslem culture, together with Ellen's (1983 & 1988) material on Nuaulu identity and inter-ethnic relations represent instances of this approach. It is no longer possible to ignore the historical introduction and incorporation of new and alternative ideologies and ontologies which has occurred throughout the Indonesian archipelago. The "pure" and "intact" cultures which Van Wouden refers to and laments the passing of, exist only within the frozen space delineated by anthropological texts.

### **Change and Continuity**

Analyses of 'eastern Indonesian' societies have frequently given the impression of ordered and unified cultures, in which people's actions dutifully conform to the prescriptions and 'norms' of that society (e.g. see Van Wouden 1968; Schulte-Nordholt 1971; Barnes 1974; Forth 1981; MacKinnon 1983). Often in these accounts, social relations are systematically reified and presented in terms of a limited number of social categories (e.g. wife-takers, wife-givers,

patrilineal descent groups, etc.) while individual choice and creativity is largely ignored.

I went to Amaya half expecting to document the neat social categories, the binary oppositions, asymmetric alliances and circulating connubiums which constitute what Rosaldo calls "the ethnographic staples" (1989:197) of so many studies and upon which influential anthropological theorems have been built (e.g. 'alliance theory'). Instead, what I experienced was the disorder which constitutes and characterizes any social reality. Here social relatedness and group affiliation were interpreted and defined largely in terms of the context and were heavily influenced by individual personalities. In this setting I came to realise that it is individuals and not faceless aggregates which shape and give meaning to cultural practices.

In the course of my stay in Amaya and in my meetings with people from other areas I also came to see that social change does not occur uniformly across cultures or within any one culture. The diverse historical, social, political, economic and ecological circumstances of cultural groups and the individuals who comprise those groups results in quite different interpretations of and responses to specific historical events or episodes.

I became aware that the social reproduction of local cultural beliefs and practices in a radically transformed present is a political process which is shaped and informed as much by social relations within a specific cultural group as it is by relations to external entities and institutions. Within any one society there are individuals and groups who represent a number of different interests. Social groups do not constitute unified wholes (Rabinow 1975 & Clifford 1988) but consist of complex configurations of relations, all of which articulate a diverse range of political perspectives, understandings and interpretations with respect to the social world. Identity then, is not an essential and apriori dimension of any culture, group or person. Rather, identity, as discussed in this thesis, is viewed as contextual and relational (Clifford 1988:11); established and rendered meaningful in the dialogical nexus of time, persons and place.

Traditional anthropological views of identity and culture are being challenged by a growing body of literature which also addresses the problems and issues posed by colonialism, cultural contact, change and resistance to change. Among the more recent works of note are Asad (1973), Rabinow (1975), Warren (1978), Taussig (1980 & 1987a), Comaroff (1985), Fernandez (1985), Sahlins (1981 & 1985), Morris (1986), and Clifford (1988). A common theme running through many of these

works is the relationship between change and cultural continuity - how is cultural autonomy maintained, if it is at all, in the face of contemporary global processes? Sahlins (1985) and Clifford (1988), in particular, provide some insights to the 'predicament' confronting local cultures and anthropologists. Both ultimately suggest that change and stability are not opposed, as is commonly thought to be the case, but that the reproduction of culture is a synthesis of continuity and change, the historical and the contemporary, the traditional and the novel. As Sahlins states, "the cultural order reproduces itself in and as change. Its stability is a volatile history of the changing fortunes of persons and groups" (1985:xii).

The question of how a sense of cultural continuity is created and reproduced in the face of often radical change forms the fundamental problematic and starting point for my analysis of social and cultural life in Amaya. Selectively drawing from the body of literature on the social and historical mediation of the colonized/colonizer relationship, this thesis proposes a view of social change and cultural difference which contrasts sharply with those perspectives which present culture as a collection of cryogenised traditions or sees local groups as being doomed to 'disintegration' or assimilation.

Following Sahlins and Clifford, I suggest that it is naive to conceptualize change simply in terms of total conversion or direct confrontation solely on the part of the oppressed or colonized, but as Clifford emphasizes, cultural contact is a "series of cultural and political transactions" (1988:342) involving all parties. Thus, communication and interaction between cultural groups should be viewed more as a dialectical and diachronic process of negotiation, in which the synthesis of continuity and change can be viewed as a mode of cultural reproduction (Sahlins 1985). The appropriation and incorporation of novel events and ideas within local cultural forms and logic ensures that these cultures are able to maintain a sense of difference and distance (see Bartels 1977; Errington 1984; Thomas & Benda-Beckman 1985; Hefner 1985). Within the context of Amaya, the process of maintaining cultural identity and ensuring identification with the national community is informed by and legitimated through the social and political engagement of a number of 'origin' narratives, locally and nationally constructed as 'history'.

### **History or Myth?**

The status of such origin narratives has long been a point of contention amongst anthropologists whose views, broadly

speaking, span a continuum marked at one end by myth and at the other by history. Levi-Strauss, in his consideration of the standing and significance of Canadian Indian origin narratives, epitomises the predicament of many when he poses the question "where does mythology end and where does history start" (1978:38)? Here Levi-Strauss attempts to bridge the conceptual gap (created by anthropologists and historians alike) between myth and history by suggesting that certain histories can be seen as an extension of mythology. Elsewhere (1966), he points to the selective and bias nature of so-called "historical facts" (*ibid.*:257) and is critical of histories that purport to be universal in scope.

Notwithstanding his attempts to reconcile myth and history, Levi-Strauss himself states that "there is no history without dates" (1966:258). It is clear that for Levi-Strauss, the 'historical' is always defined in terms of its diachronic elements and primarily identified with respect to the societies of the 'west', his so-called "hot societies" (Levi-Strauss 1982:29). Myth, on the other hand, is defined largely in terms of its synchronic dimensions and is confined, to use Levi-Strauss' own words, to the "timelessness" (1966:263) of the "primitive societies" (1982:28) he identifies as "cold" (*ibid.*:29). This distinction between diachrony and synchrony, between history and myth, however, constructs a somewhat arbitrary and

limiting set of criteria for understanding these concepts. As a result, myth and history continue to be characterised as two distinct ideological domains of representation.

Surely the question is not 'when does myth become history', but whether one can really speak of different cultural constructions of the past in terms of this dichotomy, especially given the tendency amongst many anthropologists and historians to treat history as empirical fact and myth, on the other hand, as elaborate fiction.

Marshall Sahlins (1985), in his recent book *Islands of History*, is critical of the exclusivity of western-centric approaches to the construction of history - approaches which tend to view 'history' as a linear and chronological continuum of factual events and effects which are causally linked and discretely classified (see also Taussig 1987b). This "rosary beads" (Benjamin 1978) approach to the formulation of history derives its authority from its objectification and persistence in the form of such things as documents, archives and monuments. History, in this sense, effectively precludes the incorporation of other cultural constructions within its framework and declares them to be something other than 'history', namely myth. 'History' thus opposes itself against, what Michael de Certeau (1983) calls, the "genealogical story telling, myths and legends of the



collective memory and the meanderings of the oral tradition" (1983:126) and gathers its force from its opposition to what it defines as false. In doing so, it presents itself as a more authentic and legitimate representation of the past than those accounts identified as myth. This position reflects the arrogance of western forms of knowledge, including anthropology, which appropriates history for itself and assigns myth to the context of alien, 'primitive' cultures (cf. Malinowski 1926; Levi-Strauss 1975; Levy-Bruhl 1983).

Sahlins (1985) suggests that instead of viewing both our own and other cultural accounts of the past in terms of the history/myth: fact/fantasy dualism that results from a too narrow definition of what constitutes 'history', it is far more expedient to recognise that different cultures construct and produce different kinds of 'history' and that these distinct histories constitute legitimate and valid interpretations of the past. It is, as Sahlins' observes, through these glimpses of the "obscure histories of remote islands" (Sahlins 1985:72) - the so-called forgotten 'islands of history', that we can "multiply out conceptions of history" (*ibid.*:72).

This approach realises a fundamental point, that what is often referred to as 'history' is not somehow epiphenomenal to social reality, as many historians would have us believe,

but is shaped and accorded value within the context of a particular culture. In other words, history can be viewed as an ideologically shaped discourse which communicates (cf. Barthes 1972) a specific cultural understanding and ordering of the world, both past and present.

It is through these representations, as Taussig (1987a) points out, and not ideologies per se, that people construct and articulate their view of the world. If we acknowledge, therefore, that the construction of any account of the past is a creative act and that there is a role for the imagination in these narratives, then history and myth do not exist as separate domains of logic (cf. Levi-Strauss 1978) but are inextricably folded upon each other and 'shot through' (Benjamin 1968:265) with elements which may be identified as both mythopoeic and historical. *? by what definition?*

This "interweaving of history and fiction" (Ricoeur 1988:181) gathers its force and authority, both ontological and epistemological, through its intention of recounting a "real past" (Ricoeur 1988:181). However, as Michael de Certeau (1983) points out, "in pretending to recount the real, it [history] manufactures it" (1983:134). By hiding behind a "picture of the past" (Certeau de 1983:130) history conceals the "present that produces and organises it" (loc. cit.). It only when 'history' is considered as "serious fiction"

(Clifford 1988:10) and not as immutable truth that it is possible to reveal the social and political practices which organise its construction and which produce an active body of believers (cf. Certeau de 1983).

Contemporary Mayawo society is informed by a number of histories - a history of European colonialism, Indonesian nationalism, Christian conversion as well as a history of the foundation of Amaya and the origins of local social groups. Modern Indonesian history constitutes a civilizing discourse that speaks of change and development, unity and justice, representation and resistance. The discourse of Christianity, linked to and legitimated by the State, preaches morality and equality, sacrality and profanity. Local origin narratives, on the other hand, are constructed as discursive metaphors of continuity and persistence, hierarchy and diversity, which are seen to link the present to the original time of the past.

These different historically-oriented discourses, either individually or in various articulated configurations, inform social practice within the context of Amaya. Although each delineates quite different epistemological and ontological modes of action and identity, all are variously employed to legitimate orders of authority and control.

Contrary to a structuralist approach, I suggest that in order to fully understand these narratives it is necessary to examine them within the context of practice. In this thesis, I argue that the relationship between discourse and social action is a dialectical one shaped by the conjunction of historically determined circumstances. While the core events, identities and places inscribed in local and national narratives do not alter dramatically over time, the interpretation and thus meaning of these narratives does. Consequently, narratives cannot only be regarded as the genealogical evidence for current social practices as the Malinowskian view of myth proposes but, as often is the case, the contemporary situation is employed to account for the facticity of the past. By this I mean that present ideologically informed practices shape and legitimate the logic and veracity of these accounts. In turn, the narratives become devices for the justification of extant structures of authority and domination.

One of the primary foci of this thesis, therefore, is the relationship between fiction, ideology, and culture. In this connection, the thesis examines the expression of cultural ideology through various discursive forms and the role and significance of social narratives in the articulation of social and political identity in Amaya. I am particularly interested in the process whereby social fictions come to be

delineated as natural and immutable and are thus apprehended as both real and self evident 'truths'. In this thesis, I suggest that Indonesian nationalistic history and local origin narratives take on the appearance of the real when they are engaged with the logic of practice within the context of local cultures. The task at hand is to demythologise both local and national notions of time, space, society and the individual in order to reveal the social and political basis of these categories and concepts. By examining the cultural synthesis of these discourses of continuity and change it is possible to understand how the people of Amaya can maintain a sense of cultural difference and identity yet, at the same time, participate in wider contexts as Indonesians and Christians.

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### Thesis Synopsis

This thesis is thematically divided into two parts. In chapters one to five I establish the social and historical setting of Amaya through an examination of the conjunction of local culture with the themes and values constitutive of European colonialism and Christianity. In these chapters I discuss, among other things, local conceptualisations of social relatedness and affiliation, the classification of difference in terms of the primary categories delineated by

considerations of age, gender and origins, and the contexts and relations which serve to inform and structure these aspects of Mayawo social life. A primary concern here is the exploration of the role of local origin narratives in the articulation of social identity and the legitimation of political authority. Thematically speaking, the first section of the thesis is primarily devoted to an examination of Mayawo cultural logic and its expression and transformation in practice.

The second part of the thesis is concerned with the problem of cultural continuity and, as such, examines the dialectical relationship between Mayawo culture, the State and the Church. In chapters six and seven of the thesis, I particularly focus upon the conflation of local political structures with those of the Indonesian Nation-State. In this connection, I examine the articulation of this relationship in day-to-day practices and its implications for social identity within the village. Among other things, I argue that 'traditional' structures and positions of authority are reproduced by the accumulation of symbolic capital on the part of certain individuals (Bourdieu 1977).

In chapters six and seven I also discuss the situation whereby many of the disenfranchised members of the village, notably low ranked persons, women, immigrants and youths, now

question the central exegetical function of origin narratives in relation to social ontology and local politics. The Church and the State in this context have effectively driven a wedge between the fictional correspondence of 'history' and reality. These novel institutions represent utopian alternatives to what are regarded as traditional modes of being and strategies of authority and control. To the existing hierarchies of power and ontology, they offer the egalitarian alternatives of democracy, equality and individuality. I argue that it is through these two institutions (i.e. the State and the Church) that local forms of resistance are primarily expressed.

It is important to note here that social resistance is not necessarily directed outwards against the forces of change but is an integral dimension of all social relations. Resistance, I shall argue (following Foucault 1978), does not take the form of a universal or univocal body of dissent and discontent but manifests itself in terms of a plurality of oppositions (Foucault 1978). The rhizomes and nodes of resistance are spread throughout society unifying and separating individuals and groups. These points of resistance are as transient as they are transitory, and are shaped by the specificities of context and time (Foucault 1978:95). The concept of resistance and its relationship to utopia is introduced and discussed in detail in chapter seven of the

thesis. In this chapter and the two which follow on resistance, I employ Paul Ricoeur's notion of 'utopia' (1986) as a useful theoretical construct to assist my understanding of relations of power in Amaya. In chapter eight of the thesis, I argue that for the disenfranchised members of the village, the Church (as well as the State) represents a utopian alternative to traditional modes of social ontology, control and organization. The Church is seen as offering the means whereby the disenfranchised can become franchised members of a Christian community.

Within the context of Amaya, however, resistance and dissent is largely emasculated by the appropriation of the logic and structures of the Nation-State and the Church to legitimate what are regarded as historically informed practices and institutions. In turn, these 'traditional' hierarchies verify the social fictions upon which the State and Church are founded. 'Tradition' (i.e. *adat/hnulcho*), within the context of Amaya, is politically constructed as the dominant idiom for the local articulation of cultural, national and religious identity. Mayawo culture in this dialectical relationship thus appears as a continuous 'tradition' because the self-referential interpretation of present practices in terms of the 'historical' past delineated in local origin narratives ideologically denies the transformed and transformative dimensions of contemporary social life. Social



ontology, in this strategy, is effectively frozen in a particular epoch of knowledge and practice.

The paradox of the situation is that while the apparatus of the Indonesian State (coupled as it is to the rhetoric of nationalism) and the bureaucracy of the Protestant Church represent legitimate political devices for the verification of the logic disseminated in local origin narratives, local cultures, on the other hand, represent sympathetic contexts for the legitimation of these symbolic forms. The utopian alternatives offered by the Nation-State and the Church represent just another variation on the theme of power, directed as they are towards the appropriation and dissimulation of local cultural values and categories.

Thus, what appears as utopia is just ideology in another guise. This, I would argue, contrary to Ricoeur (1986), is the fiction of utopia. Realized utopias subvert existing systems of power in order to replace them with yet other forms of power. Power, in this order of things, begets power. In this respect, ideology and utopia are mutually referential and interchangeable.

The more these alternative 'utopias' are dissimulated within local cultural structures the smaller the gap between cultural claim and belief becomes while, on the other hand,

the larger the gulf becomes between what is rhetorically offered by the State and the Church and what is realised in practice. At this point, the disenfranchised people in the village construct and locate new utopias which, practically speaking, involve leaving the village to pursue the nationalistic aspirations of becoming modern Indonesian men and women. I conclude the thesis, therefore, with a discussion of the relevance of local origin narratives outside of the context of Amaya. Through the presentation of a number of ethnographic vignettes, I summarize many of the primary themes and issues discussed in the body of this work.

## NOTES

1. The appellation 'eastern Indonesia' is widely used by anthropologists to generally refer to the numerous islands and cultural groups located in the geographic area bounded by the island of Bali in the west and Irian Jaya in the east. The term 'eastern Indonesia' constitutes, I would argue, an arbitrary field of reference and does not correspond with any known linguistically or culturally demarcated area except that constructed, as a matter of convenience, by western ethnographers (cf. de Josselin de Jong 1980a.). In this situation, to quote Jean Baudrillard, "it is the map that engenders the territory" (1983:2) and not the territory which precedes or survives the map.

2. A number of factors intervened to cut short what was originally intended to be an 18 month period of fieldwork. These included, the staging of the national Indonesian elections in April 1987, a time when all researchers were required by LIPI (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia*) to remove themselves from their fieldwork location for a minimum period of 6 weeks either side of the elections, and the contraction of both pneumonia and malaria while in the field which required urgent medical attention and hospitalization.

3. In keeping with local usage, I have chosen to use the indigenous term Amaya to refer to the village where I conducted research rather than use the Indonesian appellation by which the village is more commonly known.

4. My comments (see endnote 1 this page) on the use of the appellation 'eastern Indonesia' also apply to this term.



## CHAPTER ONE

### THE SETTING, 1986 - 1987

#### Introduction

On a number of occasions, within the context of large, public meetings in Amaya, I heard the 'village headman' (*Kepala Desa/lelechro lato*) remind the assembled audience that "usso delusso tawok wokpo tonlo, vio kelask usso tawok wokpo temunlo" ('we eat together from one banana, we drink together from one glass'). This metaphorical reference to the collective consumption of what are considered to be the basic food items in Amaya (i.e. bananas and water) evokes, among other things, images of commensalism, social equality and consubstantiality.

Indeed, during the first few months of my stay in the village of Amaya, I was quite struck by the sense of community that prevailed among residents and the degree of participation in village-based activities. In contrast to this image, however, the longer I stayed in the village the more I became aware of the various social constructions and categories of difference and of the range of opinions expressed by village residents.

In short, the more I began to apprehend the diversity in the (comm)unity.

In the course of my stay in Amaya, I also came to realize that personal and social identity was not only an on-going problem for me, dislocated as I was from my own cultural millieu, but also for many others in Amaya. One of the reasons for this, I believe, is that increasingly the people of Amaya find themselves participating within contexts largely delineated by the Indonesian Nation-State. The articulation of local culture within this context has resulted in the creation of new meanings, values, and aspirations.

Thus, while this chapter is concerned with establishing the broad physical, cultural, economic and political conditions experienced by people on the island of Damer, it is also intended as an introduction to the people of Amaya, who broadly identify themselves as Mayawo, and some of the more polarised and politically manipulated social categories and expressions of difference invoked by these people.

In the first part of this chapter, I present details of climatic conditions on the island, the physical environment, the location of villages and village demography, transport, communications, economic and subsistence activities and local

population mobility. In addition, I also briefly outline the material representation and expression of the Indonesian State, the Protestant Church, Western technology and modern capitalism on Damer. The existence of government schools, village-based development committees, churches, trade stores, video machines, generators, radios, etc., however, do not necessarily suggest that on Damer it is simply a case of so-called 'external forces' penetrating or impinging upon, to varying degrees, the social life of local people. Nor can we seriously speak of this engagement in terms of inside/outside, tradition/modernity type dichotomies, as it is often portrayed in the anthropological literature. Rather, the interaction with other ideologies and ontologies should be viewed as part of an on-going and dialectical social and political process of cultural invention and re-invention. In the following chapters, I argue that while the physical location of Damer has not prevented the introduction and articulation of the State, Protestantism or, for that matter, modern capitalism it has, to some extent, been instrumental in the maintenance of cultural distance and difference. In particular, the remoteness of the island has enabled local groups to articulate their relations with these entities largely in terms of their own cultural logic and practices.

In the second part of the chapter, I introduce the people of Amaya and outline some of the different social experiences

and social identities of the residents of this village. In subsequent chapters I explore the social construction of difference in greater detail. In addition to this material, I also discuss the location, territory and physical disposition of the village, as well as presenting data on local demography, community facilities, major economic activities and relations between villages on Damer. Some statistical information concerning household incomes, shop sales and cash crop production is also presented in this section.

## Damer

### **Climate and Physical Environment**

Situated at 7°07'S, 128°37'E (see Map 1.1.), Damer experiences a seasonal tropical climate. Annual weather patterns produce two short wet seasons and an extended dry season. From December to the end of March, the north-west monsoon lashes the island, bringing heavy rain. Around the beginning of April, the winds swing around to the east and sustained rains fall for the next two months. In June the rains begin to abate with the onset of the dry season. The hottest and driest period usually extends from August to November. The arrival of the north-west monsoon around mid-December marks the end of the dry season. Climatic statistics

collected at Saumlaki in the nearby Tanimbar Islands give some indication of the climatic conditions prevailing on Damer. These figures are presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Climatic Data for Saumlaki 1984\*.

Month	Temperature (Celsius)			Total Rainfall (mm)
	Av.	Max.	Min	
January	27.0	33.2	18.3	329.0
February	26.9	32.2	18.2	303.3
March	26.8	33.0	18.2	161.0
April	26.9	31.8	17.4	208.9
May	26.6	30.2	18.1	296.8
June	26.0	29.2	17.9	86.0
July	24.8	28.4	15.6	90.0
August	25.2	29.4	14.4	5.0
September	26.5	30.6	17.0	7.0
October	27.3	32.0	16.0	13.0
November	28.2	33.6	16.6	64.0
December	27.2	32.2	17.4	350.0
TOTAL	319.6	375.8	205.1	1923.0
AVERAGE	26.6	31.3	17.1	160.3

\* Source: *Kantor Statistik Propinsi Maluku, Publikasi Maluku Dalam Angka Tahun 1984.*

The dominant topographic feature on Damer is Vworlali, an active volcano of approximately 870 metres, located on the ENE tip of the island (see Molengraaff 1916). Major eruptions of this volcano were recorded in the first two decades of this century (Great Britain 1920) and minor earth tremors continue to be a frequent occurrence. Several non-volcanic peaks over 500 metres in height are located in the interior of the island. The coastline of Damer is interspersed with numerous sand or rock beaches. Much of the island is



surrounded by a coral reef, exceptionally rich in marine life, extending about 75 metres out to sea. With the exception of cultivated areas in the immediate vicinity of coastal villages, the island is covered in primary monsoonal rainforest. The jungle provides a habitat for forest bird species, cuscus, lizards, snakes, rats and feral pigs.

The rainforest on Damer, and particularly those areas claimed by the peoples of Amaya and Wulur, has recently attracted the interest of local Chinese merchants. There is a large demand for timber on Kisar and the other non-volcanic islands in the region. These islands have much greater population densities than Damer and as a result, local forests have been heavily exploited. To date, the residents of Amaya have permitted Chinese traders and others to fell trees which would be used solely in *perahu* mast and keel construction. The situation in the village of Wulur on the eastern side of the island is somewhat different. There the resident Chinese shop owners have been allowed to cut timber on a largely unrestricted basis (see chapter nine for more details).

#### **Administration, Access, Facilities and Island Demography**

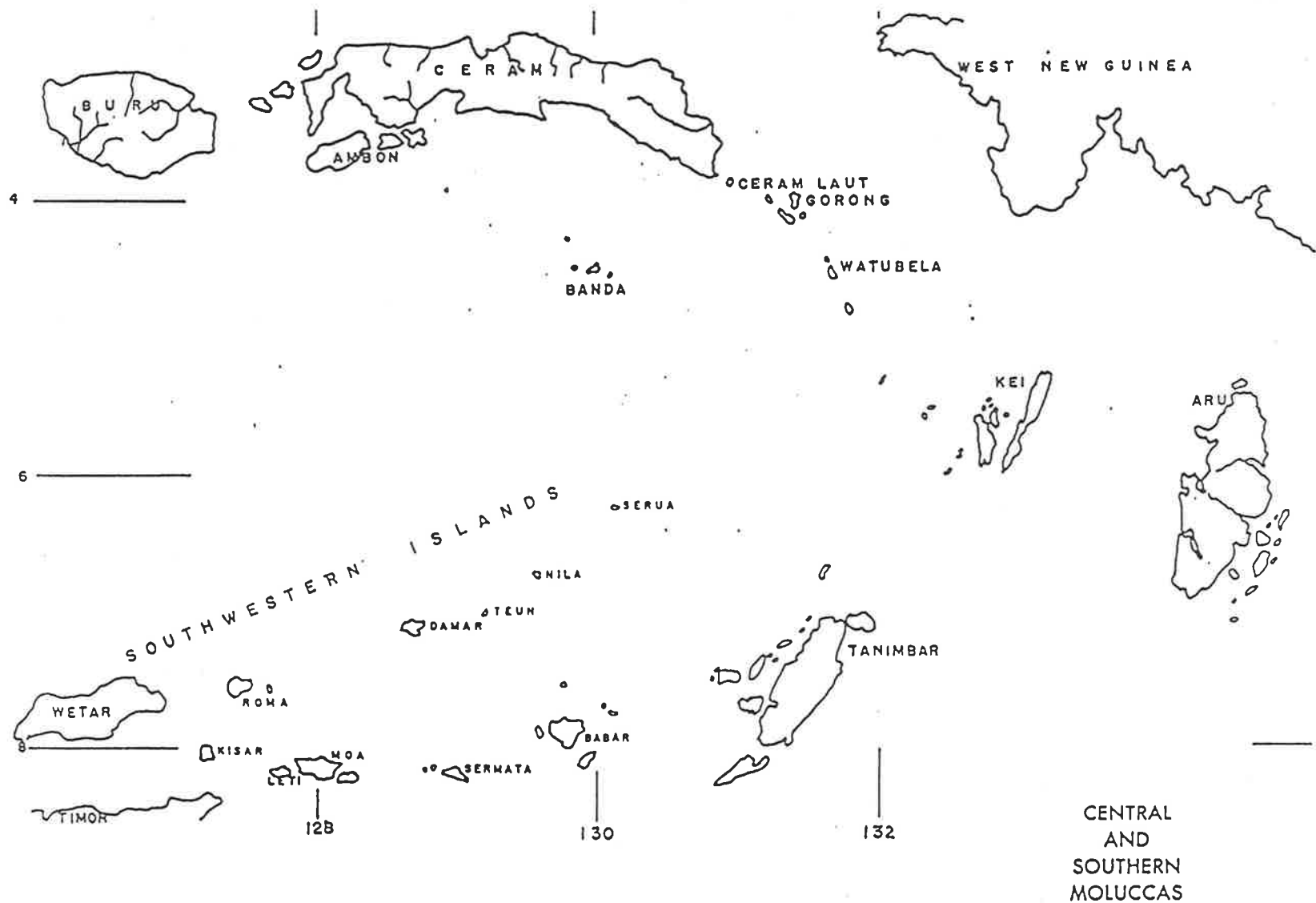
Damer, together with the nearby islands of Kisar (the district administrative centre), Romang, Maopora, Nyamuk,

Tikus, Wetar, and Liran, is included within the local government district (*Kecamatan*) of *Pulau-Pulau Terselatan* ('Southern Islands')<sup>1</sup>. The administrative centre of the *kecamatan* is the village of Wonreli on the island of Kisar. In colonial times, Kisar was the seat of the Dutch residency of the 'Southwest Islands' (Kolff, 1840:45). *Kecamatan P.P. Terselatan* is one of eight *Kecamatan* which collectively constitute the administrative region (*Kabupaten*) of *Maluku Tenggara*, 'South-east Maluku' (see table 1.2. for general details of this region ). A total of five regions, including *Maluku Tenggara*, make up the Province (*Propinsi*) of Maluku, the 25th of 27 provinces in the Republic of Indonesia<sup>2</sup>.

Table 1.2. Population size, density and physical area of the 8 *Kecamatan* which comprise the *Kabupaten* of Maluku Tenggara, 1984-1985\*.

<i>Kecamatan</i>	Area km <sup>2</sup>	Pop. size	Pop. density km <sup>2</sup>
P.P. Terselatan	4,686	20,173	4.30
Serwaru	1,506	14,626	9.71
P.P. Babar	2,456	17,756	7.23
Tanimbar Selatan	3,629	37,505	10.33
Tanimbar Utara	2,307	30,621	13.27
P.P. Kei Kecil	3,468	57,093	16.46
Kei Besar	581	38,834	66.84
P.P. Aru	6,325	43,247	6.84
TOTAL	24,958	259,855	av.10.41

\* Source: Kantor Statistik Kabupaten Maluku Tenggara.



Map 1.1. Map of Maluku indicating position of Damer (source, Lebar 1972).

Access to and from Damer is afforded by locally-owned sailing boats (*perahu*) and/or the State-owned and subsidized PERENTIS (*Pelayaran Nasional Indonesia*) ship, which briefly calls at the island approximately once a month<sup>3</sup>. During the eastern monsoon (April - November), the ship anchors off the villages of Kumur and Bebar Barat on the north-east side of the island. For the 3-4 month duration of the north-west monsoon (December - March), the ship lays off the villages of Wulur and Kehli on the eastern side of the island. The PERENTIS ship primarily operates as a passenger vessel between the provincial capital Ambon and the numerous islands of Maluku Tenggara. The voyage from Damer to Ambon on the PERENTIS ship can take up to 11 days depending upon the weather and the route taken. The ship alternates between two routes, locally referred to as "*jalan panjang*" ('long way') and "*jalan pendek*" ('short way'). From Ambon, *jalan panjang* involves stopping at the islands of Banda, Kei, Tanimbar, Masela, Babar, Sermata, Lakor, Moa, Leti, Kisar, Wetar, Romang and finally Damer, the last port of call on the voyage before the ship returns to Ambon via Babar, Tanimbar, Kei and Banda (*jalan pendek* back to Ambon). On the next voyage out from Ambon, the ship will follow the *jalan pendek* route to Damer, stopping only at the islands of Banda, Kei, Tanimbar and Babar before reaching Damer, a trip of about 5-6 days. Returning to Ambon from Damer the ship will then follow the *jalan panjang* route outlined above. The alternation of the

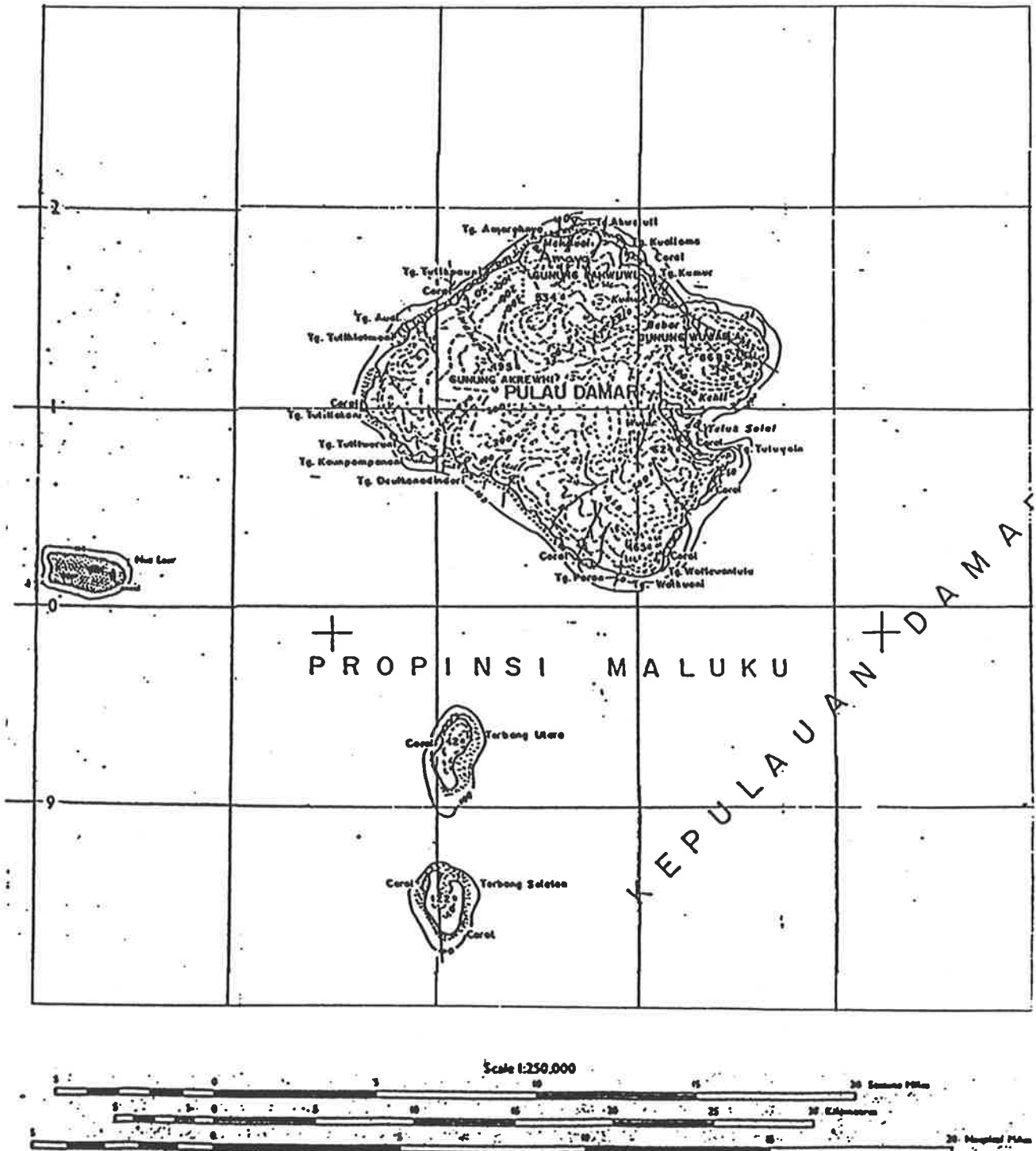
*jalan pendek* and *jalan panjang* routes in this way, however, is not necessarily fixed. During the last half of 1987, the PERENTIS ship did not alternate the two routes but continually followed the *jalan panjang* route out to Damer and the *jalan pendek* route back to Ambon. For people on Damer this meant a relatively short trip to Ambon. However, it also meant that in order to visit the *Kecamatan* centre of Wonreli on the island of Kisar, the various *Kepala Desa* on Damer and other people on the island would need to catch the boat to Ambon first, wait for its departure, and then catch it once again to Kisar, a voyage which would have taken up to a month to complete. For visiting government representatives, such as the police, the change in the ship's route meant that once they had disembarked on Damer the only way back to Kisar on the PERENTIS boat was again via Ambon. This situation effectively served to isolate the people on Damer even further and, at the same time, prevented the government from exercising appropriate administrative control over the local population.

For the inhabitants of many of the islands of Maluku Tenggara, the PERENTIS ship also functions as a floating department store and supermarket where items such as rice, sugar, soap, flour, batteries, clothing, fishing tackle and kitchen utensils are purchased from on-board stall-holders.

As there is no post office or radio transceiver on Damer, communication with other areas of the province is also by way of local perahu or the PERENTIS Ship. The nearest shore-based post office and two way radio are located on the island of Kisar, the administrative centre of the *Kecamatan*, about 180 km. south-west of Damer. *Perahu* from Damer regularly sail to Kisar carrying letters, produce, passengers and local government representatives and return with news, letters and instructions from the *Camat's* ('District Head') Office. Less frequently, local *perahu* also sail to Ambon. A number of short-wave radios on the island enable local people to receive shipping news from Ambon and to keep abreast of events in Indonesia and the wider world. In Indonesia, the radio represents one of many media employed by the State for the transmission of nationalistic ideology. However, as very few people own an operating radio, the influence of this medium on local culture is attenuated.

Eight villages (*desa*) are located along an east-west arc around the northern coast of Damer. From east to west, these villages are Wulur (Auljo in the vernacular spoken in Amaya), Kehli (Akehli), Ihli (Aihli), Bebar Timur (Apepratimi) or Pepre as it was previously known (see Riedel 1886), Bebar Barat (Apepraworto), Kumur (Ailwevno), Kuai or Kuwaya (see Riedel, 1886) (Akuwa)/Melu or Molung (see Riedel 1886) (Amelo) - two separate villages amalgamated under one

Map 1.2. Map of Damer indicating position of villages (source, Pulau Damar, Indonesia. Series 1501, Sheet SB 52-14, Edition 1-GSGS. Director of Military Survey, Ministry of Defence, U.K. 1970).



*Kepala Desa*, and Amaya (see Map 1.2). The villages of Wulur and Bebar Barat are regarded as the main centres of commercial activity on Damer. The largest shops on the island and the Chinese owners of these stores are located in these two villages. In addition, the government sponsored PERENTIS ship stops at either of these two villages, depending on seasonal conditions.

As previously mentioned in the introduction, the population of Damer is divided into two Austronesian languages groups<sup>4</sup>. The language spoken in the village of Amaya is also spoken in the closely related (both mythically and socially) villages of Kuai and Melu on the western half of the island of Damer. The speakers of this language refer to it as vnyola Mayawo ('language of Amaya'). The remaining 6 villages on the eastern half of the island speak a different language known to people in Amaya as vnyola timcho ('east language') or vnyola heriluwononi ('language of the other side'). Collins, in a report on linguistic research in Maluku (1984), notes that in the languages spoken on Damer, as well as on Serua, Tanimbar and Kei, "verbs are marked obligatorily for the person of the agent or experiencer" (*ibid.*:130). In this process, he remarks, "the resulting verbal conjugations display vocalic and consonantal changes in the verb form " (loc. cit.). In Amaya, for example, the term for 'I drink' is od vimnyo whereas the phrase for 'we (inclusive) drink' is



itito ktemnyo.

The local lingua franca on Damer is a combination of Ambonese Malay and Bahasa Indonesia. Ambonese Malay is comprised of a large number of loan words from Portuguese, Dutch and other Moluccan languages (Collins 1984; de Josselin de Jong 1937 & 1947). As a result of their occupation by the Dutch colonial forces, the people on Damer have a long history of use of Malay, the linguistic source of Bahasa Indonesia. Collins (1984:84) states that the extended use of Malay in Maluku was noted by Europeans as early as the sixteenth century. The widespread introduction of education facilities on Damer in the early 1970's, increased population mobility and media penetration has resulted in an increase in the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* by local people. In Amaya the use of Ambonese-Malay/*Bahasa Indonesia* by Mayawo adults is largely confined to public contexts concerned with Government and Church activities, such as village meetings, contact with government representatives, religious services, etc. Generally, vnyola Mayawo is the language of day-to-day life although school-age children, who are not usually considered fluent in the local language, tend to use a mixture of Ambonese-Malay/*Bahasa Indonesia* and vnyola Mayawo.

In 1986 a government census (*Biro Pusat Statistik* 1986) recorded a total of 3,618 people on Damer (see Table 1.3.).

Table 1.3. Population Statistics for the Villages on Damer for the Year 1986\*.

Name of Village	Adults		Children		Foreigners		Total	No. of Households
	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Wulur	215	218	164	163	3	3	766	135
Kehli	186	202	137	124	-	-	649	164
Ihli	97	101	93	74	-	-	365	66
Bebar Timur	137	133	92	88	-	-	450	86
Bebar Barat	96	100	50	50	1	-	297	45
Kumur	72	70	75	74	-	-	291	52
Kuai/Melu	71	75	49	49	-	-	244	51
Amaya	168	174	106	108	-	-	556	123
TOTAL	1042	1073	766	730	4	3	3618	722

\* Source: *Registrasi Penduduk Akhir tahun 1986. Biro Pusat Statistik, Jakarta.*

Riedel (1886), in a much earlier census taken in 1882, recorded an island population of 1,697, 809 males and 888 females. According to contemporary government figures, the villages of Wulur and Kehli are the largest population centres with 766 and 649 residents, respectively. Amaya is the third largest village with a 1986 population of 556 people. The smallest villages are Kuai and Melu with a combined population of 244 persons. The 1986 census identified a total of 7 non-Indonesian residents on the island. These people were all of Chinese extraction and resided at Wulur (6 persons) and Bebar Barat (1 person). My

own demographic data for Amaya are presented later in this chapter.

Each of the villages on Damer is associated with a 'historically' demarcated territorial area. According to official records, Amaya maintains the largest territorial area of 63.80 square km whereas Wulur, the largest village in population size, maintains a territory less than half the size of that occupied by Amaya, only 30 square km (see Table 1.4). Government figures (*Biro Pusat Statistik*) indicate that the total land area of the island is approximately 168 square kilometres.

Table 1.4. Territorial Area Claimed by Villages on Damer, 1986\*.

Name of Village	Area km <sup>2</sup>
Wulur	30.10
Kehli	2.47
Ihli	10.61
Bebar Timur	9.01
Bebar Barat	3.20
Kumur	32.00
Kuai Melu	17.13
Amaya	63.80
TOTAL	168.32 km <sup>2</sup>

\* Source: *Registrasi Penduduk Akhir Tahun 1986. Biro Pusat Statistik, Jakarta.*

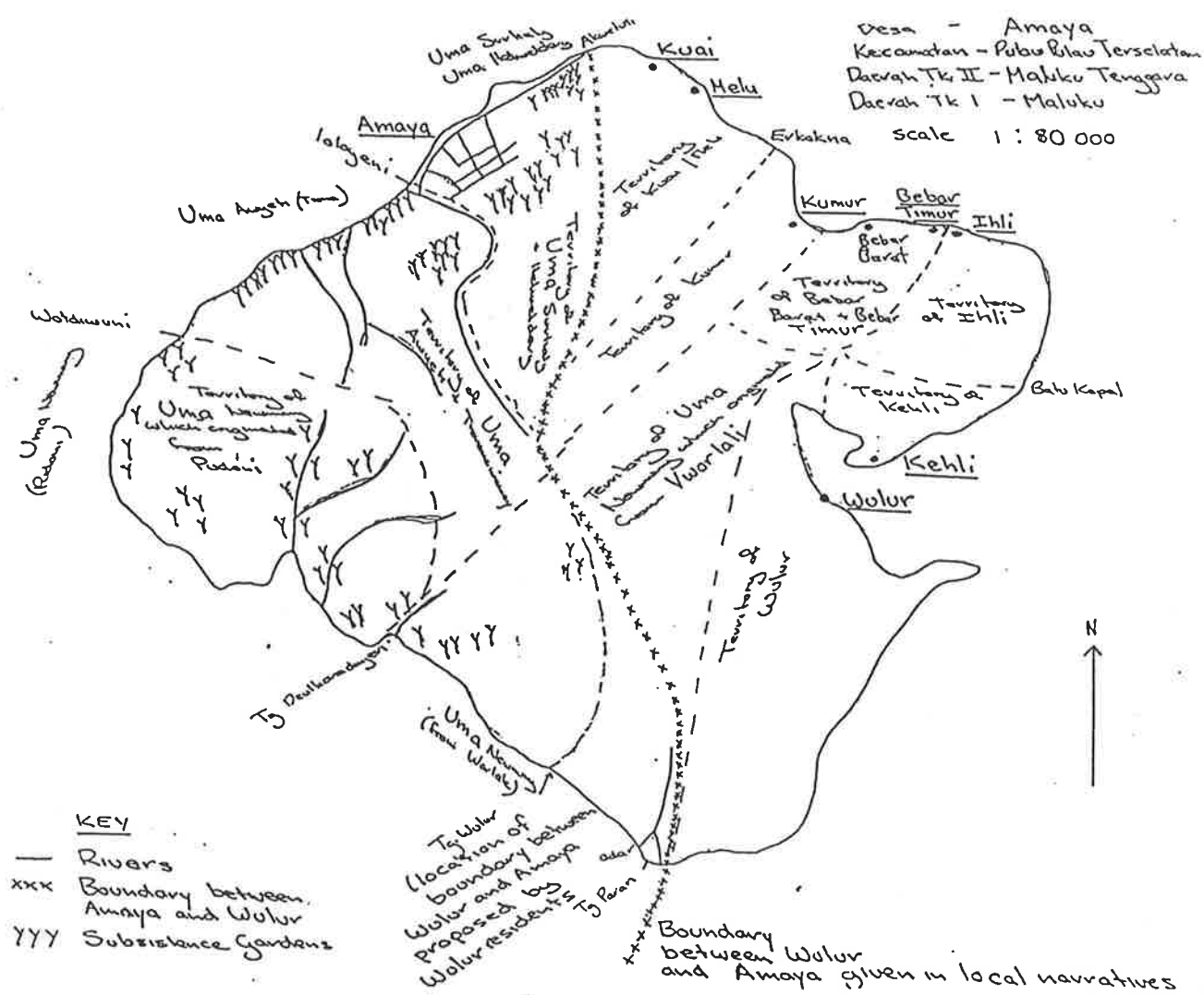
The territorial domain of Amaya adjoins lands traditionally claimed by the villages of Kuai/Melu, Kumur and Wulur (see Map 1.3.). For some years now, the position of the southeastern boundary dividing the domains of Wulur and Amaya and ownership of the island *Terbang Utara* has been in dispute (for a more detailed discussion of this issue refer to Chapter nine). To date, the situation between the disputing villages, Amaya, Wulur and Kehli, has not been resolved. Relations between Amaya and Wulur and between Wulur and Kehli remain strained, with members of each of these villages visiting each other only upon official Church or government business or when the PERINTIS boat calls in at Wulur.

Relations between Amaya and the other villages on Damer, however, are good. Generally people in Amaya have more contact with the nearby villages of Melu, Kuai, Kumur and Bebar Barat than they do with the inhabitants of Bebar Timur, Ihli, Kehli and Wulur. Whenever a wedding is held in one of these nearby villages the *Kepala Desa* of Amaya and other local people are invariably invited to attend. Children from Amaya attending *sekolah menengah pertama* ('junior high school', known throughout Indonesia with the acronym *SMP*) in Bebar Barat will lodge during the school week with family friends either in Kumur or in Bebar Barat itself. Often on the weekends people from Melu and Kuai will pay a social visit to kinsmen and friends in Amaya and bring with them

locally produced baskets to sell. At least once every two months the local Church youth group will visit the other villages on the western side of the island to attend meetings and religious service, while once a year class six children of the *sekolah dasar*, escorted by their parents, will sit their final year examinations in one of the nearby villages or Amaya itself will play host for the visiting students and their families.

Previously, as part of the celebrations for National Independence day (*Hari Merdeka Nasional*) on the 17 August each year, sports competitions were organised between the villages on Damer. Also, once a year a religious service was held in one of the villages, which all the villages on the island would attend. However, because of deteriorating relations between Wulur and Amaya and Wulur and Kehli, arising from disputes over land ownership, these inter-village events were canceled in 1975.

Map 1.3. Map of the Territorial Domains of the Villages on Damer.



Public facilities on Damer are extremely limited. There are no medical facilities on the island - no operative clinic, dispensary, trained nurse or paramedic. In the case of serious injury or illness, patients are sometimes evacuated by boat to the regional hospital in Tual, in the Kei islands. More often than not, however, traditional medicines and methods of healing are employed with varying degrees of success<sup>5</sup>.

With the exception of the village of Bebar Barat, all villages on Damer maintain a *sekolah dasar* ('primary school'). Christian State-assisted schools outnumber local government schools by a ratio of five to two<sup>6</sup>. In addition to the 7 primary schools, one *sekolah menengah pertama Kristen* ('Christian junior high school') is centrally located in the village of Bebar Barat. Lessons in all of the schools are conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. The absence of a 'senior high school' (*Sekolah Menengah Atas*) on the island means that local children are sent to Ambon to finish their education. From the parent's point of view, this is an expensive undertaking. For the children, their stay in Ambon brings them into contact with a different lifestyle where television and Western-style films are the main sources of entertainment and where social relations and objects are commodified in terms of their use value. Upon returning to their homes on Damer, many of these teen-agers are critical of local practices and

institutions.

Like the majority of people in the province of Maluku, the entire population of Damer are members of the Dutch-inspired *Gereja Protestan Maluku* ('Moluccan Protestant Church'). Each village on the island contains a church, although not all villages have their own minister<sup>7</sup>. In 1986 and for most of 1987, Amaya was the only village with a resident minister. This person also administered to the religious needs of the other villagers on the island. In late 1987, however, several trainee clergy arrived on the island and took up residence in a number of the villages.

In formal State terms, at least, responsibility for law and order on Damer largely devolves upon each *Kepala Desa* ('Village Headman'). Police, stationed on the island of Kisar, visit the island once a year to hear local grievances and adjudicate on unresolved legal matters.

### **Economic and Subsistence Activities**

Consumer needs on the island are catered for by a number of Chinese-owned shops. The commercial activities of the Chinese shop-owners are based either in Kisar or Ambon. The main shops on Damer (managed by resident Chinese) are located in



Wulur and Bebar Barat. Small subsidiaries of these stores, staffed by local people, operate in the villages of Amaya, Kuai/Melu, Bebar Timur, Ihli and Kehli.

The shops sell a limited range of food and non-perishable items purchased in Surabaya (east Java) by the Chinese shop owners and transported by motor boat to Amaya and the other villages on the island roughly twice a year. The shops also act as purchasing agents for local produce such as copra, cloves, trepang, tortoiseshell, shark fins, trocus (Tectus niloticus or lola as it is known throughout Maluku) and batu laga shells. Once acquired, the produce is stored in huts at the rear of each shop. At the end of the dry season, local produce purchased by the shops is collected by Chinese owned motor boats and taken to Ujung Pandang and Surabaya.

In addition to these trading stores, most of the villages are visited at least two or three times a year by Buginese and Butungese trading boats. Generally, the items carried on these boats are restricted to non-perishable objects such as clothing and kitchen utensils. Sometimes, the Butungese come to Damer to sell salt to people on the eastern side of the island. Often, these traders will attempt to purchase copra and lola from the villages they visit. However, the competition from the Chinese-Indonesians is fierce and the traders are not always successful in their endeavors.

Other visitors to Damer include Luangese fishermen, who occasionally sell the fish they have taken from local waters to the inhabitants of the island.

Fish, sago and bananas are the primary staple foods on Damer, although yams, cassava, taro, corn and various fruits such as pawpaw, pineapple and watermelon are also cultivated. Towards the end of the dry season in September, household members begin to make new gardens, either on fallowed land or in virgin rainforest areas. Most gardens are abandoned after 4-5 years of constant use and are left for a number of years before being used again. Planting usually takes place in December and January, the first two months of the wet season. The majority of gardens are located in a narrow 1-2 km strip of coastal land encircling the northern half of the island. Most households have at least one garden within close proximity of the village which is visited on a daily basis. As I have previously indicated, available and suitable garden land is restricted for a number of the villages on the eastern side of the island. In these villages, notably Kehli, Bebar Barat and Kumur, this situation has resulted in an increasing dependency on store-bought foodstuffs such as packaged noodles and rice.

## Amaya

The village of Amaya is situated on the north-northwest coast of the island of Damer (at approximately 7° 45'S, 128° 355'E). Amaya is the only village situated along the western coastline of the island - its nearest neighbour, the village of Melu, is located some 5 kilometres away on the northern shores of Damer.

The territory claimed by the residents of Amaya encompasses most of the western half of the island of Damer, an area of 6,380 hectares, and extends to the adjoining sea areas. According to figures compiled by the current *Kepala Desa* for the 1980 census, 563 ha. of the total land area of 6,380 ha. is under cultivation and a further 523 ha. is designated as suitable garden land. The remaining land, 5,285 ha., consists of dense tropical rainforest and steep hills. Amaya also lays claim to two coral atolls known collectively as Nus Leur (Riedel refers to these atolls as 'Nusleuru') or nud ono keketodini, 'the small child of the island [Damer Island]', approximately 25 km. south-west of Amaya and the uninhabited island of *Terbang Utara* (Riedel identifies this island as 'Nus Raa'), known in the vernacular as nud ono kpawodini, 'the larger child of the island [Damer], approximately 10 km. south of Damer (see Map 1.3)<sup>8</sup>. *Terbang Selatan* or 'Nus Lora' (see Riedel 1886), the southern most of

the two islands situated south of Damer, is contentiously claimed by the peoples of Wulur and Kehli. The territory of Amaya is particularly rich in natural resources including timber, trepang, trocus shells, and fish. In recent times, the poaching of marine produce by visiting Butungese, Makassan and Luangese fishing boats has become a serious problem for people in Amaya. At the local level, it is difficult to patrol the distant islands of Nus Leur and *Terbang Utara* and even more difficult to physically prevent encroaching fishing boats from removing the valuable produce. With no police presence on the island, the law enforcement powers of the village headman are insufficient to detain and charge offenders.

### The People

In a detailed census conducted during the period October - December 1986, I recorded a village population of 585 people (see table 1.5). Earlier in the same year (April-May 1986), the local *Kepala Desa* recorded a population of 597 people whereas, according to official government figures (loc. cit.), the population of Amaya during 1986 was 556. Throughout the period of my research, the number of people resident in Amaya fluctuated only slightly around my census figure (plus or minus 15).

Table 1.5. Population Distribution by Age and Sex, 1986\*.

AGE (Years)	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
0-4	32	54	86
5-9	41	30	71
10-14	34	32	66
15-19	21	14	35
20-24	23	21	44
25-29	33	20	53
30-34	18	24	42
35-39	19	16	35
40-44	18	18	36
45-49	13	13	26
50-54	10	12	22
55-59	15	11	26
60-64	8	11	19
65-69	7	3	10
70-74	4	2	5
75-79	3	3	6
80-84	1	0	1
85-89	0	0	0
90-94	0	0	0
95-99	1	0	1
TOTAL	301	284	585

\* Source: Field census, October - December 1986.

A large number of people who were born in Amaya now reside and work in other parts of the archipelago (approximately 81 adults together with their families). Most of these people (51 adults or approx. 65%) live within the province of Maluku and of this group a large number of people (36 or approximately 70%) reside in the provincial capital of Ambon. Other former residents of Amaya can be found as far east as Sorong in Irian Jaya and as far west as Jakarta, the national capital. Many of the expatriates of Amaya are government employees working as teachers, police, public servants in

various government departments and crew on the State-owned PELNI and PERENTIS ships. Given local transport and communications, few of these people return to Amaya during the course of their working life. A number of people I spoke to in Ambon indicated that upon retirement, however, they would return to their place of origin for good. The reasons put forward by these individuals as to why they would retire to Amaya were to a large extent predicated upon economic considerations.

The residential population of Amaya itself, like any group of people, is made up of a diverse body of individuals with different interests, experiences and social identities. This fact is particularly evident when speaking to people about their experiences outside the context of the village. There are some individuals (mainly, though not exclusively, elderly women) in Amaya, for example, who have never visited the villages on the eastern side of the island let alone been to the district centre of Kisar or the provincial capital of Ambon. In fact, quite a large number of people in the village (mainly children, women and very old residents) have never had call to leave the island of Damer. This means that they have never experienced first hand many of the technological innovations which are now an integral dimension of every-day life in many parts of Indonesia.

On the other hand, there are a small number of individuals (all of these people are men) who have been as far afield as Java and Bali and even to Singapore, while others have worked for periods of time as public servants, tuna fisherman, teachers and manual labourers within the Province of Maluku itself. A growing number of teen-age children (often young men) are now sent to Ambon for their education and many of these students are reluctant to return home upon completion of their studies.

At the most inclusive level, the inhabitants of Amaya collectively refer to themselves with the indigenous term (first person plural inclusive) itit mayawo ito or just Mayawo ito meaning 'we (the) people of Amaya'. I discussed with a number of people what term was appropriate to use to nominate the 'people of Amaya' generally. Most people pointed out that while the term Mayawo literally translated as the 'people of Amaya' ( Amaya - name of village, deyo - person/people), within the context of speech it was always qualified by a pronoun or a nominal marker, for example, odo Mayawo ochi or just Mayawo ochi 'I person of Amaya'; odomo Mayawo omo or just Mayawo omo 'we (exclusive) people of Amaya, and therefore was not used on its own. However, as it is not possible to qualify the term Mayawo within the context of a text written in English, those I consulted suggested that in this situation the appellation Mayawo could be used

on its own to collectively designate the people of Amaya.

The term Mayawo signifies the identification by local people with the village as both a meaningful place and a social unit<sup>9</sup>. The importance placed on the village as the locus of shared identity is reflected in the involvement of residents in community-based development projects and activities. The residents of Amaya also act as a corporate group in relation to a number of cultural, state and Church-based rituals and events (e.g. marriage ceremonies, celebrations for the Indonesian National Independence day and Christian communion, to name but a few) which I shall discuss in more detail in later chapters.

The use of the appellation Mayawo as a term of identification is largely confined to those situations when it is necessary to define the collective identity of the village residents *vis-a-vis* some others (cf. Laing 1971). Often this term is used to distinguish the people of Amaya from the people of the nearby villages of Kuai Melu, who speak the same language as that spoken in Amaya. Sometimes the term is also employed among residents of Amaya, when speaking of themselves, in relation to those people who reside on the eastern side of the island. Within Amaya itself, the term is used to mark other distinctions and other identities which I shall discuss at greater length in the following section.



While the term Mayawo is not generally used outside of the contexts I have discussed, place, however, is still an important frame of reference for individual and social identity, especially when people from Amaya move outside the social domain of the village.

When visiting other villages on Damer people will often use the more widely understood Indonesian term "*orang Amaya*" ('Amaya person') rather than the vernacular appellations Mayawo ochi (first person singular subject) or Mayawo (plural subject) to refer to themselves or others from Amaya. This appellation is also employed when visiting Kisar (the administrative centre of the *Kecamatan*) and other nearby islands. Within the context of the *Kecamatan* Amaya is well known as a village where "*adat* is still strong" ("*adat masih kuat*") and the inhabitants are devout and law-abiding Christians (personal communication, *Camat* and district police chief).

On visits to the provincial capital of Ambon, however, I noted that people from Amaya generally refer to themselves as "*orang Damer*" ('Damer person') or use the abbreviated and more popular form "*orang Dam*". In this context, when speaking to non-Moluccan Indonesians (as a result of historical and political circumstances, these people are often Javanese) people from Amaya may describe themselves as

"*orang Ambon*" ('Ambon person'). As a provincial capital, Ambon is more widely known than the island of Damer, and thus it is often easier for Mayawo to identify themselves in this manner. Indeed, the physical remoteness of Damer and its marginal role in provincial affairs is attested to by the fact that I often met Ambonese people who did not know where Damer was located.

At another level, when we discussed matters with a wider frame of reference, for example, matters that involved Indonesia and Australia, people often spoke of themselves as "*orang Indonesia*" ('Indonesian person/people').

### Village Diversity

The varied experiential circumstances of individuals in Amaya mentioned in the above section is not the only source of social and cultural diversity in the village. Difference, in this context, is also expressed in terms of a person's origins, gender and age.

In Amaya, the primary field of reference for the construction of difference and the articulation of discrimination is constituted by the concept of origins. The differential values harnessed to this concept give rise to the social

categories of and distinctions between indigenes and immigrants. Within the former classification, local notions concerning the origins of various groups inform and structure a tri-partite system of ranking. While I discuss this subject in greater detail in chapters three and five of the thesis, it is necessary here to briefly outline who these classifications refer to.

While at one level the term Mayawo can be used to refer to all the inhabitants of the village of Amaya, it can also be employed in a more restrictive sense to distinguish the descendants of the ancestors who are credited with founding the localised 'state' or *negri* of Amaya (or whose ancestral group evolved from or were linked to these founding clusters of ancestors) from those people broadly classified as 'immigrants' (deyo dachmodini, 'the people who came afterwards'). Although some of the ancestors credited with founding the village of Amaya are said to have originally come from nearby islands and were thus regarded by the autochthonous population as 'immigrants', the descendants of these beings, however, are not regarded as such. Over time these first 'immigrants' have been incorporated into local 'historical' accounts and society so that today they are no longer considered to be *pendatang* but are regarded as "*orang asli*", the 'original people'.

Commonly referred to as *pendatang* in Ambonese-Malay, 'immigrants' are those people who arrived at Amaya in the present century, the majority of whom came in the period after the Second World War, and the descendants of such individuals. These people are further identified on the basis of their place of origin. 'Immigrants' from other villages on the island of Damer are called larso while those individuals who originate from other islands in the region are referred to as awvno.

The *pendatang* in Amaya today originate mainly from the islands of Leti and Kisar to the south, although there are individuals who come from Kupang, Tapa, Nila, Lakor, Palue and the villages of Kehli, Kumur and Bebar Timur on Damer. The majority of *pendatang* are men who have married women from Amaya and have settled in the village in the last three or four decades (of the 107 married couples residing in Amaya, 35 or 32.7% of these include spouses from other villages and islands).

Of a population of 585 people, 99 (or 16.9%) individuals have the name of one of the 33 different immigrant family names represented in the village today. More than a third (thirty nine or approximately 37%) of the 105 residential dwellings in the village are occupied by individuals who do not originate from Amaya.

While the houses of the 'indigenous' residents of Amaya tend to be located in the older, elevated sections of the village, the houses of the *pendatang* residents are located at various points along the path that skirts the sea front. The residences of the newcomers are generally cement-walled, zinc-roofed houses, as opposed to the traditional dwellings of the indigenes, constructed of bamboo and sago products. The spatial position of the *pendatang* in the village, on the periphery of the village, reflects their marginal social and political position in the community.

The three Chinese owned stores operating in Amaya are run by *pendatang* families. Other *pendatang* are employed as teachers or are retired public servants and thus receive regular salaries and pensions. Generally, *pendatang* enjoy greater monetary wealth than the indigenous residents, the majority of whom are subsistence gardeners.

Because of their economic activities and association with the non-Christian Chinese traders, the behaviour of many of the *pendatang* residents is regarded by others in the village as individualistic, selfish and incompatible with local practices. *Pendatang* are often accused of gambling and drinking, although many other people surreptitiously indulge in these activities which have been prohibited by local Church and government officials. The majority of people

referred to as *pendatang* do not speak the local language vnyola Mayawo and rely solely on *Bahasa Indonesia* to communicate with others in the village. In Amaya, *Bahasa Indonesia* is mainly used by school children and is seldom used in daily life by the majority of village adults.

While the recognition of the broad categories 'immigrants' and 'indigenes' might suggest a degree of unity and homogeneity within these classifications, this is certainly not the case. As I examine in subsequent chapters (notably chapter five), the so-called indigenous residents are variously classified and organised into a hierarchical system of ranked values which is primarily informed by the thematic content of local origin narratives.

In addition to those social distinctions predicated upon local constructions of origins and descent, there are others based on gender and age. Nearly half (258 individuals or 44.10%) of the residential population of Amaya are under 20 years of age. The attitudes and values of the youth of Amaya differ markedly from those of the older residents and generally reflect those advocated by the Indonesian Nation-State. It is the youth of the village who, through the education system, come into greater contact with the ideology and practices of State-articulated nationalism. They, more than any other group in Amaya, embrace the slogans, rhetoric

and language disseminated by the Government. In this connection, it is worth noting that the national lingua franca *Bahasa Indonesia* has become, at the expense of the local language, the main language spoken by the school-age children of Amaya. It could be argued that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* opens up a new world view to the youth of Amaya, replete with new meanings and symbols. In the following chapters I explore how language, among other things, enables the youth and the disenfranchised members of the village to participate in the national culture and identify with new groups and contexts. The use of the national language also means that local cultural meanings expressed in the vernacular are no longer available to these people. Language is, in this instance, not only a mode of representation but is also a source of meaningful experience.

The older members of the village, on the other hand, are generally more concerned with preserving 'traditional' cultural beliefs, categories and practices in the face of what they consider to be an "upturned world" (*"Dunia sudah terbalik"* is a commonly used Indonesian expression among the older residents of Amaya to describe recent social and technological innovations) than adopting modern (often 'western') ways of doing and being. The different perspectives of the two groups is evident in relation to matters concerning social rank, marriage, political

organization and local culture.

As Table 1.4. above indicates, female residents outnumber males inhabitants, with the overall residential population of Amaya consisting of 301 females (51.46%) and 284 (48.54%) males. However, for certain age cohorts, notably the 0 - 4 year, 30 - 34 year and 60 - 64 year groups, males outnumber females by more than 15 % and, in the case of the 0 - 4 age group, by as much as 26% (five years ago this situation was practically reversed with females in the 0-4 year age group outnumbering males by more than 16%). The sharp decline in the number of teen-age boys between the ages of 14 and 19 years can be largely accounted for by the fact that many youths of this age group are sent away from the village to complete their secondary education, either to Bebar Barat to attend *Sekolah Menengah Pertama* or to Ambon for *Sekolah Menengah Atas*. Many of the boys sent away return to the village upon completion of their schooling and, for the most part, this would account for the increase in the number of men in the 20- 24 year age group.

An increase in the number of women aged between 25 and 30 years, on the other hand, can be attributed to an influx of women from either other villages or other islands into Amaya as wives for local men. From the table it can be seen that women enjoy greater longevity than men, with nearly 73% of



the village population over the age of 65 being women.

In Amaya, like many other societies in Indonesia and Melanesia, gender relations are constructed and expressed in terms of a range of economic, social and political symbols and practices. This is most explicit in the sexual division of labour, where men and women undertake different (and often complementary) economic activities and roles. The day-to-day management of 'household' gardens is generally considered to fall within the domain of women's activities. Men are responsible for the initial clearing, burning and fencing of garden land but do not plant, weed or harvest the gardens. This sexual division of labour is also evident in the production of sago. Sago palms (urpisso) are primarily processed by husband and wife teams, assisted by teen-age children. Among other things, the man is responsible for the construction of the sago extractor (uro), felling the sago palm (ratno urpisso), extracting the raw sago fibre (rotno) from the trunk of the palm and constructing the sago-leaf containers (kakana) for the finished product. The woman, on the other hand, is responsible for making the coconut fibre sieve (ninitja) of the sago extractor and processing the raw sago into sago flour (priho).

In addition to working in the household subsistence gardens, women also produce salt on small plots of coastal land. Not

only are women responsible for the production and preparation of food stuffs but they are also responsible for the care of children, domestic animals such as pigs and chickens and the day-to-day running of the household.

Whereas women's work is largely confined to land-based activities, men's work, on the other hand, is generally associated with the sea (alero). Although, women sometimes fish and look for shellfish (both edible and commercial species) when the tide is very low, their activities are always conducted from the beach or on top of the exposed reef. Men are largely responsible for supplying the household with sufficient fish to satisfy household requirements on a day-to-day basis. Towards the end of the dry season, however, large quantities of fish are caught and smoked in preparation for the coming wet season (December-May), when the seas are too rough for fishing. During the dry season, men dive for the valuable trocus shell which is found all along the coastal reef. Trocus shells (or *lola* as it is commonly known throughout Maluku) and other large nacreous shells (*batu laga*) are sold to local Chinese traders by the kilogram and are an important source of cash income for villagers. Other sources of cash income include copra, cloves and oranges. In 1985 the average annual household income was Rp.357,230. In 1986, the average annual household income had risen to Rp.417,323. This rise in household income can be largely

attributed to an increase in the prices paid for local produce, in particular, copra and lola.

Other activities which are generally regarded as 'men's work' includes pig hunting and the construction of dug-out canoes, spears, bows and arrows, fish traps, garden huts, and residential dwelling. The production of palm spirit (arko or *sopi* in Ambonese-Malay) from the *gemutu* palm (*Arenga saccharifera*) (Wallace 1872:230) is also seen to fall within the parameters of men's activities. Arko produced in Amaya is locally regarded as a far superior product to that produced in other villages on Damer or on other islands. Bottles (1800 ml) of arko are sold to locals for Rp.3000 or exchanged for rotan carrying baskets (lungcho), which are produced in the villages of Melu and Kuai. Apart from its economic importance, palm spirit is also used as payment in name-avoidance infringements and plays a significant role in marriage ceremonies, dispute resolution and local celebrations.

The social distinction between men and women is further reflected in the local political context. In Amaya, only men are entitled to sit on the local government council, inherit the title of local descent group leader (ryesro), be nominated as the leader of a residential aggregate (Ono), be elected as a Church elder or religious sector leader, invited

to attend local government meetings, be elected as village headman (*Kepala Desa*), officiate at local marriage ceremonies, adjudicate local grievances and decide suitable punishments for offenders. Whereas men are generally accorded positions of extended authority and control, women, on the other hand, are accorded minimal and limited opportunities to participate in local, political affairs.

This situation is, however, gradually being challenged by the operation of the recently established (1985) State-organised women's group *Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* ('Family Welfare and Development') or *PKK* as it is more commonly known. While the principles and objectives of *PKK* valorise the traditional roles of women as wives and mothers, the organisation does promote greater social awareness among women about their rights as Indonesian citizens and their integral role in national development. Increasingly women, especially younger women, are questioning so-called 'traditional' roles and values and are advocating greater participation in local politics and the day-to-day running of the village. I examine the conjunction of local and national constructions of women in greater detail in chapter seven of the thesis.

Broadly speaking, the different opinions and identities articulated by people in Amaya reflect two distinct

positions. On the one hand, there are those people, including many immigrants, youth and women, who want to change certain cultural practices which they regard as no longer relevant and incorporate certain features of the modern Indonesian nation which are. On the other hand, there are those residents, represented (but not solely) by many indigenous (high ranked) men, who want to maintain what they see as a 'traditional' lifestyle and yet, at the same time, participate as citizens of the Republic. The relationship between the two positions is not simply structured in terms of the oppositional dichotomy of tradition and modernity. Rather, it manifests itself as a dialectical tension between the articulation of local culture and the accommodation of alternative ideologies and ontologies. This is particularly explicit within the broad political context of the community. In subsequent chapters, I discuss why it is that local modes of social categorization persist in Amaya when other dimensions of local culture have changed dramatically.

The social construction of difference, expressed in terms of origins, gender and age not only points to the fact that cultural groups do not comprise unified wholes (cf. Rabinow 1978; Clifford 1988) but also reflects the multiple and relational dimensions of the constitution and articulation of identity. In this connection, the relatively recent introduction of new ideologies and ontologies in Amaya, in

the form of Christianity, Indonesian nationalism and capitalism, has not only led to an awareness that alternative modes of being do exist but also facilitated the expression of these different identities. It is difficult, therefore, to speak of identity as something that is either essential, singular, or isolated. It is not simply a case of being either Mayawo or Indonesian for example, but, as I have tried to illustrate above, the social construction of identity is contextual, multivocal and relational (cf. Clifford 1988). Thus, in certain contexts, the people of Amaya expressly identify with the Nation-State and emphasize their identity as Indonesians. On other occasions, they may choose to emphasize their identity as Mayawo and/or Christians and/or "*orang Dam*" depending on the political, cultural and social parameters delineated by the context. In the following chapters I take up the notion of identity again and discuss the construction and legitimation of certain identities *vis-a-vis* local representations of 'history'.

This somewhat brief outline of the social constitution of difference should give some indication of the complex configuration of relations obtaining between individuals and groups which constitute social life in Amaya. However, notwithstanding these differences, the people of Amaya also identify with and participate in a common ground of shared meanings, space and experiences. This is particularly evident

in relation to many State and Church-based activities, where the villagers come together to work on projects which ultimately benefit the entire community. The degree of involvement of local residents in community based activities is also reflected in the range of community facilities and publicly owned property in Amaya. Compared with the other villages on the island, the public facilities in Amaya are quite extensive.

#### Village Facilities and Physical Layout

Approaching Amaya from the sea only the thatched roofs of the 100 or so houses in the village and the white-washed spire of the Church are visible. Everything else is enveloped by a dense mantle of green consisting of coconut palms, secondary forest growth and domesticated crops.

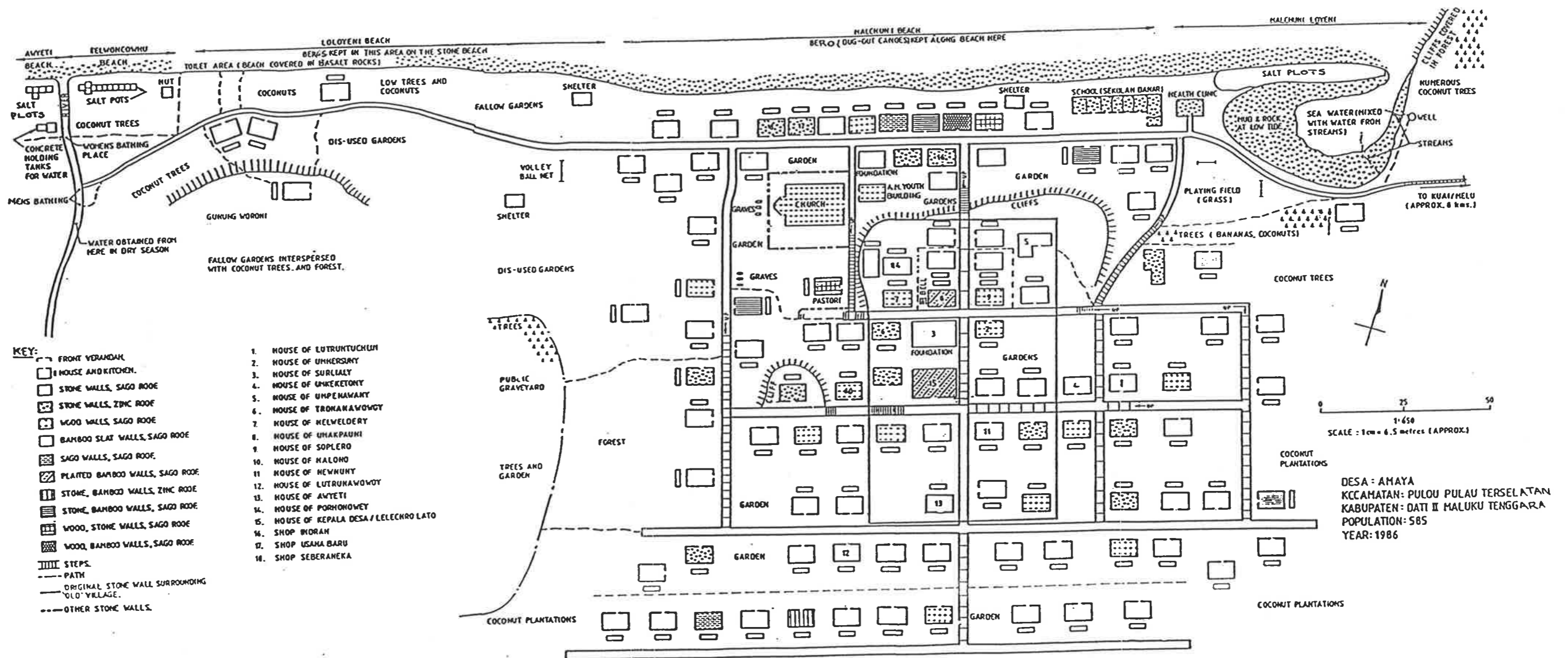
Entering Amaya on foot from the north-east, one descends into the village by a steep flight of irregular stone steps (see Map 1.4.). At the bottom of the steps a small fresh-water stream emerges from the rocks and trickles into a series of rock pools before entering a salt-water lagoon. At low tide the village women congregate at this rock pool, known as hochnoni or *air salobar* in Indonesian, to bathe and wash clothes. Several metres to the north of *air salobar*, on the

edge of the path leading to the men's bathing spot, is the community well. Constructed of concrete, the well is situated over an underground stream, and was built by the men of the village. Work on the well began in September 1986 and was completed by December 1986. Materials used in the construction of the well were purchased with a development subsidy received from the government in the 1985/86 financial year.

From the steps, the path leads to an open area of cleared ground, used in the dry season for soccer, volleyball and netball matches, and then branches. One fork leads inland to the main residential area of the village while the other follows the line of the coast. This path represents the main thoroughfare linking the two primary water sources, *air salobar* on the eastern edge of the village and the river (lelwo viethuni lelwo = river, viethuni = inhabitants of Awyeti) on the western outskirts of Amaya. Along this path, in a roughly east to west direction, are located most of the community facilities and publicly constructed and owned property.



Map 1.4. Map of the Physical Layout of Amaya.



Past the playing field on the seaward side, is a path leading to the beach and the village salt plots (rowa), which are situated on a narrow spit extending across the mouth of the lagoon. Here at Malkunloyeni ('beach spit') are located the main cluster of salt plots (61) while the remaining plots are located further west along the beach at Loloyeni ('tip' or 'apex') (11 plots), Awyeti (9 plots) and Amolwono (7 plots). The plots are constructed and worked by women with the majority of women only tending one plot each season. These plots contain hundreds of clam shells (rono), which, in the dry season (June-November), are filled daily with sea-water. The salt (dwiyo) that accumulates upon evaporation of the sea-water is collected by the women on a weekly basis. During the wet season, the clam shells are turned over and remain like this until the following dry season. Amaya is the only village on Damer still producing salt. The other villages now purchase salt from the Bugis and Makassan traders who visit the island during the dry season. Salt is an important product in the local economy and is exchanged for woven baskets and palm spirit made by people in the other villages on the island.

Located close to the salt plots is the building of the village 'health clinic'. Constructed by local people of concrete and roofed with zinc, the building has never been used for the purpose it was originally built for. This is

largely due to the unavailability of medicines and trained health workers. The building is now used as a private residence.

Next to the clinic building is the village 'primary school' (*sekolah dasar* or *SD*). Although the *sekolah dasar* is a Christian school affiliated with the Protestant Church of Maluku (*Gereja Protestan Maluku* or *GPM*), the salaries of teachers are provided by the government department of Education and Culture (*Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*). This department also met some of the costs associated with the construction of the school building. Other construction costs, labour and school furniture were provided by the people of Amaya. The school opened in 1974.

The school population in June 1986 consisted of 120 students, four teachers (1 woman from Amaya, another woman originally from Kisar but now married to a Mayawo man, one woman from Tual and a man from Kisar) and a headmaster (a local man). In 1986, the headmaster received a monthly salary of Rp.162,000 plus a monthly ration of 70kg. of rice and a uniform while the teachers were paid Rp.139,000 and 50kg. of rice each month and also received a uniform. By October of 1986, the number of teachers at the school had been reduced to just two, the headmaster and the wife of a Mayawo man. In January 1987, the number of children enrolled at the school dropped

to 104 while the number of teachers remained constant.

The school is divided into six classes. Six days a week (Monday - Saturday) classes 1,2 and 3 receive five 40 minute lessons while classes 4,5, and 6 receive seven 40 minute lessons. Lessons are conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. Each month the students are required to pay Rp.250 in tuition fees.

To further their children's education past the primary school level, parents are obliged to send their children to the 'junior high school' (*sekolah menengah pertama - SMP*) in Bebar Barat, some 9 km. away. While attending *SMP*, children from Amaya usually board with family friends and distant relations living in either Bebar Barat or the adjoining village of Kumur. Most of the children return home to Amaya for the weekend. During the three years spent attending *SMP*, most children acquire a conversational knowledge of the language spoken in these two villages.

Next to and opposite the school are located the respective houses of the headmaster and teachers, which were constructed by community work groups.

Some 100 metres past the school on the left is located *Toko Indah* ('Beautiful Shop'), one of three small retail shops.

The other two shops, *Toko Seberaneka* ('General Goods Shop') and *Toko Usaha Baru* ('New Enterprise Shop'), are situated 50 metres further west on the village sea-front. Owned by Chinese merchants in Kisar and managed by local residents, these shops were respectively established in 1970, 1973, and 1981.

During the 1986 shell gathering season (late July - late December), the three shops collectively purchased 3,539.5 kg. of *lola* @ Rp.4,750/kg (a total outlay of Rp.16,800,125), 165.1 kg. of large *batu laga* @ Rp.10,500/kg (totaling Rp.17,335,500) and 16.2 kg of small *batu laga* @ Rp.4500/kg (totaling Rp.72,900). For each kilogram of *lola* and *batu laga* acquired, the shops are required to pay Rp.50 of the purchase price to the local *LKMD* organisation (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa* - 'Village Maintenance Organisation').

Practically opposite *Toko Usaha Baru* and *Toko Seberaneka*, on the southern, landward side of the path, are the church, the Christian youth organization building and the manse.

The church forms the spatial and social focus of the village. Construction of the church began in 1918 and was officially opened by ministers from Ambon on 18 October 1932. Built by residents of Amaya, the church is constructed of locally hewn timber and sago-leaf thatch. In the 1950's, the residents of

Amaya handed over ownership of the church and the adjoining manse to the Protestant Church of Maluku (*Gereja Protestan Maluku - GPM*). Each Sunday, from 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m., religious service is held in the church and is attended by the entire community. In addition to this general service, there are a number of other activities associated with the Church. These include, Sunday School held every Sunday afternoon, catechism classes conducted twice a week, choir practice for the six choral groups held once a week, practice for the Church band held every Sunday morning, women's religious service (*Pelayan Wanita*) held every Sunday afternoon, a youth service held every Monday morning and religious service for the three village sectors held every Saturday afternoon (see chapter eight for more details on Church activities).

The path continues on past the church for several hundred metres until it reaches the river. In the 1984/85 financial year a large section of the path leading to the river was widened and paved with rocks. A cairn commemorating this work was erected at the river end of the path by the village men.

Most people in the village wash, bathe and obtain water from the river. The women's and men's bathing areas are some distance apart with the men bathing upstream of the women. This is because the women also wash clothes and dirty the

water with the soap they use. Drinking water is obtained further upstream past the men's bathing site. The water is mainly collected in large bamboo sections although plastic and metal buckets are becoming quite popular.

On the western bank of the river two large concrete water holding tanks have been constructed. In particularly arid dry seasons, when the river all but dries up, bamboo pipes are run from inland springs down to the concrete vats where the water is held. The materials used in the construction of the vats were purchased with a Rp.800,000 development subsidy received from the government in the 1978/79 and 1979/80 financial years. On this side of the river, the path branches into a number of smaller paths leading to individual subsistence gardens.

The path which leads inland to the main residential area transects the sports ground and ascends another flight of steps overhung with the boughs of breadfruit trees. Climbing the stairs, the original eastern entrance to the village (laton porho atimhini - Laton =village, porho =door, atimhini =eastern - 'eastern door of the village') can be seen. This entrance, a small gap between the village walls (lutruni), is still used by nearby residents as a short-cut to the beach. The other 'door' to the village is located on the north-west side of the original walled compound and is regarded as the

main entrance to the village (laton porhoyeni 'village door').

The present-day village of Amaya consists of the original walled village (lato mtuvcheni, 'village old'), situated high on the side of the mountain Anorto, and more recent houses erected outside of the walled area, which extend down to the sea. Amaya is one of the few villages on Damer to occupy the same site since its inception. Other villages such as Wulur, Kumur and Kehli have, over the years, succumbed to pressure from Dutch and Indonesian governments, and moved down from their original mountain sites to new locations along the coast.

Within the walled compound of the original village are located the majority of the ancestral houses (umtuvatvcha or 'house oldest') of the founding local descent-based groups (see Map 3). Generally, the oldest houses in the village are located within this walled section. As the village increased in size, houses were built, for security reasons, on land adjoining the eastern, western and southern walls of the original compound. Only in recent years have houses been constructed along the sea-front on the northern perimeter of the village. Many of the houses erected on the flat ground, north of the old village, have cement rendered stone walls and zinc roofs. Throughout Maluku concrete houses have become



the new economic and social status symbols, signifying greater monetary wealth and identification with the civilizing ethos of the modern Indonesian Nation-State. This is also the case in Amaya, where an increasing number of young married couples aspire to a 'modern' house and failing that, at least either concrete walls or a zinc roof for their new residence.

Also located within the confines of the original village is the house of the *Kepala Desa* ('village head') or *Bapak Rajah* ('king father') and the unfinished building of the government-organised women's association *PKK* (*Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*).

The *PKK* building has concrete walls, a zinc roof and will, when finished, have glass windows, a ceiling and a cement floor. Work on the building began at the start of 1986, although building materials were assembled in late 1985, and is funded by a government development subsidy. Lack of money has prevented the village work groups from finishing the building. It is envisaged that the building will house the *PKK* sewing machine, library and records and serve as the venue for *PKK* meetings and *PKK*-organised activities.

The house of the *Kepala Desa*' is situated in the middle of the village and reflects the central position of the *Kepala*

*Desa* in day-to-day social and political life. All the village records are kept in the *Kepala Desa*'s house as well as the community owned 15 hp. Yamaha outboard motor. All local government, village and, until the *PKK* building is completed, *PKK* meetings are convened at this house. Visitors to Amaya are required to visit this house and inform the *Kepala Desa* of their intentions. It is usually the case that visiting government officials lodge with the *Kepala Desa* during their stay in the village.

The older sections of the village are criss-crossed with a number of broad, stone-paved, thoroughfares (holoni) and stairways (ehnoni) which eventually lead to the perimeter of the village. Here the houses give way to coconut plantations and subsistence gardens. Situated on the western edge of the village, surrounded by used and disused gardens, at the base of the hill Woroni, is the village cemetery, *kerko*, a word derived from Dutch.

### Conclusion

One of the major concerns of this chapter has been to demonstrate, albeit in a preliminary manner, that the people of Amaya are socially, politically and economically connected to wider spheres of influence. I reject the notion that local

cultural groups in Maluku Tenggara are as remote and isolated as many anthropologists (Josselin de Jong 1937 & 1947; Barraud 1979 & 1985; Mackinnon 1983; Pauwels 1985; Van Dijk & De Jonge 1987) have depicted. Like other peoples in the region, Mayawo do not exclusively locate themselves within the parameters of their own culture. They, to quote James Clifford (1988), "invent *their* culture within and against the contexts of recent colonial history" (*ibid.*:12) and, I should add, 'within and against the contexts' of the Indonesian Nation-State and local constructions of the past.

In this regard, the people of Damer, and Mayawo themselves, have a long history of contact with other cultures, including European and various Indonesian cultures. This cultural nexus has, at times, engendered colonization, conversion and cultural degradation as well as subversion, resistance and improvisation. In the following chapter I present one perspective of this history.

## NOTES

1. According to the 1985 government Census figures (*Kantor Sensus dan Statistik Propinsi Maluku*), the total population of *Kecamatan Pulau-Pulau Terselatan* is 20,173 people. The *Kecamatan* consists of 17 islands, only 5 of which are inhabited. According to these figures, the total number of villages in the *Kecamatan* is 55.

2. 1985 census figures from *Kantor Sensus dan Statistik Propinsi Maluku* give the population of *Kabupaten* in the province as follows:

Maluku Tenggara - 256,216

Maluku Tengah - 496,815

Maluku Utara - 490,888

Halmahera Tengah - 109,389

Kodya Ambon - 255,250

Total provincial population in 1985 = 1,608,558.

3. The sailing schedule of the PERENTIS ship is, among other things, contingent upon the weather, public holidays, and the time taken to off-load and load produce and goods at the various ports where it stops. For people on the island of Damer, this means that the date of the arrival of the ship can fall three or four days either side of the proposed arrival time.

4. In this connection, the findings from a recent, preliminary lexico-statistical survey of the 'south-west islands' (including Damer) conducted by Mark Taber (Summer Institute of Linguistics) supports my conclusions concerning the linguistic status of Damer (personal communication).

5. According to government figures (loc. cit.), there are 3 hospitals, 1 *PUSKESMAS* (an acronym for *Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat* or 'Community health centre'), and 10 aid stations. There are no maternity centres or dispensaries in the *Kecamatan*. Nor, according to these figures, is there a resident doctor or dentist. This is quite alarming considering that between the years 1983 - 1985 1,583 cases of malaria, 376 of Tuberculosis, 232 of Bronchitis, 1,262 of influenza, 314 of diarrhea and 433 cases of abscesses were reported in the *Kecamatan* (loc. cit.). In the entire district there is only family planning clinic (*Klinik Keluarga Berencana*).

6. There are two *Sekolah Dasar Negeri* ('Government Primary School') located in the villages of Kuai and Ihli and 5 *Sekolah Dasar Kristen* ('Christian Primary School') situated in the villages of Amaya, Kumur, Bebar Timur, Kehli and Wulur.

According to government census figures for the years 1985/86 (op. cit.), there are 19 *sekolah dasar (SD) negeri* and 24 *sekolah dasar Swasta* in *Kecamatan P.P. Terselatan*. There is a total of three *sekolah menengah pertama (SMP)* in the *Kecamatan* and only one *sekolah menengah atas (SMA)* 'senior high school'. Of the 7,677 children in the *Kecamatan*, 3,824 attend *SD*, 667 attend *SMP* and 285 attend *SMA*.

7. According to government census figures for the year 1985 (loc.cit.), there are no Islamic places of worship in the *Kecamatan Pulau Pulau Terselatan*. All Churches in the *Kecamatan* are of Christian denomination, with a total of 58 Protestant churches and just one Catholic church.

8. According to local people, the name of the island *Pulau Terbang Utara*, which in Bahasa Indonesia can be translated as 'the northern flying island', has been incorrectly represented on maps. The term *Terbang* or 'flying' is said to be derived from the term *Terban*, which informants translated as 'separated' and which is locally considered to be more in keeping with the meaning of the name for the island in the vernacular.

9. The construction of space as meaningful place and as a marker of social identity has been discussed by a number of anthropologists writing on Indonesian societies (see Fox 1980a; Acciaoli 1983; Lutz 1983). In other contexts, Geertz (1979:237) discusses how identity is an "attribute" that is "borrowed" from a particular setting.

## CHAPTER TWO

### "PREVIOUSLY WE FOLLOWED OUR MOTHERS": A HISTORY OF CULTURAL CONTACT, COLONIALISM AND CHANGE ON THE ISLAND OF DAMER.

... our experience of history is indissociable  
from our discourse about it...  
Hayden White (1989:19).

#### Introduction

When Mayawo say, "previously we (exc.) followed our mothers" ("lawadorcha odomo mlerwanodi renamani" or in Ambonese-Malay, *Dulu kami ikut ibu*) they refer to a period in the recent past when recruitment to local descent-based groups known as Uma ('house') was largely determined on a matrilineal (hrowol deweyeni) basis. It is no longer the case today say people in Amaya that "we follow our mothers". Instead they observe, "now we follow our fathers" ("lawadira odomo mlerwanodi tatomani"). To "follow our fathers" refers to an explicit, although by no means exclusive, cultural emphasis on patrification as the means of ascribing individual identity and rights and responsibilities in Uma.

For many people in Amaya, the beginnings of this process of transformation are inextricably linked to events which took place in the early decades of the twentieth century. In

particular, they identify Dutch pacification of the region, the associated re-introduction of Christianity in the form of the Dutch Reformed Church (a highly conservative Protestant denomination), the role of the Ambonese in both these ventures and the influx of immigrants from nearby islands as all having a significant input into the process of local cultural change.

Mayawo perceptions of local social organisation, change and relations of causation stand in stark contrast to the theories expressed by a number of ethnographers writing of 'social structure' in the 'Southwestern Islands' of the Moluccas. The Dutch anthropologist J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong, for instance, observed that,

it is hardly to be doubted that the clan organisations of all of these islands have developed from 'double systems'... and this origin explains both the existence of patrilineal and matrilineal organisations in neighbouring and closely related communities and the vacillating between patrilineal and matrilineal clan-heredity (1937:12).

De Josselin de Jong's remarks closely parallel the conclusions of F.A.E. van Wouden, another prominent Dutch anthropologist who, two years earlier, stated that "the mingling of patrilineal and matrilineal elements...in this area is a natural result of a former double-unilateral system" (1968:157).

Initially, both van Wouden and de Josselin de Jong viewed

social and cultural diversity in 'eastern Indonesia' in terms of the differential "disintegration" (van Wouden 1968:85) of a proto-Indonesian form of social organisation based upon the existence and equivalence of "patrilineal and matrilineal principles of grouping" (Van Wouden 1968:92), that is, 'double descent'.

Some years later, however, both authors modified their positions to the extent that de Josselin de Jong suggested that "the whimsical distribution of matriliney and patriliney in one culture area and among neighbouring tribes" (1977:309) could be explained by the fact that "harmonic asymmetric systems have become disharmonic under the influence of neighbouring tribes with bilineal... systems" (*ibid.*:273)<sup>1</sup>.

The influence of neighbouring cultural groups also forms the basis of a more recent study of cultural diversity, change and 'double descent' in the 'Southwestern Islands'. Following the hypothesis of Muller-Wismar (1913) and also it would seem, that of Levi-Strauss (1969)<sup>2</sup>, van Dijk and de Jonge (1987) postulate that the original system of social organisation which prevailed in the Babar archipelago was based upon patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence. Van Dijk and de Jonge conclude that the existence of 'double descent' (or a 'disharmonic regime') on Dawera and Dawelor and a 'harmonic regime' (patrilineal descent and patrilocal



residence) on the island of Marsela is directly attributable to the differential historical influence of the matrilineal system of the people of the nearby island of Luang.

Elsewhere in 'eastern Indonesia', most notably on Timor, researchers have identified shifts from patrilineality to matrilineality and from virilocal to uxori-local residence with the associated 'payment' or non-'payment' of 'bridewealth' (Berthe 1961; Cunningham 1967:5; Schulte-Nordholt 1971:116-118; Friedberg 1977:141; Hicks 1978, 1981; Mackinnon 1983).

In this chapter I suggest that in order to understand "the mingling of patrilineal and matrilineal elements" in Amaya today, it is necessary to place the discussion within and against a much wider socio-historical framework than that afforded by studies which exclusively focus upon singular localised factors such as the influence of neighbouring island groups (de Josselin de Jong 1977; van Dijk & de Jonge 1987), the prestation of marriage-linked valuables (Barnes, 1980), and archaic arrangements based on 'double descent' (de Josselin de Jong 1937; van Wouden 1968). In addition to these factors, I argue that it is also necessary to take into consideration the cultural influences engendered by regional interaction, European colonialism, Christianity and Indonesian nationalism which researchers elsewhere in Maluku

(see Kennedy 1955; Cooley 1962; Bartels 1977) and Indonesia (Schrieke 1955; Maretin 1961; Schulte-Nordholt 1971; Fox 1977 & 1980a; Hicks 1978; Francillon 1980; Kahn 1980; Kato 1982; Volkman 1985) have broadly identified as possible sources of change in local social organisation<sup>3</sup>.

In this chapter, local people's perceptions of the events and agents associated with changes to the reckoning of group affiliation constitute both the foci and starting point for a much wider, historical examination of cultural contact, colonialism and Christianity on Damer. As Levi-Strauss remarks, "history is never only history *of*; it is always history *for*" (1966:257). In other words, constructions (or re-constructions) of the past need to be situated within a specific context in order for them to be rendered both intelligible and meaningful.

The following account (the first of two 'histories' presented in this thesis), therefore, is specifically constructed to (1) demonstrate that the historical past of the people of Amaya cannot be viewed in isolation but must be placed within the context of regional, national and international relations of colonialism and proselytization; (2) give some idea of the degree and nature of historical contact people on Damer have had with other cultures and (3) identify a number of historical themes and conjunctions which, as I argue in

subsequent chapters, have significantly informed contemporary Mayawo culture.

The product which results from this nexus is simultaneously a history of micro and macro proportions which, in part, delineates local histories of contact, marginalisation and encapsulation as well as defining some of the elements and interstices which make up the broader historical matrix. As such, it is not intended to represent a total history of contact or of colonialism in this region. Nor does it attempt to provide a definitive account of change in Amaya. Instead, it attempts to create a number of, often discontinuous, historical windows, through which certain significant events and relations can be viewed and interpreted.

### Making History

In order to illustrate events prior to the early 1900's, I rely mainly upon archival records and historical documents - the so-called durable "traces" (Ricoeur 1988:116) or marks of historical time. This material largely consists of Dutch and English colonial reports, missionary accounts and travelers' descriptions (as far as I am aware, there are no Makassan or Buginese records of contact within the Maluku Tenggara region). Compared to the vast sources of information on other

areas and peoples in Maluku, the historical material on Damer is limited in the extreme. To some extent, this situation reflects the geographic remoteness of Damer and its marginal economic and political significance since the dissolution of the Dutch spice monopoly in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Highly selective and Euro-centric, these colonial accounts construct a world in which both colonizer and colonized are depicted in 'fictional' terms<sup>4</sup>. For the colonizers, these representations project the structures of domination and the exercise of power in terms of the so-called 'rationalism' of economics and the ethics of Christian morality. The colonized, on the other hand, are largely condemned to occupy, to extend upon Taussig's (1987a:4) words, 'the dead spaces' created through the colonizer's images of the other as primitive, barbaric and godless. However, as Taussig (1987a:134) points out, these accounts also act as mirrors, reflecting back onto the colonizers the "barbarity of their own social relations" (*ibid.*:134).

Many of the 'historical' details presented in this chapter are common knowledge amongst people in Amaya. In constructing this 'history' I have attempted to give an account which in some way encompasses the 'official' version of 'Indonesian' history available to people in Amaya through the medium of

school text books, developmental brochures and tapes, radio broadcasts and State rituals (newspapers and television are unavailable on Damer) and yet, at the same time, transcends this version to reveal some of the contradictions incorporated within this narrative. In this connection, I stress that it is the thematic content of this history, rather than the historical minutiae, which is significant for this analysis.

By way of contrast, I also include local people's recollections and accounts of past contact with foreigners generally and Europeans in particular. For many people in Amaya, these accounts represent a social world which existed before they were born. It is for them the world of their 'predecessors' (see Schutz 1962:15; Geertz 1973:366; Ricoeur 1988:114). They come to know of this world through the reminiscences of others. Thus, these experiences, which for some are located in the past beyond their lifetime are, for others, part of their biography. As accounts of the recent past, these memories constitute an important link between the present and the recent past. For Ricoeur (1988) the history of the recent past is "a slippery genre" (*ibid.*:114) insofar as it folds together the first-hand experiences of those defined as both 'consociates and 'contemporaries' (cf. Schutz 1967: 139-214) and those narratives received from a person's parents, grandparents, etc., in short, their 'predecessors'

(cf. Schutz 1967). Thus, the boundary between the historical past and individual memory is, to use Ricoeur's term, "porous" (*ibid.*:114) and should be viewed in terms of a experiential horizon which recedes or advances according to the individual.

Local people's recollections and subsequent objectifications of the past effectively organise the data presented in this chapter into three historical epochs, which roughly correspond with the period of European colonialism dating from the early 17th century up until the Japanese invasion of Maluku in the mid-twentieth century, the years 1942 - 1945 during the Second World War and the post-Independence period from the 1950's to the present day. Given this ordering of past events, relations and identities, it is not surprising, therefore, that a chronological logic runs through the entire account and serves, in part, to structure the relations between the various historical points of reference.

To understand Mayawo recollections of the past and their statements regarding perceived transformations in local cultural practices it is necessary to place local constructions of the past within a more inclusive historical framework - a framework which is largely delineated and dominated by the actions and values of a number of European cultures.

In the following account, I have chosen to fold selected fragments of the 'histories' of colonialism, Christianity and Indonesian Nationalism into a single narrative structure which, in many ways, reflects their historical articulation within the context of local cultures. Within the narrative frame of these histories are also contained numerous other histories and, thus, by presenting these accounts I also reveal concurrent histories of contact, exploitation, domination, resistance and innovation. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of these 'histories' is not simply the outcome of an arbitrary ordering of data. I suggest that these narratives acquire and realise their force in relation to each other. These 'histories' do not exist as independently defined 'provinces of meaning' (Schutz 1962:231) but rather they constitute a dialogical and dialectical constellation of knowledge and experience. Moreover, in certain contexts, these diverse 'histories' become dissimulated within the logic of cultural practices and are worked into a master narrative which encapsulates and unifies difference and dissidence - a process which, according to Ricoeur (1965), puts an end to the "vertigo of variation" (*ibid.*:xiv) through the "imperialism of unity" (*ibid.*:xiv).

History then, viewed as a social product, constitutes a subjective and often politicised medium of representation which incorporates fiction or the imaginary as a constitutive

element. The juxtaposition of 'Western' and local histories in the following account serves to illustrate this point by depicting the mythical quality of colonial history and the historical nature of local constructions of the past.

### The Period of European Colonialism

It is difficult to state specifically the year in which people on Damer first experienced contact with Europeans and even more difficult, given the paucity of written documents, to discuss the history of cultural contact prior to the arrival of the Europeans. The Dutch scholar and one time Resident of Amboina, J.G.F. Riedel (1886) reports that the Portuguese were the first Europeans to visit Damer and trade spices with the local inhabitants, although he gives no date<sup>5</sup>.

The Portuguese, in search of the fabled spice islands, reached Maluku<sup>6</sup> in 1512 (Ricklefs 1981)<sup>7</sup>. Initially, they confined their activities to the islands of Ternate and Tidore in the north but after hostilities broke out between them and the local inhabitants, the Portuguese adopted Ambon as their main trading centre. Soon after the Portuguese had established their position in Maluku the process of Christian conversion began.



Saint Francis Xavier, a co-founder of the Jesuit Order, worked among the peoples of Ambon, Ternate and Morotai between 1546 and 1547. By the 1560's there were as many as 10,000 Catholics in the area and by the 1590's this number had grown to 50,000 (see Ricklefs 1981:23). Another example of the exportation of Portuguese culture was the incorporation of numerous Portuguese words into local languages (de Josselin de Jong 1937; Abdurrachman 1973; Chlenov 1980; Ricklefs 1981; Collins 1983 & 1984).

The Dutch, in a bid to control the world-wide production and trade of spices, arrived in Maluku in March 1599. In the four years that followed, competition among rival Dutch traders forced the price of spices upwards and profits were severely affected. In order to regulate the market the competing companies merged in 1602 to form the United East India Company, the VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie) (Ricklefs 1981).

The activities of the Dutch brought them into direct conflict with the Portuguese, who were already experiencing resistance from the local people. In 1600 the Dutch formed an alliance with the people of Hitu (northern Ambon) to combat the Portuguese, and in return the Dutch acquired the sole rights to purchase the spices produced in Hitu. As a result of this alliance, the Portuguese surrendered their fort in Ambon and

retreated to the north. The VOC occupied the fort and renamed it Fort Victoria and proceeded to expel the Catholic missionaries and convert the local population to Calvinism. Ambon remained the centre of VOC activities until 1619, when the VOC headquarters were moved to Batavia (present day Jakarta).

The English also posed a threat to the VOC spice monopoly in Maluku. The English explorer Sir Francis Drake, on his voyage around the world between 1577-80, had stopped at Ternate in the north and sailed back to England with a cargo of cloves. According to Michael Turner (pers. comm. 1988), Drake also stopped at the island of Damer, where he was forced to seek shelter after experiencing gale force winds. Drake is purported to have stopped in Solat Bay on the eastern side of the island and then to have sailed north-west to the village of Bebar Barat where he stayed for two days<sup>8</sup>.

Drake's visit to the Spice Islands excited interest in England and in 1604 the English East India Company reached the shores of Ternate, Ambon and Banda. The English encountered hostility from the VOC but because of diplomatic interventions in Europe they were permitted to establish a trading post in Ambon. Relations between the English and the VOC remained strained and came to a bloody climax in 1623, when the VOC executed 12 English traders for conspiring to

undermine the economic activities of the VOC. The English withdrew their forces from the area and did not challenge the hegemony of the Dutch again until the late eighteenth century (Ricklefs 1981).

With the departure of the English and the Portuguese, Dutch activities in Maluku were directed towards establishing their monopoly of the spice trade. In the course of implementing their strategies of control, the Dutch encountered continual resistance from local populations, either in the form of open conflict or defiance of VOC regulations through the smuggling of spices. In order to put down local resistance, the Dutch emasculated the power of local rulers through the use of conditional treaties of allegiance or as was more often the case, they resorted to physical violence - the most elementary form of domination (Bourdieu 1977:190). On the island of Banda, for example, in an attempt to control smuggling, the Dutch supposedly massacred the entire population in 1621 and replaced them with Dutch colonists using slave labour. For the populations of many local domains, contact with the colonial forces consisted of a protracted struggle for independence, often contracted in the form of guerrilla warfare. For the colonizers, the objectives of economic and social hegemony could only be achieved through the continued use of military force.



According to Riedel (1886), the Dutch arrived on Damer in 1645 at a time when the military foundations of their commercial hegemony had already been well established<sup>9</sup>. In the following year, the island was occupied by a VOC merchant named P. de Liefde accompanied by 75 soldiers, who built a small fortress (Fort Wilhelmus), a church and a school in the village of Kumur on the north-east coast of Damer. The majority of schools established in Maluku during the period of the VOC functioned largely as catechism schools and were thus linked to the activities of the Dutch Reformed Church and the dissemination of Protestantism throughout the region (cf. Fox 1977:109).

Relations with the local population turned hostile when, in 1648, the Dutch destroyed more than 3000 nutmeg trees. According to Riedel (1886:461), the Portuguese were responsible for inciting the islanders to attack the occupying Dutch troops. The Dutch successfully quelled this uprising and continued to rule the island. In 1662 the Dutch again destroyed thousands of nutmeg trees and fearing reprisals from the local population, they moved their garrison to the nearby island of Babar. Upon their evacuation from the island, the English, seeking to establish a foothold in the Moluccas, moved in and took possession of the former Dutch fortress Fort Wilhelmus (Klerck 1975:278). They showered gifts on the local village *Rajahs* and promised

protection against the Dutch. However, the Dutch realizing their mistake, quickly returned to Damer and soon took control of the island once again (Riedel 1886). The removal of the English forces from Damer marked the end of the English presence in the Moluccas (Klerck 1975:278). The exclusive occupation of the Moluccas by the Dutch was further consolidated by the peace treaty of Breda, enacted in 1667 between the Dutch, English and French governments, which stipulated that each of the parties concerned would retain control over the colonies in their possession on May 20 1667 (Klerck 1975:47).

From information contained in the works of Coolhas (1960) and MacKnight (1976) it is apparent that the Dutch not only had the Portuguese and the English to contend with on the island of Damer but also the Bugis and Makassan traders. MacKnight (1976:12) reports the setting up of a Dutch trade goods store on Damer in the mid 1600's to compete with Makassan collecting voyages in the area. However, the Dutch were unable to centralize and control this trade and the store failed. It is highly probable, given their sailing routes, destinations (see Berndt 1954 & MacKnight 1976) and the type of produce they collected (tortoise-shell, trepang, trocus shells, etc.) that the Makassans also called in at the island of Damer.

From other historical sources, particularly Kolff (1840), it appears that throughout the region local people were actively engaged in trade. Kolff reports that the people of Kisar regularly visited the island of Wetar to "barter cloth, iron and gold for sandalwood, rice and Indian corn" (*ibid.*:42) as did the people of Leti. Elsewhere (*ibid.*:35) he mentions the regional trade in slaves, wax and sandalwood, the voyages of Javanese traders to the area to purchase stock (p.64) and the arrival of ships and *perahus* from Aru, Ambon and Banda at the island of Romang to purchase wax and honey (p.86).

In other parts of Maluku, local resistance was also frustrating the operations of the VOC. It became clear to the Dutch that the VOC hegemony could not be maintained solely by peace treaties, fortifications and naval supremacy. It was necessary to implement a more aggressive policy of control and domination. The first phase of this more aggressive period began in Maluku around the 1630's (Klerck 1975:240-299).

On Damer, Dutch militarism was stepped up in 1662, when the Dutch increased fortifications on the eastern side of the island and a large number of VOC personnel were transferred from Banda to the island. The continued hostility of the islanders to the European presence angered the Dutch Governor in Banda and determined to crush local resistance, he sent

two ships (the Loenen and the De Crab) with 80 soldiers to Damer. Upon their arrival, they were immediately attacked and were forced to retire to the safety of the fort and await reinforcements. With their numbers increased by an additional 30 men, the Dutch attacked and totally overpowered the local opposition. Devastated by their losses, the islanders signed a treaty with their pacifiers, offering themselves as faithful subjects of both the Company and the Dutch 'Reformed Church' (*Hervormde Kerk*) (Riedel 1886). Under these circumstances, there was no alternative other than to accept the imposed order.

Although, as Fox (1977:104) points out, there was not an explicit 'Company' policy concerning the conversion of the indigenous population to Christianity, it was ultimately in the interests of the VOC to promote Protestantism among local people. Local Christian populations strongly identified with the 'Company' and indigenous forces derived from these groups were often used by the Dutch to quell local insurrections.

Conversion to Christianity at this time was for indigenous people a means of gaining higher social status *vis-a-vis* other individuals and groups (cf. Fox 1977:104). Local headmen and villagers who became Christians were more likely to receive VOC favour than those who continued to practice their local religion. In this connection, indigenous

Christians were not necessarily subject to local adat law and in cases of dispute, were often privileged over non-Christians (Fox 1977:104). In the case of local traditional hostilities between feuding states or groups, Christian rulers were often able to manipulate their relations with the Dutch to their strategic benefit. At the same time, the Dutch themselves often took advantage of these local rivalries in order to pacify previously resistant regional groups. Local rulers, referred to as *orang kaya*, were officially recognized by the VOC with the presentation of either gold or silver staffs of office and gifts of cloth, knives and alcohol. As Christians, villagers experienced a certain freedom from the ever present threat of Dutch and Timorese slavers, whose trade in human lives constituted a major economic activity within the region.

With the successful quashing of local resistance throughout the Maluku region the Dutch effectively secured their monopoly of the spice trade.

On Damer relations between the Dutch and the local population remained without reported incident until 1710, when 5 villages attacked the occupying forces and killed seven soldiers. Outraged by their treachery, the Dutch sent 150 VOC soldiers to the island to deal with the offenders. With the assistance of the other villages, the Dutch defeated



and destroyed the 5 villages concerned. In order to quell further disturbances of this kind, the Captain of this military contingent recommended that efforts to convert the local population to Christianity be stepped up. The Dutch returned to Batavia with 134 prisoners as slaves (Riedel 1886).

It is worth noting here that the situation on Damer contrasted sharply with the experiences of those who lived on Moluccan islands devoid of the valuable spices, nutmeg and cloves (Damer together with the islands of Banda, Romang, Teun, Nila and Serua were the only islands in the southern Moluccas where nutmeg, both long and round, occurred naturally). The inhabitants of Luang and Babar (low-lying non-volcanic islands to the SSE and SE of Damer, respectively), for example, were largely spared Dutch violence and prolonged military occupation because their lands were of no economic significance to the VOC. This may explain why, although given a similar history of Christian conversion, the peoples on these islands were able to maintain, to a certain extent, their religious beliefs and forms of social organization (cf. Van Dijk & De Jonge 1987).

In 1714, a Dutch postholder or administrative officer, was installed on Damer. With the complete pacification of the island it was no longer necessary to maintain a strong

military presence and so by 1756 the garrison consisted of only one corporal and 3 soldiers. In the years that followed, the postholder was removed and local affairs were dealt with by visiting Dutch administrators.

Towards the end of the 18th century the VOC clove monopoly in Maluku began to collapse. Two French expeditions to Maluku between 1769 and 1772 captured cloves from Ambon and introduced the spice to the island of Mauritius. Cloves were no longer of major economic importance. Tea, coffee and pepper from Java supplanted nutmeg and cloves as the main export crops (Boxer 1965).

On 1 January 1800 the VOC charter expired and the Company ceased operations. Its territorial possessions became the property of the Netherlands government, though not for very long. The Napoleonic wars in Europe had a considerable influence on the state of affairs in the 'East Indies'. When the Ruler of the Netherlands fled from the French armies to England he instructed Dutch colonial officers to surrender all territories in the East Indies to the British. The British ruled in Ambon and the surrounding areas from 1796 - 1803 and from 1810 - 1817, when East Indies territories were returned to Dutch authority.

In 1825, Damer was visited by First Lieutenant Kolff in the

Dutch Brigantine of war Dourga. The ship anchored on the eastern side of the island and Kolff and his crew disembarked at the village of Selat (or Kehli as it is now known). In this connection, it is worth noting that on a large rock face situated at the entrance to the bay where Kolff anchored is carved the outline of a brig, a two-masted, square rigged vessel. Locals refer to this place as *batu kapal* ('ship stone').

Kolff writes that he and his men were received with "strung bows and leveled spears" (*ibid.*:94), however, upon learning that they were Dutch and "officers of the government" (*loc.cit*), the "natives" laid down their weapons. At Kehli, Kolff and his men saw the remains of the block house and other buildings erected by the VOC in 1662, which amounted to heaps of rubble. Kolff notes that they met with a few Christians but the majority of people were "either heathens or individuals once Christians" (1840:93), evidence of which was provided by the existence of a substantial church in the village of Kumur. According to Kolff, the local inhabitants had not seen a European for thirty years as the island was rarely visited by trading vessels and had not been visited by a clergyman since 1789. Kolff observes that,

owing to a want of regular government and of instruction for their youth, the people had returned to their original state of ignorance and barbarism, but nevertheless it could be perceived that they esteemed highly every relic

of the Dutch rule which they had in their possession (Kolff 1840:94).

On the northern coast of the island at the village of Kaayn (probably Kumur) Kolff discovered the remains of the fort Wilhelmus or Nassau which had been erected by the VOC in 1646 at a time when, according to Kolff (*ibid.*:96), "the island produced a considerable quantity of spices". When he questioned the local people about the fort they replied that previously there had been a large garrison of VOC soldiers stationed at Kumur and that the island was once regularly visited by VOC ships trading for spices. Above the door of the vacant VOC residence in Kumur, Kolff found a decayed plaque with the inscription, 'erected in 1773 with the help of God' and in front of the gate of the building, a stone on which the arms of the Dutch East India Company were engraved.

Kolff reports that a number of the islands inhabitants had emigrated to other islands to become "bondsmen or slaves" (*ibid.*:96). He also mentions that local people on Damer constructed *perahus* which they traded with people from the neighbouring islands.

Apart from the village of Kumur, all the other villages on the island were, in Kolff's opinion, "small and of little importance" (*ibid.*:98). The population of the northwestern parts of the islands, Kolff reports, was small and only two or three huts could be seen.

As an official representative of the Netherlands government, Kolff adjudicated local grievances and nominated the 'Upper Orang Kaya' (local headman acting on behalf of the Dutch) and other "chiefs". He also distributed presents and tokens of distinction and provided the inhabitants with a Dutch flag. At a meeting in Kumur (which Kolff believed to be the "capital of the island") of all the village headmen on Damer, Kolff was presented with two old batons which had been presented to deceased chiefs by the VOC. These Kolff returned to their successors. He also gave the new 'Upper Orang Kaya' a new baton (*rotan mas*) bearing the arms of the present king.

[It is interesting to note that the present day *Kepala Desa* ('village headman') of Amaya has in his possession a gold knob, bearing a coat of arms, from a baton which was given to his ancestor, the former village headman *Tiawo Surlialy*, over 150 years ago. It is quite possible that *Tiawo* was the 'Upper Orang Kaya' who received the *rotan mas* from Kolff.]

Kolff remarks that "on this island [Damer] we had a still stronger proof than on the others, of the great attachment the natives shew to our customs and mode of dress" (*ibid.*:103). In this connection, he observes that at the general meeting some of the inhabitants of the island were dressed in "old felt hats with broad brims" (*ibid.*:103) while others "wore extremely old-fashioned coats" (*ibid.*:104) which

had been given to them by the Dutch.

Kolff reports that the local people requested that he leave behind two soldiers as representatives of the government. Kolff was unable to do this although he did leave behind Paulus, an Ambonese school teacher, whose primary function was to attend to the religious needs of the population. During the short time Kolff was on the island, the clergyman accompanying Kolff on his voyage baptized more than 250 islanders.

Kolff concludes his account of his visit to Damer by stating that the arrival of the Dourga at Damer "has been of the greatest service to the good-natured, but uncivilized and half-savage islanders" (*ibid.*:101) who had "solemnly and thankfully promised that they would hereafter live in unity and ... follow the advice of the government..." (*loc.cit.*).

Riedel reports that between the years 1825 and 1841 European clergy visited the population of Damer on several occasions (Riedel 1886:462). After 1841, however, administrative disinterest in Damer led to a reduced Dutch presence and local interest in Christianity waned accordingly. In 1882 a postholder was reinstalled on the island to administer the island of Damer as well as the nearby islands of Teun, Nila and Serua. Riedel (1886) observes, however, that the

postholder had no real power or control over the local population.

In 1882, J.G.F. Riedel, the then Resident of Amboina, visited the island of Damer. He reports that many of the villages are "dirty and neglected", especially those on the western side of the island (*ibid.*:463). The largest villages on the island at this time were the villages of Bebar, Wulur and Amaya. According to Riedel, the inhabitants of Amaya, Melu and Kuai originated from the island of Romang, the people of Bebar and Ihli from the island of Leti whereas the population of Kumur first came from Lakor. Only the inhabitants of Wulur and Kehli were descended from autochthonous ancestors who, states Riedel, came out of the ground.

The people of Damer, reports Riedel, are "not much different from the people of Leti" (*loc.cit.*). The men wear a "shame belt and a hair braid" (*loc.cit.*) while the women wear a sarong woven from palm leaves which stretches from the hips to the knees. Children begin to wear the 'shame belt' or sarong from the onset of puberty or menses. Many of the women, Riedel comments, are covered by a fungal skin infection which, because it causes the skin to turn white, is regarded more as an embellishment than an affliction.

Riedel observes that the population of Damer consists of

orlete, ordinary people and slaves who originally came from nearby islands and concludes that there are two primary social categories on the island - "the free and the unfree" (*ibid.*:463). Each village on the island is nominally ruled by an orlete or *orang kaya* ('village chief') who, according to Riedel, are answerable to the heads of the various 'family clans' (loc. cit.) and a 'kapitan' ('war leader'). In addition to these two figures, there exists the ritual leaders the 'rehare' who presided over activities concerning the ancestral beings, the upulero.

In each village he visited Riedel observed the existence of a central ancestral statue and a sacrificial stone. In front of the individual village houses a tall pole was erected to which a sacrificial platform was attached. Offerings were made to a number of different 'spirits' (nitu) on such occasions as death, sickness and pregnancy.

Riedel notes that on his visit to Damer that, with the exception of one woman who claimed to be a Christian, the entire population of Damer subscribed to indigenous religious cults. He also mentions that since the destruction of local nutmeg trees, trade on Damer consisted of "exchanging black and white linen, pottery, brassware, ironware, tortoise-shell, peas, corn and sago" (*ibid.*:466).



In November 1891, Damer was again visited by Europeans, this time by the English surveying ship 'Penguin'. The surgeon on board the ship, P.W. Bassett-Smith, reported that the island was passed en route from Darwin to Hong Kong and that an occasional trading steamer called at the island which was nominally ruled by the Dutch (Bassett-Smith 1893). The ship was met by the Dutch administrative officer (the postholder), a man from Makassar, carrying a gold-headed cane bearing the Netherlands arms. The presence of this 'Makassan' on Damer indicates that Damer was visited by traders and fishermen from south Sulawesi. During his short visit to Damer, Bassett-Smith recorded a number of words in the vernacular from a local inhabitant who spoke Malay. He noted that the villages he and other members of the ship visited were encircled by a 'dry-stone wall' and access was by means of a wooden ladder. Over the doorways of individual houses were carved "grotesque figures of men and animals" (1893:137) and in each village stood a "carved post and figure seven feet high" (loc.cit.). Bassett-Smith observed that the men on Damer wore carved and ornamented bamboo combs in the hair and silver, bone, tortoiseshell and wood pendants in their ears. The British surgeon and his men bartered "clothes, needles, pins, knives, matches, etc." (*ibid.*:137) for local foodstuffs as the local people, according to Bassett-Smith, "did not value money much" (loc.cit.).

Bassett-Smith concluded that the "mode of life and customs" (*ibid.*:140) of the people on Damer "are decidedly Papuan" (*loc.cit.*) but also bear a strong resemblance to the people of the Tanimbar Islands.

Accounts such as Kolff's, Riedel's and Bassett-Smith's constitute part of a wider colonial discourse through which colonizer and colonized were constructed, reified and mythologised. The reports and writings of officers of the colonial government (and missionaries), however, were not the only narratives which produced and reinforced this discourse. Popular writings such as works of fiction and travelogues, together with scientifically oriented works all contributed to this discursive process. In all of these narratives, local people are consistently depicted as 'savage' and 'uncivilized natives' whose attempts to mould themselves in the image of the Dutch constituted both pathos and parody<sup>10</sup>. Local beliefs and practices were regarded by both Europeans and Ambonese Christians as 'primitive', measured as they were against the yardstick of Dutch Reformed Protestantism, Dutch cultural mores, and the civilizing objectives of the Dutch colonial government. Portrayals of this kind effectively served to infantilise indigenous people and morally empower the colonialists to take responsibility for their welfare. Thus, relations between the Dutch and local people were constructed in an idiom of 'good faith' (Bourdieu 1977) and control was

established through the dichotomous imagery of good and evil; civilization and savagery; truth and ignorance. In this way, relations of domination and economic dependency were transformed into relations of paternalism and proselytisation. This conflation of "violence and ideology; power and knowledge; force and discourse" (Taussig 1987a:29) was further objectified by the Dutch through the institutionalised system of the '*orang kaya*' and other such offices and titles.

Judging from Basset-Smith's account of the local inhabitants and their "customs", it seems that the rituals and costumes of Christianity had been well and truly abandoned by the late nineteenth century. However, the situation changed dramatically in the early 1900's when Dutch and Ambonese missionaries once again began to visit the island. Within a relatively short period of time, they had reinstated Christianity, installed local men as lay preachers and initiated the construction of a number of village churches. In Amaya, the universal adoption of Christianity is locally thought to have started in or around the period 1905-1915. Construction work on the village church is known to have commenced in 1918. By the time the church was completed in 1932, Mayawo had embraced Christianity and the transition from an expressly matrilineal form of social organisation to a system largely based upon patrification was well under

way.

Local reconstructions of social organisation prior to the re-introduction of Christianity at the beginning of this century stress that women formerly held and controlled rights of usufruct in descent group lands. These rights were passed on to their daughters. Women were always buried in the floors of their mother's houses. Sons remained in their mother's house until marriage, when they invariably took up uxorial residence (klewonodi deweyeni) on a permanent basis. Consistent with this pattern of residence, married men were buried in the houses of their wives. In cases of divorce, separation or the death of a wife, the husband returned to his mother's house and was subsequently buried therein. Thus, the localised residential group depicted in these accounts consisted of a set of matrilineally-related women, their husbands and unmarried or divorced male offspring, who occupied a single communal house<sup>11</sup>.

According to local people, authority within the 'lineage' was exercised by the ryesro, the male 'lineage' heads. The position of ryesro was usually inherited by the oldest brother or sister's son of the previous incumbent. Ryesro acted as spokesmen and mediators in inter-lineage affairs and, together with the lelechro lato ('village leader' or *Bapak Rajah*), collectively constituted the eight member

village decision making body known as ryesro viti mahnoni po viya ('lineage head - seven - village leader - thus - eight'). From this account it appears that men largely held the key political positions within each local descent group. Prior to the relatively recent arrival and settlement of immigrants from other villages and islands, marriages in Amaya were largely contracted within the village. According to local people, at some point in the distant past, people from the nearby villages of Kuai and Melu married into Amaya and formed separate 'houses'. These incidents, however, are still regarded as operating in accordance with the principle of village endogamy as the inhabitants of Kuai and Melu are said to be originally descended from two Mayawo brothers. Affinal relations with other villages on Damer were even more restricted and, in the case of Wulur, were terminated as a result of a serious breach of conduct over two hundred and fifty years ago.

In many respects, Riedel's observations of local social organisation are consistent with the accounts given by local people detailing the matrilineal emphasis in the reckoning of local 'house' affiliation. Among other things, Riedel reported that if a man wanted to marry a woman he would first have sexual relations with her in the house of her mother. The woman's kin would then seek a settlement payment from members of the suitor's group. Upon 'payment' of a number of

objects, which usually included 2 golden discs, 2 pairs of earrings and 4 pieces of patola cloth, the man remained in the woman's house. According to Riedel, the newly married man subsequently "lost all of his rights in his parental house since he had been incorporated into his wife's family clan" (*ibid.*:464). Riedel also reports that the first-born child of such a liason was given to the woman's parents and the original 'dowry' was then returned to the man's kin. Subsequent children remained in the house of the mother. On the occasion of the husband's death, Riedel states that "the man's inheritance is taken by his wife" (*ibid.*:466). Upon the death of a wife, Riedel reports that "the inheritance is divided among the children" (*loc.cit.*). If there are no children then, according to Riedel, the woman's "relatives" receive the inheritance.

Many people in Amaya regard the re-introduction of Christianity, and Dutch Reformed Protestantism in particular, at this time as being instrumental in the transformation of local religious and social practices<sup>12</sup>.

Based predominantly on readings from the Old Testament, the teachings of the Dutch Reformed Church placed considerable emphasis upon the role and significance of patriarchy within the cosmological order (see Tawney 1926:132; Schama 1987: 93-127). From the abstract, yet undeniably masculine God of

Genesis who created man in His own image and subsequently fashioned woman out of man, through the descendants of Adam to the patriarchal figures of Abraham and the later male prophets, the Old Testament theology of the Dutch Reformed Church has consistently presented a view of the universe in which masculinity is the dominant principle of identification, affiliation, control and inheritance (see Marty 1972:244).

The dissemination of Protestantism throughout Maluku was initially carried out by Dutch missionaries. Subsequently, the Dutch recruited Ambonese and other local Christians to spread the Gospel. As Chauvel (1985) points out, the 'Christian Ambonese community' was a readily available source of labour for the Dutch colonialists. Indeed, Cooley (1967) and Kennedy (1955) have observed that large numbers of Ambonese Christians entered the colonial civil and military services while many others migrated to the more remote areas of the province to work as missionaries and pastors. On a visit to Damer in 1825, Kolff (1840) - a Dutch naval officer - installed an Ambonese man named Paulus as a school teacher and religious instructor (Kolff 1840).

The influence of Ambonese individuals and Ambonese culture generally in the region has also been noted by F.D. Holleman in his study of *adat* law on the nearby islands of Teun, Nila

and Serua between 1923 and 1936. An advisor to the Dutch colonial government, Holleman reports that the people of these islands base their lives on "an Ambonese model" (1943:383). According to Holleman, the languages spoken on these islands are gradually being "pushed aside" by Ambonese-Malay and "the style of their houses, their matrimonial customs, the burial of the dead" (loc. cit.), and their judicial system reflect the Ambonese influence. He also remarks that missionary work, Protestantism and education has been extremely influential in the transformation of local religious beliefs and social practices. Holleman reports that it was the Ambonese and not Europeans who were most active in this regard and who lived amongst the people for many years at a time. Holleman concludes that this orientation towards Ambon and Ambonese culture is the result of historical, economic, religious and social factors which have led to the widespread belief that the Ambonese islands constitute "a metropolis of culture and authority" (*ibid.*:382). As such, Holleman observes, "everything that is Ambonese is... regarded as superior and therefore fascinates and induces imitation" (*ibid.*:383).

The situation Holleman describes for the neighbouring islands of Teun, Nila and Serua also pertains to the island of Damer. Mayawo themselves state that early twentieth century Dutch missionaries to Amaya were accompanied by Ambonese



Christians, who were largely responsible for the religious conversion of the local population. The official opening of the church in Amaya on 18 October 1932 was attended by both Ambonese and Dutch pastors (J.Lisapaly and P.M.Vellikoop, respectively).

Apart from their direct role in religious proselytisation, Ambonese Christians on Damer also disseminated their own cultural expressions and predominantly patriarchal forms of social organisation (which had also undergone quite dramatic transformations during the colonial encounter) among the people they administered. To the Christian Ambonese and the Dutch, the local practice of matrilineality, predicated as it was upon belief in ancestral spirits and inheritance through the female line, explicitly contradicted the teachings of Dutch Reformed Protestantism (see Marty 1972:244) and the social organisation of Dutch colonial culture. In this connection, the historian Simon Schama (1987), points to the common and widespread use of patriarchal imagery and idioms in the construction of Dutch culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, Dutch patriotism during this period, according to Schama, drew its inspiration from, among other things, Old Testament scripture and the patriarchal figures around which the events depicted in this text coalesced. Indeed, the Dutch Republic, in terms of its historical, moral, cultural and spatial geography, was

popularly imagined and depicted as 'The Fatherland' (Schama 1987:53-54). Schama also refers to the literary and social construction of the 'home' in which the father was depicted as 'lord' (1987:388) or 'king' (*ibid.*:422) and points to the "formal subjugation" (*ibid.*:404) of women with respect to their rights in marriage and their occupation of public office. In the moral economy of the Dutch Republic, women, as Schama observes, were often portrayed in 'Calvinist homilies' and 'misogynist satires' (1987:467) as the source of disorder, licentiousness and mischief (cf. Bamberger 1974). Given the patriarchal bent of the Dutch culture, it is not surprising, therefore, that many indigenous cultural forms and institutions were regarded as a 'primitive' and 'ignorant' practices and, like so many other beliefs and practices, were actively discredited by Dutch and Ambonese missionaries and administrators alike.

In this connection, an elderly Mayawo woman recalls an incident in which the resident Dutch pastor in the village in the late 1920's refused to christen her two daughters with the names of the two female founding ancestors of the woman's descent-based group. These names were regarded as 'pagan' names and it was only after the woman had selected appropriate Christian names that her children were baptized (see also chapter eight).

Religious proselytisation was a fundamental aspect of the process of Dutch pacification of the 'Southwest Islands'. According to Lebar (1972), this region was "long noted for the fierce qualities of its native inhabitants, with frequent reports of hostility to outsiders and a propensity for headhunting and...cannibalism" (1972:110). Early colonial accounts on the region indicate that there was strong local resistance to the hegemonic policies of the VOC resulting in open war-fare and numerous deaths (see Riedel 1886).

In the case of Damer, Kolff (1840) describes being met by men armed with bow and spears, while de Josselin de Jong (1947:15) records a long-standing tradition of hostilities between the Erai people of Wetar and the inhabitants of Damer. Narratives independently recorded by de Josselin de Jong on Wetar and myself on Damer, suggest that 'headhunting' raids between the two islands were quite frequent and spanned a period of several hundred years. Twelve stone cairns erected some distance south of Amaya were, until pacification, the place where Wetarese heads, each one taken by a different generation of Mayawo warriors, were displayed. A thirteenth cairn was erected to hold the head of a Dutch missionary killed by Mayawo earlier this century.

Such activities were regarded by Dutch colonial administrators and missionaries as 'barbaric' and obviously

hindered effective Dutch control of the region. Although de Josselin de Jong concluded that Dutch intervention would not prevent such activities, the eventual pacification of the region in the 1940's ultimately brought about the cessation of so-called 'headhunting' raids between regional groups.

The second wave of religious proselytisation which swept across Damer in the 1900's and the associated emphasis on regional pacification coincides with a significant change in Dutch colonial policy at the beginning of the twentieth century. During this period the commercial exploitation of local populations ceased to be invoked as the official justification for colonial rule. Instead, the welfare of the populace was put forward as the primary motive for continued Dutch control. Called the 'ethical policy' (*Ethische politiek*), this new approach to colonialism, guided by the principle of self-government, was purportedly based on humanitarian principles designed to improve the impoverished conditions of the subject masses (Furnivall 1944:229; Klerck 1975:533). The implementation of the 'ethical policy' created a resurgence in missionary activity, especially in the outer islands of Indonesia (Klerck 1975; Ricklefs 1981; Webb 1986).

During this period of 'ethical' colonialism, a considerable emphasis was placed upon educating the local population. Education was viewed both as part of the civilizing process

and as a means of ensuring the continued loyalty and subjugation of the masses. Throughout the archipelago, the Dutch government opened village schools (*desascholen*) which, in addition to basic catechism lessons, provided a three year course of basic literacy, numeracy and practical skills (Furnivall 1944:366-367; Klerck 1975:415). In the so-called 'Outer provinces' (Furnivall 1944:381), Christian missions played an important role in the implementation of the education programme devised by the colonial government. Indeed, as Webb points out, "the missions, in accepting responsibility for education, became willing instruments of this policy [ethical policy]" (1986:24). By the 1930's the missions had established an extensive network of schools throughout 'Eastern Indonesia' (Webb 1986:24).

The physical remoteness of Damer did not prevent the Dutch from establishing schools there and many of the older residents of Amaya recall attending the government village school, where lessons were conducted in Malay. They also recollect that a large residence was erected by the villagers at the edge of the village to house visiting Dutch officials.

During the period between the commencement of construction of the Church in 1918 and the Japanese occupation of Maluku in early 1942, Amaya was visited by a handful of Dutch administrators and Ambonese priests. During this time, the

Dutch succeeded in pacifying the area and prohibited the ritual taking of human heads associated with local warfare practices. Dutch intervention in inter-village relations resulted in Amaya signing a peace treaty with the villages of Arwala and Erai on the nearby island of Wetar, their traditional enemies for the past 12 generations. To seal the peace accord, the parties involved drank palm spirit and exchanged ritual objects of value. The people of Amaya received a glass bracelet and a cloth from the Wetarese and gave in return a spear and a flat golden disc (karcho). The pacification of the area effectively led to a greater degree of contact between the peoples of the numerous islands in Maluku Tenggara, in terms of trade and marital alliances. The Dutch also intervened in local disputes over land ownership. During the 1920's, the boundary between Amaya and the nearby combined village of Kuai Melu was a point of contention between the inhabitants of these two villages and, according to residents of Amaya, the two villages nearly went to war about this matter. Previously the boundary between the two villages had been located at the cape of Lulsunloyeni. However, the people of Kuai Melu were dissatisfied with the location of the boundary. They wanted to move the boundary further west to a place called Ahuhuchro in order to alleviate the extant problem of insufficient garden land experienced by the people in this village. The mother of the present *Kepala Desa*, a woman in her eighties, recalls that

she was a teen-ager when the Dutch, as a compromise to the claims made by both sides, decided to relocate the boundary mid-way between Lulsunloyeni and Ahuhuchro at a point called Akwetuti. A stone cairn was erected to mark the position of the new boundary. In effect, the cairn also serves as a physical reminder of the control the Dutch colonial government exercised in the daily life of village people.

In the early years of the twentieth century, people in Amaya started to establish copra plantations and once again began to plant and harvest nutmeg and cloves trees for commercial gain. The destruction of the island's nutmeg and clove tree stocks by the Dutch in the seventeenth century meant that the bulk of the new trees planted were obtained from the nearby islands of Teun, Nila and Serua.

In the years prior to the outbreak of World War Two, people in Amaya recall that a small number of indigenous religious icons and ancestral statues were still kept in the ceilings of the ancestral 'houses' and local weaving techniques were still practiced. Pressure from the Protestant Church (see chapter eight for more details) and the circumstances of Japanese occupation, however, resulted in the destruction of both these facets of local culture.

## The Second World War: A Period of Transition

The Japanese attack on Ambon on 31 January 1942 and their subsequent victory in the days that followed, heralded the end of nearly three hundred and fifty years of Dutch rule in Maluku. The Maluku region, together with the rest of eastern Indonesia and Kalimantan, was controlled by the Japanese Navy. Ambon became the administrative centre for Japanese military and naval activities and was the focus of much of the fighting.

According to local people, the Japanese forces first arrived at Amaya in 1943. From 1943 to 1945, when Allied personnel arrived on Damer, Japanese naval patrol boats regularly visited Amaya to obtain food and water. The Japanese arrested the two Chinese inhabitants on Damer and deported them to East Timor to work as laborers. Stories of Japanese atrocities on the nearby islands of Kisar, Leti, Moa and Timor produced in local people a fear of the Japanese (cf. Taussig 1987a). Consequently, when the Japanese ships arrived at Amaya, many of the village women and children fled into the forest leaving their male relatives to protect their belongings in the village. Some villagers made small subsistence gardens in the forest and attempted to eke out an existence unbeknown to the Japanese. During this time, a number of children were born in the jungle.



Between patrols of the local area, the Japanese stayed, for short periods of time, in the village of Amaya and at the beach Awnyevnyo on the southern coast of the island. People in Amaya recall that two Japanese soldiers arrived on Damer by local *perahu* ('sail boat'). One of these soldiers, a man named Takara, taught the children of the village a number of songs in Japanese, Malay and English. Many of these songs are still remembered by villagers who were children during the war years<sup>13</sup>.

Today, when asked about their experiences and perceptions of the Japanese, most people who were alive during this period admit that their relations with the Japanese were ambivalent. On the one hand, people recall with some fondness the Japanese soldier Takara and yet they also remember the stories of terror relating to Japanese cruelty on nearby islands.

Towards the end of the Japanese occupation of Maluku, Allied forces took control of many of the southwestern islands. Local people recall that in the years 1945 and 1946 Damer was occupied by the Allies (Australians, Indonesians and Dutch) who regularly engaged Japanese naval ships in the area. The Allied commander of the islands of Damer, Teun, Nila and Serua, a Dutchman, resided in the village of Bebar Barat on the northern coast of Damer. In Amaya, six Allied personnel,

one Dutch, one Indonesia and four Australians, two of whom were Red Cross nurses, were stationed in two of the village houses. People in Amaya recollect that the Australians generally participated in village life while the various Dutch soldiers temporarily stationed in Amaya, remained aloof and were billeted in houses erected at the edge of the village. According to local people, an Australian Airforce Catalina arrive each day carrying troops and supplies and landed on the sea just in front of the village<sup>14</sup>. Several village men were commissioned as observers and were responsible for informing the Allies of Japanese movements in the area. One man from the village is said to have been a 'spy' for the Allies and to have taken a number of Dutch soldiers to Java on a local sailing boat (*perahu*), for which he received 400 Dutch Rupiah.

The Australians also gave the villagers guns and knives as well as clothes and food. During this period it was not possible for women in Amaya to weave cloth and subsistence gardens in the jungle did not adequately provide all household requirements.

Australian Army personnel are credited by local people with introducing a new type of pawpaw, known in Amaya as papaya Australia, as well as tobacco plants. A number of people in Amaya still have in their possession items, such as currency,

given to them by the Australians.

At the end of the war, the Australians, according to local reports, arrested a villager on charges of spying for the Japanese. This person was taken to Darwin aboard a Catalina and remained there for approximately five years. According to his relatives, the alleged spy was not imprisoned in Australia but spent the five years working and living in Darwin.

In Ambon and the other major cities in eastern Indonesia, Australian troops took the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945 and continued to occupy these cities until mid-October 1945. In Amaya, the end of the war was announced by a rain of leaflets which were dropped from a plane as it flew over the island<sup>15</sup>. Local people recall that two types of pamphlets were dropped - one which had the flags of the Allied nations, America, England, Australia, China and the Netherlands, depicted on it and the other, without flags, written in Malay. During the war only one bomb was dropped on Damer when an American plane attempted to hit two Japanese patrol boats anchored off the beach of Awnyevnyo on the southern coast of the island. The bomb, however, failed to detonate. After the war, Butungese traders disarmed the bomb and took the contents and left the shell. Local people transported the shell to Amaya and hung it in the centre of the village to

function as a rather elongated bell.

Upon Japan's unconditional surrender, the Dutch (with the assistance of their British allies) set about restoring their colonial regime and by January 1946 they had relieved the Australians in eastern Indonesia. The majority of Indonesians, however, had no wish to return to the days of Dutch colonial rule and saw their future as an independent nation. Throughout the archipelago, the Dutch met with considerable resistance from the revolutionary forces of the pro-republican movement. When it became clear that the Dutch would not be able to regain total control over Indonesia, they opted for the creation of a federal united states of Indonesia. The state of East Indonesia (*Negara Indonesia Timur*) was among the first to be declared under this plan.

More than three centuries of Dutch colonial rule and Christianity in this area had resulted in a strong identification by the local people with their colonizers. Many Christian Ambonese had previously served as soldiers, clerks and minor professionals for the colonial government<sup>16</sup>. In Maluku, many of these Ambonese Christians openly supported the Dutch and actively fought against the pro-republican armies. They viewed the new Republic as a state dominated by Muslims, Javanese and communists (Ricklefs, 1981). This is not to say that all Ambonese-Christians were Dutch loyalists.

As van Kaam (1977) points out, a significant number of Ambonese people also expressed anti-colonial sentiments.

After a violent and protracted struggle, the Dutch finally capitulated and on 27 November 1949 they formally transferred sovereignty over the archipelago (excluding Irian Jaya) to the Republic of Indonesia.

In Maluku, however, Ambonese Christians resisted the demise of Dutch federalism. On April 25 1950 in the city of Ambon, the former Minister of Justice in the East Indonesia government proclaimed the Republic of South Maluku (*Republik Maluku Selatan* or RMS). The name Republic of South Maluku is something of a misnomer and refers to the general administrative area *Daerah Maluku Selatan* ('South Moluccan region'), which in 1950 was divided into *Maluku Tengah* ('Central Moluccas') and *Maluku Tenggara* ('Southeast Moluccas'). It was largely people from the Central Maluku area, particularly on the island of Ambon, who were behind the formation of the new state and not the people of southeast Maluku (cf. Chauvel 1978). Only one resident of Amaya, who at the time of the uprising was employed as a policeman in Ambon, is said to have actively supported the RMS movement. This person eventually died in exile in Seram.

After heavy fighting between Ambonese and Republican troops,

the new state was finally crushed in November 1950. Many supporters of the movement fled into the interior of Seram and lived in exile. Other Ambonese soldiers who refused to be demobilized in Indonesia were sent with their families to the Netherlands<sup>17</sup>.

Of this revolutionary period, people in Amaya only recall that they were visited by three Dutch ships, the 'Kalwedo', the 'Gema' and the 'Eridanus'. The 'Gema' and 'Eridanus' carried doctors who vaccinated the people of Amaya against smallpox and handed out quinine tablets. Local knowledge of the RMS movement and the events which surrounded Indonesian Independence was largely gained some years after the event.

### The Post-Colonial Period

With the end of Dutch colonialism in 1949 and the beginning of an Independent Republic of Indonesia, many local cultures began a new struggle for survival and recognition. A struggle that was no longer directed at the agents of imperialism but against the very nation many of these people had fought so hard to secure.

The early years of Indonesian independence witnessed a number of revolts against the Jakarta-centered government. Regional

groups in Aceh, South Sulawesi, Western Java and the 'Southern' Moluccas came into open conflict with government forces in their demands for cultural autonomy, greater political power and control and recognised provincial status. The often turbulent events of the early post-independence period point to the divided nature of the new Republic at this time.

However, under the charismatic leadership of President Sukarno and the moral guidance of *Pancasila*, the five principles which constitute the ideological basis of State practices, the process of national unification gathered momentum. In the period 1950 - 1965, the symbols and rituals of Indonesian nationalism took shape and emerged as the dominant idiom in Indonesian social and political life. State-coined slogans, such as *satu nusa, satu bangsa, satu bahasa* ('one country, one nation, one language') and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ('unity in diversity'), became powerful expressions of Indonesian identity. The aspirations and ideology of the new Nation-State were inscribed upon the body of the President who, in turn, was popularly regarded as the 'father' (*Bapak*) of the nation and 'elder brother' (*Abang* or *Bung*) to its citizens.

The notion of a unified Indonesian Nation is ideologically grounded in the shared historical experiences of the citizens

in their bitter struggle for Independence from Dutch colonialism and Japanese occupation. The national celebration each year on the 17th August of the declaration of Independence in 1945 is testimony to this viewpoint. Many of the themes of Indonesian nationalism developed during the post-independence period trade upon the fiction that the peoples of Indonesia were united in their efforts to overthrow their oppressors. However, as the above account indicates, this was not the case. A large number of people fought on the side of the Dutch against the pro-republic revolutionary forces. Even those who opposed the Dutch did not form a unified force but were divided into a number of factions which either supported the new regime or were bent on overthrowing it (cf. Ricklefs 1981). However, in the engulfing and on-going process of national integration, these disparate social histories have been flattened out or distorted to form a unified narrative of political consensus and historical experience (see chapter six for a more detailed discussion of the Indonesian Nation-State).

In the years that followed Independence, people in Amaya recall that they were visited by a number of Indonesian government ships collecting copra, Buginese and Makassan traders and fisherman from nearby islands. In the mid 1960's, a Belgian man visited the village for the purposes of purchasing artifacts such as ancestral statues. By this time,



however, no such objects existed.

Probably the most significant series of events in the post-war period for the people of Amaya was the influx of numerous individuals from nearby islands. This movement of people was, in part, facilitated by existing trade links between groups, earlier Dutch pacification of the region, the introduction of a common religion, the establishment of regional education, improvements in communications and transportation resulting from the WWII period of occupation, and the growth of regional administrative and commerce centres. Thus, at different times after World War II, the village of Amaya experienced influxes of people from several nearby islands (including Kisar, Leti, Lakor, Nila and Timor). The majority of the people who came to Amaya were men who married local women. Others came to Amaya as school teachers and religious instructors accompanied by their spouse and family. As I have briefly mentioned in chapter one, the arrival of these 'immigrants' resulted in the creation of new social, economic and political categories of identity and their diverse cultural values further contributed to the transformation of local culture (see also chapter three for a discussion of this subject).

The emergence of Suharto's 'New Order' government from the bloody coup attempt of 1965 signaled a new era in Indonesian

history. The new political climate which resulted from the events of 1965 led to an increasing systematization and rationalisation of State policies throughout the archipelago. The widespread introduction of literacy programmes in the national language of *Bahasa Indonesia*, the growth of school and universities, the implementation of uniform administrative structures and the promotion of village-based development projects collectively served to further incorporate local groups located on the political, economic and geographic margins of the Indonesian State within its nationalistic framework. In the case of Amaya, the ethos of Indonesian nationalism and the practices of the State, together with contemporary capitalism and the associated commodification of social relations further served to inform the process of cultural change (for a more detailed discussion of these influences see chapter 6).

In line with the radical disruptions and transformations which punctuated this period on a national scale, the 60's and early 70's were also a time of change and innovation in Amaya. This period witnessed the establishment of a village cooperative (1960) and its eventual disbandment (1967), due to allegations of corruption on the part of senior cooperative members; the erection of the religious youth group *Angkatan Muda* building and the commencement of its operations (1963); the installation of the present day *Bapak*

*Rajah/Kepala Desa* (1966), who replaced the previous incumbent as a result of that person no longer being regarded by the people of Amaya as fit (both physically and morally) for the position; the establishment of Chinese-owned and run stores on Damer and an increase in trade relations with both the local Chinese population on Damer and the nearby island of Kisar and Buginese and Butungese sailing ships from southern Sulawesi; the subsequent opening of two of the three village shops (1970 and 1973, the third store commenced trading in 1981); the first receipt of community development monies from the district (*Kecamatan*) government in Kisar (1973/74 financial year) and the building and opening of the local primary school (*Sekolah dasar*) (1974).

Regionally, the late 1960's and 1970's were a time of increased government and foreign commercial activities. Throughout the Maluku area, local people were forced to compete with Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese trawlers and tuna-fishing boats. One such vessel, manned by a Taiwanese crew stopped at Amaya in 1977 for water and medical assistance for a sick crewman. The local *Kepala Desa* vividly recalls the difficulties he experienced trying to communicate with the crew of the boat. Also in 1977, a number of Australian yachts stopped at the village on the return leg of the Darwin to Ambon yacht race, an annual affair since the outbreak of hostilities in east Timor in 1975 prevented the

staging of the Darwin to Dili race.

Around 1976, the Indonesian government PELNI ships began to visit Damer, stopping at Bebar on the north coast and Wulur on the eastern half of the island. At this time, the PELNI ships also visited the nearby islands of Teun, Nila and Serua. This service greatly facilitated communication between people on Damer and their relatives residing in the provincial capital of Ambon as well as enabling local people greater access to regional services such as the *Kabupaten* hospital and commercial goods such as clothes and household items. It also allowed officials of the various government agencies to visit the island on a more regular basis than previously was the case.

Other examples of government and commercial interest and intervention in island affairs include a visit (1982) by a team of Australian and Indonesian Army personnel, members of a joint venture to map Indonesia. The mapping party arrived in Amaya by helicopter and spent nearly a month in the village. During this time, they erected two geodetic cairns on territory owned by the people of Amaya; one in the village itself and the other on the island of Nus Leur, a small coral atoll approximately 15 kilometres west of Damer. The people in Amaya remember this visit for a number of reasons. For many residents, it was the first time they had seen a

helicopter. The children in Amaya recall that they were often given fruit and sweets by the visitors. The adults remember that the visitors left behind 7 drums of aviation fuel which the people of Amaya used as fuel in their lamps.

Recent mineral exploration in Maluku Tenggara heralds a new era of exploitation and change. Already, commercially viable deposits of gold are being exploited by multi-national corporations on the remote and undeveloped island of Wetar, only 140 km. to the south-west of Damer. The news of possible employment opportunities associated with this venture has excited the interest of a large proportion of young educated men in Amaya and elsewhere in the region. In December 1986, a team of Indonesian and Australian geologists arrived in Amaya, once again by helicopter, to survey the western half of the island for trace deposits of gold. The geologists had already sampled rivers on the eastern side of the island, as well as sites on the nearby islands of Teun, Nila, Serua and Romang. This visit created enormous interest not only among people in Amaya but in each village on the island. Some people were concerned that the discovery of gold on the island would result in an invasion by speculators and drilling teams while others were enthusiastic about the financial opportunities associated with such a venture. To date, no economically viable deposits of alluvial gold have been recorded on Damer.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have suggested that cultural groups do not exist as independent entities but are formed and informed by their historical conjunction with other ideologies and other ontologies. It is important to acknowledge that this nexus does not constitute a passive encounter between cultures but is often mediated by violence, oppression and exploitation. In this connection, the history of contact presented here can be viewed as a narrative of progressive encapsulation and marginalisation, initially characterised by the exploitative relations associated with the production of nutmeg and other valued commodities by the Portuguese, Dutch and English. In the contemporary context, however, the production of a cash economy on Damer is regulated and defined by local and regional Chinese and Chinese-speaking Indonesian entrepreneurs and the geographic position of the island on the margins of the Indonesian archipelago reflects the political and social status of the people of Damer within the framework of the Nation-State.

As a narrative, the above account can be seen to coalesce around a number of 'key symbols' (Ortner 1973) and conceptual themes. Thus, apart from being a selective narrative of contact and colonialism, the preceding history can also be viewed as an 'origin' story. The notion of origin, in this

context, refers primarily to the formation of the Republic of Indonesia, the emergence of the Nation-State and the concomitant incorporation of local cultures within this structure. In other respects, the term also refers to the introduction of Christianity, in the form of Protestantism, to the people of Damer.

In other respects, the themes of diversity and unity, hierarchy and resistance serve to structure the relations between the various historical episodes as well as relations between the colonizers and the colonized. In the contemporary context, these themes have been further objectified through the construction of a collective Indonesian past and disseminated through the idiom of State-created discourses.

For the people of Amaya, the preceding narrative of contact and colonialism is dominated by the themes of change and disjuncture. Colonization by the Portuguese, Dutch, and English together with the developments of the twentieth century resulted in substantial cultural transformations. In their lifetimes, many of the people in Amaya have experienced and borne witness to the eclipse of indigenous religious practices and the concomitant conversion to Christianity; changes in the organisation of descent-based groups; the cessation of warfare and the ritual taking of human heads largely resulting from Dutch pacification of the region; the

abandonment of local pottery and weaving production in favour of store bought goods; the decline in the use of ritual language to the point where only a handful of people can recall fragments of this language; an increase in the use of the national lingua franca *Bahasa Indonesia*; the introduction of schools and local government development programmes; the influx of western commodities in the form of radios, outboard motors, generators, and videos, to name but a few; a loss of autonomy and greater control by the State through the introduction of such things as contraception, travel passes and taxes; increasing pressure from outsiders to commercially exploit natural resources; the emergence of differential monetary wealth within the village; the movement of villagers away from Amaya to the 'bright lights' and job prospects offered by the provincial capital and, probably the most significant and most far-reaching of all these events, the overthrow of Dutch colonialism and the declaration of an independent Indonesian nation.

Despite the magnitude of these changes, the social history I have outlined so far should not be viewed exclusively in terms of loss, destruction and encapsulation but, as Clifford (1988) points out, should be also seen as "a series of cultural and political transactions (*ibid.*:342). Events in this instance, even the most brutal episodes, as Rosaldo (1980: 17-18) observes, are always interpreted and



articulated in terms of the logic of local cultural practices and forms (see also Sahlins 1985 and Clifford 1988).

In accounting for Mayawo cultural transformations it is important to realise that no single factor can be taken in isolation or viewed in terms of relative degrees of influence. Neither should the process of cultural change be seen entirely as the product of external influences for, as Marshall Sahlins (1985) has argued, the reproduction of culture entails its transformation. It is important to acknowledge (*qua* Sahlins 1985), therefore, that within the context of any cultural group quite novel and unique practices and values are constructed and expressed - practices and beliefs which are themselves grounded in a distinct 'genealogy' (cf. Foucault 1972 & 1978) of knowledge and logic.

Thus, notwithstanding the obvious influence of these factors, it is necessary to regard the historical events and relations discussed in this chapter as constituting only part of the process of social change. Thus, in Amaya, hundreds of years of European colonial rule, the re-introduction of Christianity, the presence of Ambonese missionaries, Dutch pacification, the influx of immigrants and more recent developments have all contributed, although not exclusively, to the transformation of local cultural perceptions.

In subsequent chapters I suggest that introduced ideologies and ontologies such as Christianity and Indonesian nationalism represent, at one level, officially (government and Church) sanctioned and, thus, socially legitimate alternatives to existing cultural beliefs. At another level, the elements of a wider colonial and national discourse extend the social horizons of local people to encompass a diverse spectrum of possibilities. In other words, the historical conjunction of European colonialism, Christianity, Indonesian nationalism and modern capitalism with the logic of Mayawo cultural practices has served, as Edward Bruner puts it, "...to open up new spaces..." (1986:152) within which local notions of social relatedness, affiliation and identity are expressed.

This idea is pursued in the following chapter where, among other things, I examine the contemporary constitution of social groups known locally as 'houses'.

## NOTES

1. Many year later, after undertaking research in the district of Kodi, west Sumba, van Wouden also substantially revised his original argument that "asymmetric connubium appears to be based essentially on a double-unilateral system in which both patrilineal and matrilineal clans operate side by side in the organisation of the tribe" (1968:163) by suggesting that 'double descent' was not a necessary prerequisite of asymmetric exchange and that in particular contexts differential emphasis is placed upon the organisational significance of male and female lines (van Wouden 1977).

2. In *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* Levi-Strauss suggests that 'harmonic' systems are "more archaic" (1969:219) than 'disharmonic' ones and that it might be the case that 'disharmonic regimes' have 'evolved' from the more ancient 'harmonic' systems.

3. While J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong (1977) contends that "harmonic asymmetric systems have become disharmonic under the influence of neighbouring tribes with bilineal... systems" (*ibid.*:273), Kennedy (1955) and Cooley (1962), on the other hand, suggest that the shift from matriliney to patriliney on the island of Ambon and in the surrounding areas is possibly due to the influences of Islam and Christianity. Elsewhere, Lattas (n.d.) argues that the movement among the bush Kaliali of West New Britain from a "traditional matrilineal totemic system" (*ibid.*:3) towards a patrilineal system is directly linked to the processes of colonialism.

4. As Michael de Certeau observes, "fiction is a perilous word" (1983:126) and is most often "deported to the land of the unreal" (*ibid.*:127). Following Geertz's (1973:15) discussion of the concept and, more recently, de Certeau's (1983) and Taussig's (1987a) use of the term, the word 'fiction' is employed here to denote the inventive, imaginative and tropic dimensions of reality, which mediate social action and shape various modes of social representation.

5. I am deeply indebted to Pastor C.J. Bohm of the *Pastoran Katolik*, Saumlaki for his assistance with the translation of Riedel's material relating to the 'southwestern islands'.

6. Ricklefs notes that the name Maluku was derived from the Arab traders term for the region, *Jazirat al-Muluk*, 'the land of many kings' (1981:22). Frans Watuseke (1977) on the other hand, argues that the term *Maluku* derives from the Galelause or Tobelorese word *Maloko*, meaning 'mountain' and suggests that, given the necessary vowel changes over time, the appellation *Maluku* may have been synonymous with the meaning 'mountain-island'.

7. Dieter Bartels, in his doctoral thesis 'Guarding the Invisible Mountain...' (1977), states that the 'spice islands' were 'discovered' in 1511 by the Portuguese D'Abreu (*ibid.*:9). Other sources (see Boxer 1969; Ricklefs 1981; Meilink-Roelofs 1962; de Graaf 1977) indicate, contra Bartels, that for most of the year 1511, the Portuguese were pre-occupied in their struggle to take control over Malacca and did not chance upon the Moluccas until 1512.

8. As part of a project aimed at producing a pictorial biography of Drake, Turner visited Damer in July-August 1988 to photograph the areas where Drake is purported to have visited. On the basis of evidence supplied by Turner, I question whether Drake actually visited the island. No mention is made in Drake's account of the voyage of the name of the island or of any of the villages situated on Damer. According to Turner, the village Barativa mentioned by Drake is the village of Bebar Barat on the northern coast of Damer. His evidence for this claim rests upon the fact that the names of both villages begin with the letter B and that the location of Bebar Barat (7 degree 6 minutes south) corresponds closely to the reading given by Drake (7 degrees 13 minutes south). Turner himself states that,

due to the vague nautical detail in the above quotation [from Drake's account "The World Encompassed"], some authors have ascribed Barativa to another island.

I too would suggest, that for this reason and others, that Barativa is on another island and is not the village of Bebar Barat. Prior to being known by the Indonesian name of Bebar Barat, this village was called Pepero and not Barativa.

9. Riedel's date for the arrival of the Dutch on Damer accords with information contained in an official Dutch letter of 1654 regarding Dutch knowledge of Damer. The letter reports that "behind Damar are situated yet a crowd of islands whereof some are as big as the island of Buru and bigger, producing slaves, wax, tortoise-shell, etc. which were sailed annually to by the Macassarese" (Coolhas 1960:480).

10. The naturalist Alfred Wallace (1872), for example, describes the inhabitants of Seram as being in a "...low state of civilization..." (*ibid.*:352) and commends the efforts of Dutch administrators and school teachers in "...raising the conditions of the natives..." and giving them "...the opportunity of acquiring something of European tastes and habits" (*ibid.*:354).

11. In this connection, de Josselin de Jong (1937) reports that previously in the village of Oirata on the island of Kisar "several families - probably a whole lineage" (*ibid.*:20) lived together in one house. He states that missionaries and Dutch administrators were instrumental in replacing this form of residence with "small ... one-family houses" (*loc. cit.*).

12. The Dutch anthropologists Toos van Dijk and Nico de Jonge working in the Babar archipelago in the early 1980's report a similar situation to that on Damer with respect to the introduction of Christianity. They note that "since c1910 Christianity has found a firm footing in the Babar islands. An unsuccessful first attempt had already been made in the V.O.C. period" (1987:57).

13. The head of Uma Tronanawowoy, a man in his mid-fifties, kindly consented to sing, for my benefit, some of the songs he and others had learned from Takara during the period of Japanese occupation. Below are the Indonesian versions (with English translations) of two such songs. The first song was sung on the occasion of the Japanese departure from the village. For this event, the soldiers purchased a pig from one of the villagers and held a small farewell party amongst themselves.

Ini waktunya, kita mau pergi  
Now is the time we have to go

Kita akan berangkat tinggalkan negeri  
We will leave this place behind

Jikalau pergi, jangan lupa kami  
When we go, don't forget us

Umur yang panjang harap berjumpa lagi  
When we are old we hope to meet again

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Pandanglah langit fajar di laut timur  
Look at the dawn sky in the eastern sea

Matahari tertinggi bersinar-sinar  
At its height the sun is shining

Semengaku gembira di daerah kita  
Our hearts are happy in our land

Penuh penuh harapan kepulauan, Oh, Oh.  
These islands are full of hope.

Sebagai puncak dari gunung Fuji  
As the peak of Mount Fuji  
Pagi-pagi diatasnya berawan putih  
in the early morning is covered with clouds

Tidak ada ceceran sedikit jua  
There are no troubles at all

Inilah cita-cita kebangsaan kita  
These are the ideals of our people

Inilah cita-cita kebangsaan kita  
These are the ideals of our people.

14. Records held at the Australian War Memorial Research Centre indicate that the Australian Catalina Squadrons No. 42, 43 and 11/20 regularly flew missions from their base in Darwin to the islands of Damer, Teun, Nila and Serua as well as to the other islands which today comprise the *Kecamatan* of *Pulau Pulau Terselatan*.

15. The operations record book (Australian War Memorial 64) for 43 Catalina Squadron reports that on 1 August 1944 the Catalina A24/82 flew a mission over the islands of Teun, Nila and other surrounding islands (probably Damer as well) and dropped propaganda leaflets. The crew of the plane reported sighting a lugger and ketch in the vicinity of Teun flying Dutch flags. They also noted that "numerous Dutch flags" were flown by local shipping in this area.

16. Chauvel (1985) states that,

by 1930 there were 21,211 or about 10% of the Ambonese population living outside the Moluccas. Of these, 4,257 were Ambonese soldiers in the colonial army...(*ibid.*:3).

17. Ricklefs (1981) reports that 12,300 persons were transported to the Netherlands in 1951.

## CHAPTER THREE

### "NOW WE FOLLOW OUR FATHER":

#### THE CONTEMPORARY CONSTITUTION OF SOCIAL GROUPS IN AMAYA

...the transformation of a culture  
is a mode of its reproduction.  
Marshall Sahlins (1985:138).

#### Introduction

Having already established in the previous chapter the historical configuration of relations which inform Mayawo culture, in this chapter I turn to an examination of the contemporary constitution of local social relations and groups. In focusing upon the different socio-spatial categories which constitute groups in Amaya, as well as other classifications and metaphoric expressions, this chapter is also concerned with the exploration of Mayawo notions of social relatedness and identity.

Throughout the area designated as 'eastern Indonesia' in the literature, the 'house' is an important social, spatial and symbolic category (see Barraud 1979; Fox 1980a:10-12; Levi-Strauss 1982:174 & 184; Levi-Strauss 1987:155-159, 181). In Amaya, the term for 'house', uma, simultaneously denotes a physical structure, a domestic residential unit and a descent-based social group. While I discuss the first two

representations of the term uma in some detail, this chapter is primarily concerned with the latter signification<sup>1</sup>.

The differential placement of individuals as members of particular social groups in Amaya constitutes an important dimension in the construction of identity and the legitimation of political authority. For the people in Amaya, group affiliation is not solely confined to just those culturally based units organised around the principles of descent, matri and/or patri-filiation, 'historically'-defined affinities or shared residence. On the contrary, there are a large number of State and Church organised groups where membership is based upon considerations of gender, age, religious affiliation, ability, residence, experience and knowledge. While participation in those groups linked to the Indonesian State and the Protestant Church of Maluku represents, as I discuss in later chapters, an alternative field of reference for the articulation of social relations, it is the differential affiliation of individuals to local culturally defined aggregates known as Uma, however, which provides the ontological and cosmological locus of identity and, moreover, defines the significance of membership in these other groups.



## Uma as Physical Structures

As a physical structure, uma in Amaya are constructed of a variety of materials. The *Kepala Desa*'s house, for instance, which is believed to have been erected late last century, is constructed of woven bamboo lattice walls (hnyeso), rough hewn timber house and ceiling posts and a thatched sago leaf roof. Most of the older houses in the village have either bamboo lattice walls or walls made of white-washed wooden planks (hnyeso popno). As the map of the village presented in chapter one (i.e. map 1.4.) indicates, a large number of the houses in Amaya are constructed of plain bamboo walls and sago leaf roofs (orpitowo), although modern looking concrete walled and zinc roofed houses are becoming quite popular. All houses are erected upon a raised foundation of stones and packed earth (luturuni) and arranged in neat rows on either side of the broad walk-ways with the front of the house facing the residence opposite. At the front of most houses are planted ornamental shrubs and a number of orange trees, which are a useful source of cash income for most households. Generally, the floor plan of a house consists of a front open verandah (umaneyeni 'house foot/leg') running the length of the house where guests are entertained and the family sits during the day, two small rooms for sleeping (kamrodak matumlo 'room sleep') and a kitchen area (dapuroni) which is usually a separate building situated at the back of the

house.

### 'Sleeping in One House'

A compound of the term uma, uma lavcho or 'the house with the sleeping place' refers to the basic residential unit in Amaya, the household. The 585 inhabitants of Amaya variously reside in 105 households. A household comprises a group of individuals related through consanguineal and/or affinal ties who occupy and sleep in one house. Given the practice of uxorilocal residence (klewanodi deweyeni) often followed by virilocal residence (klewanodi ulchuni) which, in some cases, is also followed by neolocal residence (hmemedo uma), it is not surprising that the composition of households varies enormously from husband, wife and children units to various combinations of extended families. For example, in one household of ten residents a man lived together with his wife, daughter, brother, brother's wife, brother's child, separated sister and her two children and his mother. In this case, four different descent-based groups were represented by the members of this household. In another instance, a widow, her unmarried son, her daughter, her daughter's husband and their children resided together in the house of the deceased husband. The occupants of uma lavcho also include groups of un-married siblings, widowers and unmarried mothers and their

children. While the members of a household may be affiliated to a number of different descent-based groups, households are generally identified in terms of the descent group affiliation of the oldest male resident. Thus, in the above example where members of four different groups are present in the one house, the household is collectively identified as Umhersuny, the descent group affiliation of the eldest male sibling in this house. In the case of a widow, the household is sometimes, though not always, identified in terms of the descent group identification of the deceased husband.

For most individuals in Amaya, residence in an uma lavcho is not permanent and can possibly change a number of times according to a person's marital status (i.e. single, married, separated, widowed, etc.) and affinal responsibilities (uxorilocal, virilocal or neolocal residence). Accordingly, the number of residents in a household fluctuates over time. Births and deaths also affect the composition and size of the household population. In a census conducted in late 1986, the size of households in Amaya ranged from 1 (a bachelor) to 12 people, with the majority of households comprised of 5 people (see table 3.1).

The household generally forms the domestic unit of production with members of the uma lavcho cultivating a number of subsistence gardens (tina), either collectively or

individually, depending on the crop planted and the season. It is not unusual, however, for individuals to also work in the gardens of kinsmen in return for a share of the produce (see the section on social relatedness this chapter).

Table 3.1. Household Size in Amaya, 1986-1987.

No. of occupants	No. of households
1	3
2	6
3	11
4	17
5	19
6	15
7	10
8	12
9	8
10	1
11	1
12	2

### 'Children of the Ancestors'

Members of an uma lavcho are differentially affiliated with one or more of the named descent-based groups in Amaya collectively referred to as Uma ('house'). As I shall illustrate in this and the following chapters, in the contemporary context Uma denotes a group of cognatically related individuals who, among other things, believe that they are descended from a common ancestor or group of ancestral beings (either male or female). This belief is semantically expressed through the sharing among Uma members

of the name of the founding ancestor of the group. Together with previous Uma members, the members of an Uma are collectively regarded as ono mamso, the 'children of the ancestors'.

The term Uma is only used to refer to the seven founding 'houses' of Amaya (in order of arrival at Amaya, Surlialy, Soplero, Helweldery, Tronanawowoy, Newnuny, Halono and Umpenawany) and the six additional 'houses' (Porhonowey, Umhersuny, Lutrunawowoy, Umkeketony, Umkeketo and Surlia) which are said to have evolved from, or be closely linked to, the founding 'houses'. Uma is not used to denote the groups of resident individuals locally classified as 'immigrants' (*pendatang*), the majority of whom came to Amaya in the period after the Second World War. Groups of related *pendatang* are alternatively referred to as *marga* (a term commonly used throughout Maluku which, however, derives from Sumatra and can either mean 'district' in southern Sumatra or 'clan' among the Batak people of north Sumatra), *pamili* (derived from the Dutch word for 'family') or *fam* (<Dutch: familie).

Most *pendatang* are individually incorporated (usually as spouses) into non-immigrant households. In Amaya, only 15 of the 33 different immigrant family names represented in the village are associated with separate households, which are generally located on the margins of the village along the

sea-front. Of these 15 immigrant groups who occupy and head a household, only two groups - Romer, originally from the village of Kehli on Damer and Ratuhanrasa, originally from the village of Oirata Barat on the island of Kisar - have settled in Amaya long enough to form two separate households comprised of related individuals.

Membership in an 'immigrant' *marga* or *fam* is largely through patrification. This accords with the fact that many *pendatang* originate from a cultural milieu where membership in descent-based groups is largely predicated on the principle of patrilineal descent. For example, the children of the union of a man of *fam Ratuhanrasa* (originally from Oirata Barat, Kisar) and a woman of Uma Porhowney are accorded membership status in their father's *fam Ratuhanrasa*. According to de Josselin de Jong (1937), residence in Oirata is "patrilocal" and there is a strong emphasis on patrification as a principle of reckoning membership in one of the local descent groups. However, it is not always the case that children affiliate with the *fam* of their father. *Fam* membership is also influenced by individual personalities, the status of social relations between parents and children and by the context. In the case of a man from *fam Ruff* (originally from Wonreli, Kisar) who married a local woman, the eldest son of this union has chosen, largely as a result of contentious relations with his father, to affiliate

with the Uma of his mother. The Uma of his mother is also that of the *Kepala Desa* and in this situation, given the mercantile ambitions of this person, affiliation with his mother's Uma represents a politically astute alignment. His younger brother and sister, on the other hand, enjoy better relations with their father and are thus members of their father's *fam*.

For the handful of female *pendatang* who have married into the village, access to garden land is not a problem. They work the land in which their husband has rights of usufruct. For male *pendatang* access to garden land close to the village is largely restricted. If they are residing uxorilocally then they are able to work in the gardens cultivated by the members of their wife's household. If residence is neolocal, which is the situation in many cases, then they have unrestricted access to land in the southern-most part of the territory claimed by the people of Amaya. This region has been designated by the *Kepala Desa* as an 'open' area. For most of the *pendatang fam*, however, access to garden land is not an issue, especially given that the majority of these people earn their livelihood either from the operation of the Chinese-owned stores in the village, employment as teachers or are retired public servants and, thus, receive regular salaries and pensions from the government.

Given the variable size of *pendatang fam/marga* and that, in many instances, *fam/marga* are co-terminous with a particular household, it is difficult to speak of *fam/marga* as corporate groups in the same sense that Uma constitute corporate groups. Where all the members of one *marga/fam* occupy one household and are involved in collective domestic activities, this action proceeds largely on the basis of their shared household status (which is also shared by the non-immigrant individuals in the household) rather than on the basis of a broader, collective *marga/fam* identity. On the occasion of such events as marriage and death, members of a *marga* could be said to act together towards some common goal. However, relations between individuals and groups with respect to these and other public events are articulated within the context of more inclusive social groupings known locally as Ono. Thus, while *pendatang* are not extended membership in the Uma of their spouse they are incorporated as members of Ono (I shall discuss Ono in greater detail later in chapter five).

While individual affiliation to Uma groups was previously predicated upon the notion of "following our mothers" (see chapter two), in characterizing contemporary patterns of social organisation, Mayawo say "now we follow our fathers" ("lawadira odomo mlerwanodi tatomani"). The phrase 'to follow our fathers' refers to an explicit, though by no means



exclusive, cultural emphasis on patrification (hrowol ulchuni) as the principal means of ascribing individual Uma membership.

According to figures I compiled in late 1986, 90% of all Mayawo Uma members are directly affiliated with the Uma of their father. In another survey, involving 341 indigenous people for whom Uma affiliation could be traced back three or more generations, only approximately 28% of this group could trace their Uma affiliation to the third ascending paternal generation (i.e. FFF). Significantly, 91.5% of these latter individuals were under 25 years of age. Only 4 people under the age of 25 affiliated with their maternal Uma. However, of the people over the age of 25, 15% were affiliated with their maternal Uma. Of this latter group, approximately 87% traced descent from a maternal Uma in the third ascending generation. These figures clearly illustrate the recent nature of transformations in the reckoning of Uma affiliations<sup>2</sup>.

Whether a person or a group of siblings affiliates with the Uma of their father is often politically motivated and is, thus, influenced by a number of considerations. In one case involving three brothers, the youngest brother was incorporated into the Uma of his father so that he could later inherit the position of Uma head. The second brother,

however, was adopted into the Uma of his FF (which was not the same Uma as his father) so as to ensure the continuation of this 'house' while the eldest brother was 'sent' (ono lo 'child go') to the Uma of his MMB (a different Uma from that of his mother) in order, it was said, to 'replace his mother' (hawadedeli deweyeni).

Contrary to the theory of residence and group affiliation espoused by Barnes (1980) and others, virilocal residence and paternally reckoned Uma affiliation in Amaya are not predicated upon the prestation of valuables to the kin of the wife/mother. I have, for example, recorded several cases of virilocal residence in which valuables were not presented to the wife/mother's kin and in which the husband's children are affiliated with his Uma. Moreover, in a handful of recorded instances, husbands who lived uxori locally actually presented objects to the kin of their wives even though their offspring were affiliated with maternal Uma. To understand why this is so it is necessary to briefly examine the meaning and role of the objects presented.

Together with contemporary statements and actions, the previous Mayawo cultural forms and practices of matrilineal descent, uxori local residence and sanctioned pre-marital sexual relations (Riedel 1886), strongly suggest that the prestations<sup>3</sup> (consisting of one or more flat golden discs

(karcho or *emas bulan* in Ambonese-Malay), a pair of silver ear-rings (machotlina) and one or more patola cloths (ormollo)), made by a suitor and his kin to a potential wife's kin do not constitute 'bridewealth payments' in the anthropologically accepted sense of this term.

According to Mayawo cultural logic, the prestation of objects is invariably linked to breaches of social conduct. Theft, murder, injury, property damage and adultery are among the actions which can only be expiated by the perpetrator through the prestation of objects to the injured party. That such transactions are also associated with marriage reflects the fact that the majority of marriages in Amaya are precipitated by illicit sexual relations or an unmarried woman's pregnancy. In this respect, the first prestation of a karcho to the woman's group is said to 'lift the face' (wotwot owa) of the shamed woman and her kinfolk so that negotiations concerning further transactions of objects and possible marriage can take place. Each prestation of karcho is wrapped in a separate patola cloth to conceal, it is said, the 'nakedness' (yemkukuki) of the woman. The second and, sometimes, the third prestation of karcho, together with ear-rings, are explicitly regarded as the 'fine' (molmolcha) component of the transaction. As such, these transactions are not characterised by an exchange of different valuables. If the decision to go ahead with a marriage is made by kin of

the prospective bride and groom, the final prestation is said to 'open the door' (dol porhoni) of the woman's house so that the man and his children can take up residence there<sup>4</sup>. Upon marriage, the groom is physically transported over the threshold of the bride's house. In this connection, immigrant men marrying into Mayawo Uma are also required to pay an additional karcho and patola cloth in order to 'open the door of the village' (dol porhoni latoni). The marriage ceremony is only finalized after the completion of all of these prestations during the course of a single night.

Significantly, in many cases where the woman was not pregnant and the man was believed not to have had sexual relations with her, no objects were presented to the wife's kin. This arrangement, however, is largely based on the personal preferences of the woman's father. The non-prestition of valuables may, in some instances, influence the amount of time a man spends living uxori locally. Nowadays, the final prestation to 'open the door' is increasingly perceived as compensation for the loss of a daughter's productivity and reproductivity.

Contrary to the findings expressed in a number of studies of 'Eastern Indonesian' cultures (see Arndt 1954:69-70; Berthe 1961:17; Cunningham 1967:2-5; Schulte-Nordholt 1971:92-116; Barnes 1980:100; Forman 1980:159; Gordon 1980:63), women in

Amaya do not, upon marriage, lose their natal Uma affiliation. When a woman marries she retains her original Uma affiliation. However, she may also associate with the Uma of her spouse on the basis of her incorporation into the household of her husband and residence in an area associated with that Uma. Likewise, women may often participate in the affairs of both their own natively-determined Ono and that of their husbands' for the same reasons. Often when I recorded the names of women present at social gatherings, I was given the woman's Christian name followed by the name of her natal Uma and then the name of her husband's Uma. When I inquired as to which Uma the women 'belonged' to, I was emphatically informed by the women that they 'belonged', so to speak, to their natal Uma and that the name of their husband's Uma indicated, among other things, their affinal and residential associations.

As I indicated previously, a comparatively small proportion of the population of Amaya still affiliate with their mother's Uma. The number of people affiliated with the Uma of matri-kin increases significantly when Uma affiliation is considered over the span of 3 or more generations. Of a sample group of 341 individuals for whom it was possible to trace genealogical links back 3 or more generations, 140 people or 41% of the group identified their Uma affiliation as that of their F/FF and FFM. A further 29 individuals

claimed membership in the Uma of their F/FM and FMM. Significantly, nearly 90% of these people were over 25 years of age. Overall, more than 56% of the sample population traced descent, either through patrilateral or matrilateral links, from a matri-ancestor in the third, or higher, ascending generation. In this situation, people trace descent from a recent matrilineal ancestor of their MB's Uma through a series of matrilateral and, sometimes, patrilateral links. No-one in Amaya can trace their actual genealogical descent from the original Uma ancestors. It is not considered necessary to do this nor does it matter greatly as to how links to previous Uma members are traced. What is important is that a person believes that he/she is in some way descended from the founding Uma ancestors, that an individual can demonstrably place herself/himself in relation to an Uma ancestor and that this belief is socially verified by others.

In the contemporary context, as was probably the case in previous times, there are several ways in which affiliation to a maternal Uma is established. It is often the case that a person is affiliated with their mother's Uma as a result of being formally adopted and raised by their mother's brother (cf. Cunningham 1965). For example, Bettia, the eldest child of her mother's first marriage, was adopted by her MB who, although married for some time, had no children of his own. In the household of Bettia's MB were two other adopted child,

the MZD of Bettia's MB wife and the FFBSS of Bettia's MB. The relationship between a MB and his ZC is not always articulated through the formal pathways of adoption. In one instance, a man's ZC would regularly sleep in his house and then return to the household of their parents the next day. In other cases, a ZS would accompany his MB on fishing and hunting trips and assist in his garden.

As the above example clearly illustrated, the MB/ZC tie is not the only adoptive relationship. In this connection, I have recorded examples where children have been adopted by their MZD, MMB, FBD, FZ, FB, FMBSS and MFZD. The reasons given by local people as to why children are adopted are varied. In some cases, a husband and wife may have no children whereas the siblings of either parents may have too many children. On the other hand, a married couple may only have daughters and, as such, have no male heir to inherit a position of office. In other situations, the family consists of only sons and a female child may be adopted to assist the woman with the running of the household.

Notwithstanding the 'shame' and 'fine' prestations made to the woman's kin, children born out of wedlock are always accorded membership in their maternal Uma. The children of a man who has married a number of times are often accorded membership in the Uma of their respective mothers - a

situation which does not normally apply to the offspring of a permanent union. Given that residence upon marriage is initially uxorilocal, the children in these cases are nearly always born in the residence of the woman and thus affiliate with her Uma. This largely explains why the children of a woman who marries a number of men are invariably affiliated with her Uma. In these instances, residence is an important consideration in the determination of a person's Uma affiliation.

In a similar manner, a first-born child is often affiliated with the maternal Uma. This is largely attributable to the fact that the majority of married couples leave the wife's parents household soon after the birth of the first child and take up residence with the husband's parents. For some people, this latter dwelling is their final place of residence. Other couples, however, may stay a number of years in this household but will eventually build and live in a new residential structure. In some instances, the first-born child is 'sent' (ono lo) to the wife's Uma in place of marriage-related valuables.

Another important consideration in Uma affiliation is the social classification of the parental Uma. Uma, as I discuss in more detail in the following chapters, are classified, in descending order of rank, as mahno, uhro or ota. In marriages



involving individuals of differently ranked Uma, the children of such unions are sometimes accorded membership in the highest ranked Uma. For example, the offspring of a mahno woman and uhro man were affiliated with the higher ranked Uma of their mother. Conversely, the children of an uhro woman and mahno man are nearly always accorded membership rights in the higher ranked Uma of their father. As it will become evident in the proceeding chapters, these changes in Uma affiliation are can only be understood with regard to the politics of identity.

*on people with poor quality drawing power*

Until now, I have largely been concerned with situations in which Uma membership is determined upon birth or within a couple of months thereafter. There are, however, a number of people who have changed Uma affiliation later on in life. Thus, when a woman separates from her husband she invariably returns to her natal household and her children, in many cases, become members of her Uma. Upon the death of her husband, a woman will often return to the house of her parents and take up residence there. The children who follow her often change their Uma affiliation to that of their mother.

Changes in Uma affiliation may also be associated with marriage, or more specifically, the facilitation of 'extraordinary' (Bourdieu 1977:53-54) marriages (for a more

detailed discussion of Mayawo marriage see Pannell 1989). Notwithstanding an explicit preference for Uma exogamy (locally expressed as mehlim aliro (to 'marry outside'), it is possible for a person to marry someone from their own Uma. I illustrate this practice with reference to the case of a man whose paternal Uma is Umpenawany and maternal Uma is Surlialy. Together with his sisters and brothers, this man was originally affiliated with his paternal Uma. However, the woman he intended to marry was also a member of this Uma. To facilitate the marriage, the man changed his named Uma affiliation to that of his MB, Surlialy. A payment of one karcho was made to the ryesro (i.e. Uma head) of the Surlialy Uma to 'open the door'. Subsequently, his daughter from this marriage proposed to marry a man from her father's new Uma. Consequently, the daughter changed her Uma affiliation from Surlialy to Umpenawany. The later Uma was her FF 'house' as well as being the 'house' of her mother and FFM. According to current practices of patrification, the daughter's children now belong to the same Uma as their mother's father and, more importantly in terms of the logic of matrilineality, to the Uma of their MFM, MFMM and MFMMM. The MFMMM Uma of the children also happens to be the same Uma as their FFMMM. I should stress that this example is not an isolated case, being one of several similar instances.

From genealogical records tracing descent through 6 or 7

generations, it would seem that this 'juggling' of named Uma affiliation started to become quite widespread, although not exclusively so, approximately 3 generations ago. This would roughly accord with Mayawo perceptions regarding the re-introduction of Christianity and the gradual shift from matrilineality to an emphasis on patrification.

When Mayawo change their Uma affiliation, they do not lose their membership rights in their former Uma. At any time, they can choose to participate as a member in their former Uma. However, it is usually the case that a person is most active in the affairs involving his/her current Uma. These affairs include, among other things, the marriage of members, disputes over Uma land, the raising of new dwellings for Uma members, misdemeanor settlements and the funerals of Uma members.

Thus, changing Uma affiliation does not entail a loss of membership *per se* but involves the gaining of rights engendered by membership in a new Uma (cf. Cunningham 1967). What does change, however, is a person's named Uma status. That is, the last part of an individual's personal name will be changed to reflect their current Uma status. New Uma members enjoy the same rights and obligations as other persons in the group and in many cases, continue to participate in the affairs of their previous Uma (cf. Berthe

1961:16-17; Cunningham 1967:6). Children who are adopted into the Uma of a collateral kinsperson continue to maintain a close relationship with their parents and siblings in their former Uma. For example;

Hofni, a young man of 17 years of age, was adopted by his MB when he was still an infant because his MB had no sons to inherit the position of Uma ryesro ('Uma head'). Today, Hofni is known by the name of his MB Uma and is very much his MB's son. However, Hofni still maintains relations with the members of his former household, especially his genitor. Together they hunt, fish and work in the garden. When his MB dies, Hofni will not only inherit the position of ryesro but also the right to use his MB's garden land and other land belonging to his MB's Uma.

Notwithstanding the negotiability of 'house' affiliation, Uma are locally conceptualised as constituting relatively discrete groups of people. This is largely because, at any one moment in time, an individual can only possess the named status of one Uma which they share with a number of other people who are thought of as the primary members of that group. It is necessary, therefore, to distinguish between (1) the groups in which a person could be a member and has possible rights, (2) the group in which a person is considered to be affiliated with but is not an active member and no longer bears the name of that Uma and (3) the group in which a person is most active and with which he/she is identified by name.

From the previous discussion, it can be seen that several

considerations are brought into play in the constitution of Uma as social groups. Uma are not simply and exclusively defined by the genealogical relationships linking living members. Indeed, genealogical ties between Uma members are often quite tenuous. A person's genealogically proximate relatives may actually belong to Uma other than ego's. Thus, consanguineal links between individuals often cut across the network of social relations which define an Uma group.

Nor can it be said that a person's Uma affiliation is exclusively predicated upon the prestation of marriage-linked valuables. Regardless of whether or not a prestation is made to 'open the door' residence upon marriage is uxorilocal. As I have indicated, this does not necessarily imply that children born into this setting will affiliate with their mother's Uma. However, it would appear that residence plays a significant part in the ascription of Uma identity, especially in view of the inalienable associations each Uma has with a specific area of the village.

Neither is membership in an Uma determined along strictly patrifilial lines. As I have pointed out previously, a person's father's Uma is not solely comprised of agnatic kin. In fact it is sometimes the case that a person's patrilateral parallel cousins (FBC) belong to another Uma.

In the contemporary context, Uma are comprised of cognatically related individuals who believe that they are descended from a common Uma ancestor. Uma members initially trace relations to an Uma ancestor (s) along both matrilineally and patrilineally constructed pathways in the recent past. After three or four generations, this network of cognatic relations terminates in a line of matrilineally-connected women and their brothers who are locally regarded as constituting a direct matri-link to the apical ancestor (s) of the Uma. As I have stated previously, the exact connections between these matrilineal ancestors and the founding ancestral beings of the Uma are not known and nor is it considered necessary to have this knowledge. What is important is that an individual can make a connection to this line of women through tracing relations in the recent past.

It would seem, therefore, that matrilineal relations still continue to be a significant factor in the determination of Uma affiliation and individual identity, especially in the affirmation of an individual's ties to an Uma ancestor. It is also evident, however, that both the meaning and articulation of Mayawo notions of descent have undergone a process of transformation and re-assessment so that today the principle of descent is mediated by both patrilineal and matrilineal relations. Notwithstanding these changes, the belief that a group of individuals are in some way descended from a common

ancestor (s) still continues to be an an important dimension in the constitution and continuity of Uma groups. This belief is socially expressed in a number of ways.

### Reciprocal Identities: Sharing Substance, Names and Space

Relations between people referred to as ono mamso are articulated, at one level, in terms of the sharing of bodily substances. Members of the same Uma, both past and present, are said to share isso rowo 'flesh and blood'<sup>5</sup>. As this suggests, relations between individuals through time ('descent') are also expressed as "isso rowo". Previously, the term isso rowo referred to matrilineally defined kinship connections and generally the members of a 'matrilineage' were said to share isso rowo. However, today the term is used to denote links through both maternal and paternal lines and, as such, may also depict relations between consanguines from different Uma.

Corporeally derived images also serve to express relations between those individuals conceptualised as either close (honorso) or distant (heyo). Distant kin are specifically described as hruwe herweli, 'side kin'. The term refers to those people who, although spatially and genealogically removed from ego, are still regarded as somehow linked to

ego. In some cases, the term hruwe herweli may be used to denote co-members of ego's Uma as well as those people who stand in a classificatory relation to ego.

Close kin, on the other hand, are called hruwe dutcho, 'milk or breast kin'. Previously this term was used to describe a person's matrilateral kin, the people who shared the same 'breast' and were nurtured with the same 'milk'. Hruwe dutcho were those kin who, given the previous organisation of local descent-based groups, slept together in one house. Nowadays, hruwe dutcho refers to a more inclusive group of individuals with both matrilateral and patrilateral ties to ego. Hruwe dutcho generally includes those individuals who encircle ego both genealogically and spatially.

The notion of consubstantiality, locally articulated as the sharing of "flesh and blood" and "milk and breast", is given further expression through the bestowal of personal names (nono). Local naming practices serve to conflate generational time and semantically celebrate the expression of reciprocal identities (cf. Crocker 1977).

Each Uma claims bestowal rights in a somewhat limited repertoire of personal names. Personal names consist of a first name (older residents often have two first names - a Christian name and what they call a 'Hindu' name), followed



by the name of the individual's Uma. For example, Joseph (Christian-inspired name) Tutelehni ('Hindu' name) Surlialy (Name of the Uma)<sup>6</sup>. Very few people in Amaya today profess to have a 'Hindu' name. The majority of first names circulating in the village are the names of biblical figures, especially those in the Old Testament, e.g. Moses, Abraham, Yosef, Ruth and Batseba. Among the younger married couples, there is a trend to name the new-born child according to whatever takes the parents fancy. Thus, one child in the village is called 'jimbo' and another is named after one of the first astronauts to land on the moon. A handful of children are even named after the anthropologist and members of her family. The bestowal of these names reflects more recent encounters with technologies, media and individuals largely identified as part of 'western' (*barat*) culture.

It is a common practice to bestow upon a child the name of either lineal or collateral kin in the grand-parental generation. Previously, as part of the culturally recognised set of Uma property, each Uma was identified in terms of a relatively unique repertoire of personal names. However, because today the names of both matrilaterally and patrilaterally identified predecessors in the second ascending generation are bestowed upon children, a person's name can also link him/her to an ancestral figure in another Uma.

The bestowal of names in the contemporary context reflects recent transformations. Today the first son born among a set of male siblings is usually called after the father's father or the FF's siblings. The first daughter is sometimes named after the FM although for females there does not appear to be the same degree of conformity to this principle as is the case with male children. Subsequent children of this sibling set are given the names of other kin in the second ascending generation or even third ascending generation from ego, e.g. MM, MF, and their siblings, MMM, FFF, and so on. These names are bestowed by the parents after consultation and some competition (cf. Bourdieu 1977:36) with other relatives. The following case illustrates the bestowal of personal names. The first-born son of one couple was named after the husband's father (deceased) while the second-born child, again a son, was named after the wife's father (deceased). These two children, however, died while still young. The next child was a female and was named after the husband's mother (still alive). The fourth child was also a female and was given the name of the wife's mother (deceased). The next child was a male and was given the name of the husband's deceased father which is also the same name bestowed upon the deceased first-born son. The youngest child of this couple is a girl and was named after the wife's MM.

The contemporary practice of serial patrification is further

reflected in the reciprocal use of the term tate between father and son. Tate is the kin term used to address all patrilineal relatives of the first ascending generation including a person's biological father. Thus, if a man's son has been bestowed with the same name as the man's actual father then he will (as well as his siblings) address his son with the term tate. However, the reciprocal use of the term tate between father and son only applies if the son is named after the man's genitor. Likewise, if a son is named after his mother's father then he will be addressed as tate by his mother. When used in this manner, the term tate is locally regarded as a term of endearment. This practice does not appear to apply to the relationship between daughters and their mother's mother. Through the idiom of the naming system, the members of an Uma personify not only Uma members of the second ascending generation but also alternate generations preceding this. Thus, a person is socially constructed as the embodiment of one of the Uma's apical ancestors<sup>7</sup>.

The belief that the individuals who comprise an Uma are all descended from a common Uma ancestor and, thus, collectively participate in a common ontological field of identity, is given further expression through the fact these people are also said to share a common residential space, have primary inherited rights of usufruct in 'historically' designated

tracts of Uma owned land and, in conjunction with more inclusive groups, act as a corporate group on those occasions when the identity, integrity and unity of the group are either rendered uncertain or problematic, i.e. marriage, death, disputes and settlements, or are ideologically emphasised and socially enacted, i.e. house-raising, feasts, etc. This latter dimension of a collective Uma identity will be explored in more detail in chapters five and six.

While Uma members today are dispersed throughout the hundred or so households in Amaya, Uma groups still continue to be relatively localised within the confines of the village. In certain cases, the territorial associations of Uma within the village (lato) are reflected in the Uma name itself. For example, Porhonowey means 'in front of the door' and indicates the location of this Uma in front of the entrance to the village. Similarly, Tronanawowoy means 'on top of the [village] boundary', while Helweldery means 'to the side [of the village]' and Lutrunawowoy means 'on top of the [village] wall'. The land contained within the present-day perimeter of the village (this includes land within and outside of the walled confines of the original village) is owned by three Uma, Surlialy, Helweldery and Soplero. According to local narratives, the founding 'house' of Surlialy distributed its land among the next two 'houses' to arrive at Amaya, Helweldery and Soplero. The Uma that followed these 'houses'

established themselves within the village compound on land owned by one of these original Uma. Thus, the central, western and south-southeast sections of the village are owned by Surlialy, while Helweldery own the north-northwest section adjoining the beach and Soplero own the eastern area. When a person wants to establish a new residence, they must first request permission from the leader of one of the three land owning Uma in the village.

Within the walled area of the original village, each Uma is represented by its umtuvatvcha or 'oldest house'. The physical dimensions and appearance of the majority of umtuvatvcha differs significantly from that of normal residential dwellings. In most cases, this difference reflects not only the different status of these houses but also the greater age of these buildings. Generally, umtuvatvcha are larger in size than normal residences and will often contain several rooms. Whereas, the walls of the majority of houses in Amaya are constructed of flattened bamboo, the walls of umtuvatvcha, on the other hand, are constructed of either hand-hewn timber planks or intricately woven bamboo lattices, both of which are white-washed.

The location of each umtuvatvcha within the walled section of the village corresponds with the order of arrival and place of settlement of the original Uma ancestors. Outside the

stone walls which enclose the old village the spatial configuration of the constituent Uma households reflects the arrangement of the various umtuvatvcha within.

The umtuvatvcha is regarded as the ancestral 'house' for each Uma group and, thus, represents the physical and metaphoric point of origin for all Uma members, past and present. Accordingly, the umtuvatvcha forms the spatial and social locus for the organization of Uma-based activities such as marriage and dispute settlements. The members of an Uma, therefore, are linked not only through local notions of consubstantiality but are also seen to participate in a common spatial field of reference.

Not only is each Uma associated with an ancestrally-demarcated area within the village, but each Uma is also linked to a specific tract or tracts of land outside the confines of the village, which are jointly held by the Uma members. The first 'houses' to settle in Amaya own land located close to the village. The tracts of land owned by later arrivals are situated some distance from the village and coincide with the position of their ancestral villages and territorial links prior to their incorporation within Amaya.

The lands held by each Uma form a unique configuration of

named places which reflect the travels and activities of the Uma ancestors. Thus, place names may encode a specific historical event such as a shipwreck; an ancestral being him/herself; or the various camps and villages of ancestral beings and groups. Often, place names semantically mark a salient environmental feature such as a beach or a cape and can also be used to mark an individual's ontological status.

In Amaya, there are a number of individuals, most of whom are elderly men, who are referred to with the name of the place where they were born. For example, an elderly man from Uma Newnuny was commonly addressed as "Kokortjeni" after the place where he was born. The term Kokortjeni is derived from a thorny jungle vine which proliferates at that place. Another man was addressed as "Om Nyevnuny" ('Uncle Nyevnuny') after the beach Awnyevnyo, situated on the southern coast of the island. Although not widely employed in the contemporary context, the practice of naming individuals after a specific place does, however, semantically illustrate and affirm the historical and social links obtaining between individuals, Uma and place.

Individuals have rights of usufruct in Uma owned lands, which upon death, are transmitted to a person's children. Nowadays, son's largely inherit these rights. Women, and especially widows, separated women, unmarried women, unmarried mothers

and adopted women can also claim and be given rights of usufruct in the Uma land of their husbands', fathers', brothers' and mother's brother. Thus, it is not only those who have inherited use rights from their father who can make gardens on Uma land. People from other Uma can also claim use rights in the land (through their MB, MMB, etc.). These rights, however, are not necessarily automatically established or assumed by people. Rather, they have to be socially recognised and validated by the members of the Uma which claims, largely on the basis of local narratives, prior rights. In most cases, requests from individuals in other Uma to use such lands are not problematic, especially given the close genealogical connections between the two parties concerned. However, it is not always the case that primary rights of usufruct and kinship connections are as clearly defined. In these situations, disputes often erupt as to which party is entitled to use the land. This is further exacerbated when the land in question is located close to the village compound. For example;

A bitter and verbally abusive argument broke out between two women, Sintje and Algonda. Algonda was married to the principal of the local primary school while Sintje was a single mother. The dispute was over who was entitled to use a plot of garden land situated quite close to the village at Lateyeni. Algonda claimed that the land in question was a disused garden previously worked by her brother. She had already cleared it and started to plant crops. Sintje claimed that Algonda had extended her brother's garden to include land that had been previously gardened by Sintje's deceased sister and her husband.



Thus, the argument centered upon where the boundary lay between these two disused garden plots. The dispute is further complicated when a number of other factors, cited by the claimants to support their position, are taken into consideration.

The land at Lateyeni belonged to Uma Surlialy. This fact was not contended by either party. Sintje's deceased sister and her husband claimed use rights in the land through her MM, a woman from Uma Surlialy. Upon the death of her sister, Sintje moved into her brother-in-law's house and proceeded to cook for him and his children. It was upon the basis of her maternal Uma affiliation and the fact that she had partially taken over her sister's affinal responsibilities that Sintje claimed the right to use the land. Algonda's husband, a man from Umkeketony, stepped into the dispute and claimed that on the basis of the close links obtaining between his 'house' and Uma Surlialy and the fact that he was a man that he was entitled to use the land. When the dispute was taken before the elders of Uma Surlialy for arbitration, it was resolved in Sintje's favour. The decision, however, was primarily predicated upon the notion of social justice, the fact that Sintje was a single parent and that Algonda's husband received a substantial wage from the Education Department, rather than decided on the basis of perceived notions of customary rights in land.

With the exception of a relatively small tract of land owned by Umhersuny, land situated in the southern region of the domain claimed by the people in Amaya has recently been declared by the *Kepala Desa* as "public land" (*tanah umum*). Although, historically this land was (and still is) associated with Uma Newnuny, today any resident in the village, including immigrants, can establish a garden on unalienated land. The reason for this change in land tenure was attributed by the *Kepala Desa* to the fact that the small number of Uma Newnuny members did not warrant their exclusive access to such a large tract of land, especially given the steady increase in the size of the village population.

Rights of usufruct can also be exchanged between members of different but related Uma and until quite recently could be leased to other Uma members. For example, the Principal of the local primary school mentioned in the above incident wanted to erect a new residence on land associated with Umakpauni, a 'house' closely related to Uma Helweldery. While a number of people can claim links to this 'house', only one person today, however, bears the name Umakpauni. This person is a single woman who, at the time of the request, was attending the Protestant seminary in Ambon. She inherited rights in land associated with Umakpauni through her father. As such, the school principal wrote to the women asking permission to build on Umakpauni land and sent her Rp.40,000

to secure his lease on the land.

The leasing of residential land within the confines of the village is, however, both a recent and short-lived phenomenon. The first transaction of this kind took place in 1975, when another local school teacher purchased use rights to a block of land owned by Uma Helweldery. Since that time, only a handful of similar transactions have occurred. In 1987, the *Kepala Desa* of Amaya prohibited the leasing of residential land, judging such arrangements to be antithetical to the principles of local *adat*. Until its prohibition, the leasing of Uma owned land within the village provided one way in which recent arrivals could establish an independent residence rather than reside in the house of their spouse.

It is also the case that rights in land can be exchanged among members of the same residential aggregate, known locally as Ono. For example, a man from Uma Surlialy who had usufruct rights in land at Pahvwuvi exchanged these rights with a man from Umkeketo, who had use rights in garden land at Woroni. The two men were related through the Umkeketo man's wife. When the Umkeketo man died in January 1987, his rights in the land at Pahvwuvi were bestowed upon his classificatory sister's son, a man also from Uma Surlialy. This man lived next to the man from Uma Surlialy who

originally exchanged rights and they were considered to be close kinsmen (the man who inherited the land from the Umkeketo man is the genealogical FZDSS of the first Surlialy man). The Umkeketo man's children had moved to the town of Sorong in Irian Jaya and gave no indication of ever returning to live in Amaya.

Any transactions involving Uma land first requires the consent of the Uma ryesro or 'house leader', in whom authority to decide the use and user of Uma land is vested (the political expression of ryesro is discussed in more detail in chapter six).

In addition to a set of ancestral names, a number of Uma in Amaya also claim rights to specific titles of office. Their mandate to make such claims is, according to the indigenous people in the village, provided by local origin narratives. Of the 13 recognised Uma in Amaya, only eight are authorised to claim a title [s] (in some cases, more than one title is claimed). With the exception of one 'house', the titles are claimed by the seven Uma whose ancestors are locally regarded to have established the village of Amaya.

The collective identity and authority of the seven founding Uma is expressed in and through the person bestowed with the title ryesro (*seniri*). The term ryesro refers to the male

head or leader of the Uma. As I have indicated above, only the seven founding 'houses' are entitled to be represented by a ryesro.

The ryesro is invested with the authority to decide upon the use of Uma lands, adjudicate disputes between Uma members, represent the Uma members on the occasions of marriage or misdemeanor settlements, receive 'open the door' prestations from male affines of Uma members or individuals wanting to change their named Uma affiliation and, as I discuss in subsequent chapters, actively participate in local government decision-making bodies.

It is impossible to definitively state that these titles are inherited along strictly patrilineal or matrilineal lines. It may be the case, as illustrated below, that a man's sister's son will inherit the title. In other circumstances, the principle of primogeniture may be invoked. From an examination of the transmission of ryesro titles over a span of 3-4 generations it appears that there is a preference for a younger brother or, depending on age, an elder brother's son to inherit the title. For example, the present holder of the title of ryesro for Uma Soplero inherited the position from his FB who, in turn inherited the title from his elder brother. Most people stressed that a person's perceived ability to hold a title and act accordingly was the most

significant consideration in the transmission of Uma-specific titles. In the case where the most suitable person for the office is a man's sister's son, or someone else from a different Uma than that of the present incumbent, the proposed candidate is incorporated into the Uma of the current office-holder by the means I have previously discussed.

### The Social Construction Of Relatedness

Within the domestic context of daily life Uma, as action groups of differentially related cognatic kin, have minimal social currency. Day-to-day interactions and transactions between people in Amaya are expressed in terms of more practical arrangements which can include fellow Uma members as well as individuals from other Uma. Practical groups are formed for hunting and fishing expeditions, gardening activities, and sago processing. For example;

Cun owned a number of sago trees that were ready for harvesting. As the wet season was close at hand, the trees had to be felled and processed quite quickly. He thus sought the assistance of a number of people to facilitate this task. His FZS and WFZDS helped fell the trees and construct the sago-producing troughs. His wife, her ZD and FZD processed the sago fibre from the trunk of the tree. This group of sago-producers was comprised of individuals from 4 different Uma.

Given the kind of negotiability in group affiliation and the

previous practice of village endogamy it is not surprising that these transient groups are comprised of genealogically related individuals. Nor is it surprising that social relatedness in Amaya is, for the most part, articulated in an idiom of kinship.

In the contemporary context, the population of Amaya is comprised of indigenous individuals variously affiliated with the thirteen Uma and people locally referred to as *pendatang*, who are variously associated with a *marga* group. Notwithstanding the changed demographic profile of the village, it is still possible to state that almost everyone in Amaya (with the exception of visiting school teachers, priests and other temporary residents) can map out and express their links to other individuals in the village in terms of a range of actual or imputed genealogical connections. This includes immigrants, who mediate their relations with others in the village through their affinal relations with their spouse and spouse's kin as well as through their genealogical links to their children, children's children and their respective spouses. An individual in Amaya would generally regard the majority of people in the village as hruwolso (hruwe 'kindred', wolso 'friend'; thus 'kin friend'). As such, the appellation Mayawo can also be construed as an inclusive kinship term which collectively denotes the inter-related constellations of

perceived genealogical relations. The village is thus constructed as the physical embodiment of the configuration of social relationships obtaining between the residents (see Myers 1986:90-93) and shared residence is perceived as an expression of relatedness.

The pervasive and inclusive dimensions of Mayawo notions of social relatedness are reflected in Mayawo kin terminology which can be formally identified as an 'Hawaiian'-type system of social classification (see Table 3.2).

Broadly speaking, in this system an individual primarily classifies other people on the basis of relative age, generational distance and sex. Mayawo kinship classifications are extended to incorporate all individuals within a person's social universe, genealogically related or not. However, as I discuss in subsequent chapters, a tension exists in Amaya between these encompassing notions of relatedness and the social construction of difference.



Table 3.2. Mayawo Kinship Terminology<sup>8</sup>.

Generational level	Term of Reference	Term of Address	Categories of relatedness
+3	upocheni	upo	PPP and collaterals
+2	mamicheni	mami	PP and collaterals
+1	tatocheni	tate	F, FB, MB, FZH, MSH & other collaterals
	nenocheni/ renacheni	nene/ rena	M, MZ, FZ, MBW, FBW & other collaterals
0	kakocheni	kake	male's EB, PSibS, PPSibCS older than ego female's EZ, PSibD, PPSibCD older than ego
	wesucheni	weye	male's YB, PSibS, PPSibCS younger than ego female's YZ, PSibD, PPSibCD younger than ego
	vwotacheni	vwota	male ego's Z, PSibD, PPSibCD
	mmunocheni	mmuno	female ego's B, PSibS, PPSibCS
-1	onocheni	one	C, SibC, PSibCC, PPSibCCC
-2	mamsucheni	mamso	CC, SibCC, PSibCCC, PPSibCCCC
-3	upocheni	upo	CCC, SibCCC, PSibCCCC, PPSibCCCCC

Individuals in ego's generation are distinguished in terms of relative age and sex. Thus, a man addresses all females of his generation as vwota whereas for male generational cohorts he distinguishes between them on the basis of whether they are older kake or younger weye than himself. This situation is reversed for women where all men of their generational level are addressed as mmuno. Women older than ego are addressed as kake while those who are younger are addressed as weye.

In the first ascending generation, individuals are identified as either male or female, no distinction is made on the basis of relative age. Thus, a person's (men and women) genitor together with all males of the genitor's generation are addressed as tate. An individual's genitrix together with all women of this generation are addressed using the term rena or nene. Nowadays, it is often the case that a person will distinguish patrilaterally and matrilaterally related men of the first ascending generation from their actual 'father' with the use of the term oma or *om*, an Ambonese-Malay cognate of the Dutch word for 'uncle'. Thus, a person's MB and FB are both addressed as *om*. Similarly, women of the first ascending generation, with the exception of a person's actual 'mother', are addressed as *tante*, again an Ambonese-Malay cognate of the Dutch word for 'aunt'.

All individuals in the first descending generation from ego are addressed as one. Previously, the term ono dutcho, 'milk/breast child', was used, according to local people, by a mother and her siblings to refer to her children and the offspring of her sisters. The term denotes those people who were regarded to have suckled at the same 'breast' and were linked to each other through the sharing of the same bodily substance, 'milk'. Today the term is more commonly used to distinguish a person's actual offspring and the offspring of a person's actual siblings from others of this generation and, thus, refers to the offspring of both male and female siblings.

In this generation no distinction is made in terms of relative age or sex. This is also the case with respect to kin in the second ascending and descending generations from ego who are addressed with essentially the same term. A person's actual grandparents together with all individuals of this generational level are addressed as mami. A derivative of this term mamso is used to address all individuals in the second descending generation from ego. Individuals in the third ascending and descending generations from ego are addressed by the one term upo<sup>9</sup>.

While terminologically speaking, certain individuals are grouped together and categorised with the one term and thus,

in formal linguistic terms, certain relations are 'equated' with others, within the context of social interaction, however, distinctions are made (as I previously illustrated) between a person's actual tate (genitor), for example, and those patrilineal and matrilineal kinsmen of the first ascending generation who are also addressed as tate (see discussion below). The distinction between a person's actual and classificatory kin are often expressed in terms of the extent to which time and space are collectively shared by ego and his/her tate. Thus, for instance, a teen-age boy and his 'father' (tate) will, although not exclusively, reside together, eat together and work together, to name but a few of the activities they participate in together. With the other men who are also addressed as tate this teen-age boy may have only minimal daily contact.

It is important to realise here that Mayawo kin terms are infrequently used in everyday conversation<sup>10</sup>. Kin and affinal terms (which are specifically used within the context of name-avoidance relationships and which I shall discuss at length in chapter five) are more often used in formal highly public contexts, such as marriage negotiations or large-scale meetings, where it may be socially advantageous and politically strategic to stress a person's kinship relation with those other people present. Instead, a person is addressed with an abbreviated or derived form of their

personal name which, depending on the degree of familiarity, age difference, and genealogical proximity, may or may not be prefixed with an appropriate Mayawo or *Ambonese-Malay* kin term. For example, in the case of woman whose first name was 'Debora', those people of her own generation who were roughly of the same age and who knew her quite well (these people may also be genealogically close to her) addressed her as 'Boya'. Younger people in the adjoining generation to Deboras', not necessarily genealogically related to this woman, addressed Debora as either Nene Boya, *Tante* (an Ambonese-Malay term derived from the Dutch for 'aunt') Boya or *Ibu* ('mother') Boya.

It is misleading to view Mayawo kin classifications strictly in terms of a linear ordering of consecutive generations and individuals. As Geertz (1973:374-375) notes, terminological systems such as this link close and more distant generations of individuals to produce a synchronic circling of 'coexisting' relations as well as a cycling of reciprocal relations through time. Thus, while Mayawo kin terminology at first appears to depict a "ceaseless progression of generations" (*ibid.*:375) it in fact denotes the temporal 'iteration' of reciprocal relations obtaining between adjoining and alternating generations.

From the previous discussion of the differential affiliation

of individuals to Uma and *Marga* groups and the collective expression of Uma and *Marga* identity, it is evident that Mayawo notions of social relatedness are informed by a range of considerations which are variably expressed in terms of consubstantiality, genealogical distance, generational level and spatial proximity. It can also be seen that while immigrant individuals are excluded from membership in an Uma they are included within the broad framework of local constructions of relatedness by virtue of their shared residence and affinal links.

### Conclusion

Given the preceding discussion, it would be misleading indeed to view the social transformation from 'matrilineality' to patrification as an accomplished 'fact'. As I have attempted to illustrate in this chapter, social practices and the beliefs which inform them are in a continuous state of flux. These beliefs are constantly manipulated, suspended or invested with new meanings by different individuals in different social situations. To speak of cultural beliefs and social action largely in terms of a system of dichotomies (e.g. 'male/female', 'elder/younger', 'sacred/secular') and restrictive paradigms (e.g. 'double descent') for which marriage (specifically, asymmetric prescriptive alliance)

forms the "pivot" (Van Wouden 1968:2) simplifies the complexity of social relations and codifies the reciprocal interplay and invention of cultural meaning. A perspective of this kind also disregards the diachronic constitution of social groups.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, social groups and cultural values in Amaya can only be understood with regard to their realization within a specific historical context. This is not to say, however, that the historical specificities of European colonialism in the Maluku region served as a backdrop for, or were articulated independently of, local cultures. On the contrary, as Taussig (1987) observes, the construction of a 'colonial reality' not only required subject people and cultures for domination and conversion but in order to empower and legitimate a hegemonic order over time it was also necessary to recognise and appropriate indigenous practices and beliefs. Local cultural groups should thus be viewed as both constitutive of and constituted by the colonial encounter. The creation, configuration and reproduction of cultural practices and social relationships in Amaya reflects this dialectical interplay.

Thus, while contemporary Uma affiliation in Amaya is largely articulated in terms of "following our father", it is simply

not the case that the practice of matrifiliation and, by extension the principle of matrilineality, is or has been replaced by the practice of patrifiliation. Nor is it the case that the two structuring principles of social organisation co-exist independently. Rather, as I have suggested in this chapter, the logic of matrilineality, linked as it is to the notion of institutionalised male authority, has been conflated with the patriarchal ideology informing introduced forms of relatedness and organisation to create an indeterminate range of social possibilities<sup>11</sup>. In Amaya, this means that the people who comprise an Uma group constitute a diverse network of cognatically related individuals.

To fully understand, however, the different significations of uma (as physical structure, residential unit and descent-based social group) and Mayawo notions of social relatedness it is necessary to take into consideration not only those dimensions constitutive of a colonially constructed history but also local accounts of the past. As I have indicated in this chapter, the thematic content of local origin narratives constitutes an important dimension in the construction of social relatedness and identity. In the following chapter, I present the second part of the 'historical context' and examine Mayawo origin narratives, with a view to examining, in chapters five and six, the incorporation of Uma members



into the more inclusive socio-spatial categories of Ono and lato.

## NOTES

1. Throughout this chapter and the rest of thesis I employ a capital U to distinguish Uma as a descent-based group from the other significations of uma.
2. In a survey including 222 indigenous individuals under the age of 25, approximately 78% of this group were affiliated with the Uma of their F and FF. Approximately, 12% of this group were affiliated with the same Uma as their father and FM. However, only 1.3% could trace these maternal links through their father to the third ascending generation (i.e. FMM). Significantly, in another survey involving 119 people over the age of 25, approximately 22% of this group had the same Uma affiliation as their F, FM and FMM. Furthermore, only approximately, 7% of the people over 25 could trace their paternal Uma affiliation to the third ascending generation (i.e. F/FF/FFF).
3. Karcho, the primary category of objects in Amaya, are classified into a number of 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' (Valeri 1980:181) ranked categories. Thus, large thick, golden coloured (indicating a higher gold content) karcho are regarded as superior to small, thin discs composed of a variety of metallic substances. Within the context of marriage of fine-related negotiations, these inferior discs are frequently rejected by the woman's group. To send such a disc for consideration is locally regarded as an insult. It is also the case that each disc is ascribed a unique history of exchanges and associations (cf. Valeri 1980:189),
4. Shepard Forman, in his discussion of descent and alliance among the Makassae of East Timor (1980), notes that the 'payment' of 'bridewealth' is said to "open the door" (*ibid.*:159) and result in the "eventual incorporation of the woman into her husband's lineage" (op. cit.).
5. Lewis (1988) reports a similar conceptualisation among the Tana 'Ai of southern Flores where "men and women of the house are said to be 'one blood and flesh'" (*ibid.*:188). The relationship between matrilineal and patrilineal consanguines is thus expressed in terms of sharing 'flesh and blood'. Platenkamp (1984), writing of the Tobelo system of kinship, states that "kinship is considered to be the result of the cognatic transmission of the qualities 'flesh' and 'blood'..." (*ibid.*:176).

6. Fox (1971:42) observes that a person's name is comprised of two parts. The first name of a person is selected from the mother's or father's ancestral names. The last name is taken from the first name of the father. Barnes (1974:154) reports that among the people of Kedang a male child will receive the village name as well as the given name of his father.

7. Forth (1981) writing of eastern Sumba, notes the self-reciprocal use of the term 'umbu' by both second ascending and descending male generations. He also reports that members of local descent groups are named after deceased forbears. Usually a male child is named after his FF.

8. Mayawo kinship classifications are, in some respects, similar to those identified in the Ambonese-Malay/Bahasa Indonesia terminology, which also distinguishes between groups of individuals on the basis of sex, generation and relative age. In the Ambonese-Malay system, however, the same terms (*kakak* and *adik*) are used by both males and females to categorize individuals of ego's generation on the basis of relative age, a distinction is made between male (*kakek*) and female (*nenek*) collaterals in the second ascending generation and different terms are used for individuals in the +3 (*moyang*) and -3 generations (*cicit*).

9. Geertz (1973:374), writing of Balinese kin terminology, discusses a similar reciprocal ordering of generational relations. Thus, the term for "great-grandparent and great-grandchild is the same" (loc.cit). According to Geertz, the two generations are equated and "culturally identified" (loc.cit) in terms of the other. He concludes that Balinese kin terminology denotes the "spiritual and... structural relations among coexisting generations" (loc.cit) and not the mechanical positioning of successive generations through linear time.

10. Geertz (1973) makes essentially the same point regarding the use of Balinese kinship terms. According to Geertz, "the terms ... are almost never used vocatively, but only referentially, and then not very frequently" (*ibid.*:372). Geertz concludes that the Balinese terminological system classifies individuals primarily as "occupants of regions in a social field" (*ibid.*:373) and not in terms of their social interaction.

11. This relationship between the logic of matrilineality and institutionalised male authority should not to be confused with what has been termed "dual sovereignty" (Needham 1968:xii) in the literature. Simply put, the notion of 'dual sovereignty' refers to the division between ritual and political authority whereby the former is often portrayed as 'feminine' (Traube 1980:291) and 'sacred' (Lewis 1988:71) and the latter as 'masculine' (Traube 1980:291) and 'secular' (Lewis 1988:71).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A 'HISTORY' OF AMAYA:

#### NARRATIVES OF DIVERSITY AND CONTINUITY

Representations are authorized to speak in the name of the "real" only if they are successful in obliterating any memory of the conditions under which they were produced.

Michel de Certeau (1983:135).

#### Introduction

When asked to explain or elaborate upon the affiliation of individuals to social groups, political relations between different groups, the associations of groups with specific tracts of land or certain social classifications, practices and beliefs, many people in Amaya would invariably invoke the incidents and relationships depicted in local origin narratives to account for present-day realities. Similarly, when I consulted people about their perceptions of the past or, more specifically, about the time before the arrival of the Europeans, many people in Amaya would begin to narrate the stories recalling the origins of each of the founding groups in the village. For the majority of people in Amaya, these narratives are their history<sup>1</sup>. This is not to say that they are unaware of other historical narratives. On the contrary, as evidenced in chapter two, the people of the village have an acute awareness of the events of both the

"recent" and the "historical past" (Ricoeur 1988:114). Nor does it suggest that local narratives are independently constructed and interpreted. What it does indicate, however, is that for many people in the village these origin narratives constitute the means by which they express their identity, their relations with other people, and their view of the world in a diachronic sense. These views expressed by local people beg the question as to why the past is largely conceived and constructed in terms of the historiographic form of local origin narratives?

Each of the thirteen indigenous descent-based groups in Amaya known as Uma ('house') have their own, often inter-related, narrative of origin which, generally speaking, details where the ancestors of the group originated from, their subsequent journey to Amaya and their role in the establishment of the local state of Amaya. In the case of the seven founding 'houses' of Amaya (Surlialy, Soplero, Helweldery, Tronanawowoy, Newnuny, Halono and Umpenawany), these narratives are quite involved and collectively they comprise the mega-origin narrative for the village. The narratives associated with the remaining six houses generally detail the origins of these 'houses' from one of the seven founding 'houses'. For indigenous people, Mayawo origin narratives provide a logical exegesis of the associations obtaining between different groups and between these groups and the

physical landscape. In addition to this, origin narratives are said to disseminate the logic for local social categories, classifications and organisations.

Each of the named immigrant groups in the village also have their own origin stories which, like those of the founding 'houses' in Amaya, recall the primordial beginnings of the group. However, unlike the foundation stories of the different Uma groups, these immigrant accounts have no social or political currency within the context of Amaya. In addition to these accounts of the wanderings and origins of their ancestors, all immigrant groups and individuals can also recall another 'origin' narrative which, in this case, depicts their social and geographic point of origin on one of the nearby islands and their subsequent journey to and residence within the village of Amaya. The themes of separation, passage and amalgamation which organise immigrant stories correspond to those which reverberate throughout indigenous origin accounts. It is these thematic similarities which empower the harnessing of immigrant histories to those of the indigenes. Through this process, immigrant people are incorporated into the social, political and historical structures of the village. As such, the origin narratives for the indigenous 'houses' in Amaya are constructed as the dominant social discourse for all who live in Amaya.

Until quite recently, local origin narratives formed the primary framework for the constitution of social identity and political authority in Amaya. Today, however, there are a number of other 'historically'-oriented narratives (refer to Chapter two) which are engaged by local people to structure and render meaningful social practice. These narratives incorporate and disseminate several significant historical themes broadly expressed in terms of European colonialism, Christian conversion, and Indonesian nationalism. Together, they constitute a civilizing discourse of conquest, change and control. Mayawo historical accounts, on the other hand, are constructed as discursive metaphors of continuity and persistence which are seen to link the present to the original time of the past. Notwithstanding the explicit thematic differences between these two accounts of the past, both 'histories' also appear to express a set of similar strategies, oppositions and themes - themes which coalesce around the rhetorical notions of unity and diversity, hierarchy and egalitarianism. In this and the following chapters, I shall argue that it is this mirroring of logic which empowers both forms of 'history' in the field of local politics.

Through the emplotment of "stratified and interconnected modes of narrative" (Certeau 1983: 127), I present in this chapter the foundations for an understanding of how and why



it is the case that local origin stories remain an important dimension in the articulation of social relations and cultural practices.

One of the concerns of this chapter, as in the previous chapters, is to explore the notion, considered by a number of authors, including Rosaldo (1980), Sahlins (1985), and Taussig (1980), that 'history' is culturally constructed. In the following chapters, I examine the manner in which social relations and cultural practices are defined by an historically-ordered logic.

Before I proceed with an examination of the other dominant historical discourse which informs social practice in Amaya, I first make a few points regarding local perceptions of these 'histories', their production and documentation.

### Collecting and Constructing the Past

Mayawo regard their accounts of the origins of each of the founding Uma in Amaya as historical fact. In the vernacular, they refer to these narratives as hnyero, a term which is used interchangeably with the Indonesian word *sejarah* and, like its Indonesian synonym, hnyero is locally translated to mean 'history'. These accounts of Mayawo social and cultural

origins are opposed to the genre of narratives known as tintincha which are considered to be fantastic 'stories' or 'myths'<sup>2</sup>. The evidence for the veracity of local 'historical' accounts is seen by Mayawo to be immanent in both social practice and the physical environment<sup>3</sup>.

When I questioned people about how they knew that the events described in these narratives actually happened, many people pointed to the very existence of the village, the different descent-based groups and even themselves today as proof of the facticity of these narratives. On one occasion, when I queried how a *perahu* (a wooden sailing boat) could turn into stone or a giant walk from one end of the island to the other in just three steps, as recounted in local 'histories', I was led down to the beach and shown the 'stone boat' and the 'footprint' of the giant. On another occasion, after discussing with a number of people the situation on Damer before the amalgamation of the 'houses' which comprise Amaya, I was shown the stone ruins of the villages which were dotted along the west coast of the island prior to the formation of Amaya. In a similar vein, it is interesting to note that a number of elderly people in the village are named after either one of the ancestral beings associated with their Uma or after a place where the beings stopped and performed some important activity.

These "traces" (Ricoeur 1988:120) of the past are not, however, exclusively confined to the beings and events of local origin narratives but can also mark the passage of other cultures. In this connection, I was shown, amongst other things, a carving of a two-masted ship on a rock at the entrance to the main bay on the island and the vague ruins of the guest house in Amaya, destroyed many years ago, which was set aside for the visiting Dutch administrators, as evidence of European contact with the people of Damer. Signifiers of more recent 'historical' events, such as the Second World War and local incorporation within the Indonesian Republic, are respectively indicated by local people by a number of sites around the coast where bombs were dropped and discovered and by the presence of concrete cairns erected by or for national government agencies.

The corpus of historical accounts I refer to here do not explicitly constitute esoteric or restricted knowledge in Amaya. Most people have some knowledge, albeit fragmentary, of the events spoken of in these histories. There are, however, a handful of elderly men who are considered by the community as the most knowledgeable with regards to the details of these narratives. These men are, for the most part, the heads of the several village Uma and are knowledgeable not only about the origin history for their own Uma but also know something of the stories of other Uma.

Unlike the situation Fox (1979) describes on Roti, in Amaya there is one person, in particular, who is locally considered to be the repository for this body of knowledge. This person, affiliated with the 'house' of Surlia, is accorded the title of 'the one who speaks' (orliro) and is locally regarded as the "mouth" (nungcho) for the 'house' of the 'village head' (*Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah*) and other indigenous 'houses'. Upon the death of 'the one who speaks', the man's eldest son or his brother's son inherits the position. It is locally believed that with this inheritance also comes automatic knowledge of the various 'house' narratives.

While documenting these origin 'histories' I became aware of the variation that existed concerning the same 'story'. This variation was at times attributable to the fact that different individuals possessed different degrees of knowledge. However, this was not the only reason for this variation. I found that often individuals consciously deleted episodes and events in the accounts concerning their own Uma which they considered to be 'embarrassing'. This meant that references to incest, illicit sexual relations and theft, to name but a few, were often conveniently omitted. However, with respect to the stories of other Uma, informants were not so reticent and obviously took some pleasure in revealing these events. Moreover, they often cited the present day individual and collective behaviour of the members of the Uma

in question as verification of these past scandalous episodes.

There are a number of points I wish to emphasize here with respect to these local 'histories'. The first point is that historical knowledge does not constitute an immutable field of meaning but is subject to cultural variation and innovation. As Bruner (1986) rightly points out, the telling of these origin narratives is informed by the context, the audience and previous 'tellings'. Given these considerations, the reproduction of the narrative becomes also a dimension of its transformation (cf. Sahlins 1985). In this connection, it is interesting to note the incorporation of other narrative structures within these local accounts.

Secondly, these 'histories' make powerful political statements about both cultural unity and diversity as well as providing social and historical comment on the authentication of local practices, beliefs and positions of authority. In this respect, these 'histories' can be viewed as representing important discursive forms for the definition of identity.

Thirdly, following Foucault's thesis that knowledge and power directly imply each other, that is, power produces knowledge and it is knowledge which constitutes relations of power (cf. Foucault 1978), the negotiability of these 'histories' is not

so surprising especially in light of the tensions that exist between certain individuals and groups within the village and the political significance attached to these accounts.

While the 'histories' which follow primarily describe the origins and arrival of the seven founding groups in Amaya they also disseminate details of the origins of a number of other groups, which are in some way linked to or derive from one of the seven original 'houses'. The incorporation of these secondary 'histories' within this wider narrative structure reflects, to some extent, the nature of the relationship which exists between these connected groups.

On the occasion of public rituals, the histories of the seven founding Uma (Surlialy, Helweldery, Soplero, Awyeti/Tronanawowoy, Halono, Newnuny and Umpenwany) are narrated in sequence, beginning with the first Uma to arrive at Amaya and concluding with the last arrival. Only cursory references are made to the origins of the associated 'houses'. No reference is made at all to the more recent arrivals in Amaya.

In the following sections, I present two versions of the Mayawo origin 'histories'. The first account was narrated by the village orator who, as I have already indicated, is locally regarded as the physical repository of all local

narratives. The second version was narrated by the *Kepala Desa* ('village head'), who is affiliated with the ruling 'house' of Surlialy. In addition to his role as head of the smallest State administrative unit on Damer (the 'village' or *desa*), this person also holds the title of lelehro lato ('village leader'). Acting in this capacity, he is responsible for the observance and maintenance of local cultural beliefs and practices. When I asked the *Kepala Desa* if he could narrate the 'history' for his 'house', he proceeded to recount the 'history' of all the 'houses' in Amaya. In fact, the 'history' he narrated can be seen as an abbreviated version of the local 'history' of Amaya I specifically elicited from the village orator. As the *Kepala Desa* pointed out and I began to realise during my stay in the village, the 'history' of each local 'house' cannot be disengaged from the origin 'histories' of other village 'houses'. Indeed, it is precisely through this cross-referencing that the history of each 'house' gains its significance. This significance is discussed in a later section of this chapter.

While many of the characters and the events recounted in these narratives are similar, if not identical, the emphasis, temporal sequence and discursive context pertaining to each of these two accounts are, in some respects, quite different. The significance of this difference will become apparent in

later chapters of the thesis. The presentation, therefore, of a composite account of the Mayawo origin narratives would have excluded, if not destroyed, the uniqueness of individual and societal values and experiences expressed through this medium of communication. As Rosaldo rightly points out, "...stories often shape, rather than simply reflect, human conduct" (1989:129).

The first 'history' constitutes a more comprehensive narrative than that given by the *Kepala Desa*, which has as its focus, the 'house' of Surlialy. In the case of the more inclusive 'history' given by the village orator I have also included in parenthesis material derived from other people which offers a different interpretation of the some of the events depicted in the narrative. The following texts represent a paraphrased form of the original material. By this I mean that I have structured the translated accounts into a more readable English format than would be the case if I were to present the literal and direct translations. In order to retain the force and meaning of certain figures of speech I have quoted directly from the original data, which were recorded in both vnyola Mayawo and Ambonese-Malay.



## The 'History' of Amaya

### Version I: Informant, village orator

The 'house' of Surlialy [means 'descended from the sky'<sup>4</sup>] originated from the island of Luang to the south-east of Damer. The people of this 'house' set sail from Luang to look for a suitable place to live. Their *perahu* (wooden sailing boat) ran aground on the peak of the mountain Auhi<sup>5</sup> on the island of Damer. Here they decided to settle for some time. After the seas had subsided<sup>6</sup>, the ancestors descended from the mountain towards the sea-shore to look for a suitable place to live<sup>7</sup>. They stopped at a place called Vwortetani and lived there for a long time. Then they left and traveled to the north and stopped at the mountain Kokomani. There they made a village. They lived a long time there as well. To the east of Kokomani they could see another mountain which they called Monoluweri. Here they stopped momentarily. They left that place and journeyed towards the north, towards the sea. They arrived at the sea at a cape called Lulsunloyeni. They walked from Lulsunloyeni along the beach towards the west. They followed the beach until they met with the people of Awyeti at a place called Deuludinjeri. Then they parted from the people of Awyeti and returned along the beach to make the village of Letusu Resyara Resyara Talwunu or Amaya. Afterwards when they were patrolling their domain they met

with the people of the 'house' Soplero. The people of Surlialy invited the Soplero people to live in the village of Amaya. The Soplero people agreed to do this and together with Surlialy they made the village of Amaya which is the same village today.

The 'house' of Helweldery originated from the southern slope of the mountain Lumtuni on the island of Damer. The Helweldery people descended from the mountain and met with the people of Surlialy in the middle of their journey. They spoke to each other and agreed to meet again by the sea-shore. After Surlialy had met with the people of Awyeti they joined up with the Helweldery people and agreed to make a village together. Surlialy people were accorded the position of ruler as they were the first arrivals at Amaya. Surlialy then divided the village into two parts and gave the northern half of the village, the 'back' of the village to the Helweldery people, together with the title of Dochnuda Dorraso (*Tuan Tanah* or 'Lord of the Land'). This division of the village determined the name of the people who originated from the southern side of the mountain Lumtuni as the name Helweldery means 'one half', 'one side'.

The people of the 'house' Soplero originated from the volcano Vworlali on the eastern side of the island of Damer. They descended from the volcano and headed towards the sea. They

stopped at a beach, in the vicinity of the village of *Bebar Timur*, called Akilkili. There some of the Soplero people wanted to part and go in other directions. Unfortunately, between them they only possessed one earthen cooking pot. They decided to divide the earthen pot into two portions and give one half to those who wanted to go off in another direction and the other half to those who wanted to stay. Those people who wanted to explore further left Akilkili and walked to the beach Awaro. Here they met with the Surlialy people. This group decided to go and live with the Surlialy people in the village of Amaya. There they were given the title of Ryesro Kpawo ('Big Leader') and officiated as ritual leaders.

The 'house' of Awyeti originated from the western side of the mountain Lumtuni, from a place called Lenmeri. They left Lenmeri and descended to the sea-shore. In the middle of their journey they stopped at a place called Awolucho and left behind the pole they were carrying which was made from a long section of Bamboo *Betung* (*Dendrocalamus asper*). Here the bamboo pole sprouted and started to grow and continues to do so today. Then they descended to the beach without stopping. At the coast they met the Surlialy people but declined their offer to live at Amaya and continued west, where they met with the people of the 'house' Newnuny. The Awyeti people parted from the Newnuny people and journeyed back east and

formed a village not far from Amaya. After living at this place for some time, a fleet of ships from Seram sailed past on the way to a place called Awatpipi. An Awyeti man thought the people from Seram were going to steal the fish trap he had placed in the sea. So he took his bow and arrow and started to shoot at the Seramese ships. The Seramese came ashore and started to fight with the inhabitants of Awyeti. They slaughtered the majority of the people at Awyeti. The survivors fled to Amaya and sought refuge from the Surlialy people. They were given protection in return for all the land they possessed. To prevent the Seramese invaders from attacking Amaya, the women of the village covered the beach with the oily skins of a small nut and summoned waves which deposited large rocks upon the beach. From this moment on the Awyeti people lived in Amaya.

The ancestors of Uma Porhonowey were originally called Vietcho and came from the western side of the mountain Lumtuni. They descended from the mountain and stopped at the village of Awyeti. Not long afterwards, they were forced to flee together with the Awyeti people to the village of Amaya. At Amaya Surlialy decreed that the Vietcho people should erect a house close to the northern entrance of the walled village in order to protect the inhabitants of the village from attack. Their name was changed to Porhonowey which means 'in front of the door'.

[According to informants, Uma Awyeti has been extinct for some time. Because of the links between this 'house' and Uma Tronanawowoy the Awyeti origin 'history' has been largely subsumed within the 'history' of Tronanawowoy.]

The ancestors of Uma Tronanawowoy sailed from the small island of Dai to the island of Damer [insufficient land and disputes over fishing rights are reasons often given for their departure from the island]. They came ashore at a place called Deulkonadinjeri ('the place of many human heads') but didn't stop there as it wasn't suitable. They left this place and sailed without stopping until they reached the beach of Audi. Here they came ashore to look for food. When they returned to their boat they discovered that their cat which they had brought with them from the island of Dai had run away. They eventually found the cat in the forest at a place called Misunjeri. They renamed this place Kuhanjeri, the 'place of the cat'. Upon returning to their boat they found that the tide had receded and left the boat high and dry. They called to the dolphins and sailfish in the sea to help them pull their boat to the water, which they did. They then set sail towards the east and stopped at Atapro where the rudder of their boat snapped. They went ashore at a place called Harhuni where they obtained *mangi-mangi* wood to make a new rudder. They then set sail once again until they ran aground on a small limestone cape which they called Tutjetani 'broken *perahu*'. The bamboo pole (*Bambu Suangi*) they were carrying was washed ashore and started to grow and is still

there today. In fact, all their belongings were washed upon the shore and turned into stone, as did their boat. Thus, at Tutjetani one can see a stone pig, stone bed, stone gong, stone plate of rice, stone sail and many more objects. The Tronanawowoy people left Tutjetani and traveled along the coast and met the people of Awyeti and decided to stay with these people. Soon afterwards the Seramese invaders arrived and they were forced to flee to Amaya and seek refuge there. They were granted permission to stay at Amaya in exchange for all the wealth and land they possessed.

[According to members of Uma Tronanawowoy, this is where their story ends. However, the village orator informed me that there was another part to this narrative which, because of its scandalous content, was usually omitted by the people of Uma Tronanawowoy.]

While residing at Amaya, a man from Tronanawowoy married a woman from the 'house' Umakpauni ('big house'). At night this man went to the woman's 'house' and stole a bracelet. The members of the woman's 'house' caught her husband in the act of stealing the bracelet. After quarreling with members of the woman's 'house', the people of Tronanawowoy left Amaya and established a separate village on the mountain Anorto. However, Surlialy went to Anorto and ordered them to return to Amaya and build a house close to the house of Surlialy, on top of the stone boundary wall of the village. Thus they were given the name Tronanawowoy which means 'on top of the boundary'.

The 'house' of Halono or Umpereheni originated from the island of Luang. Seven sisters set sail from Luang and at each island where they stopped, one of the sisters disembarked and the remaining sisters sailed on. By the time they arrived at Damer only four of the sisters remained. The sisters stopped at a place called Ahivero where they left behind their bamboo pole (*Bambu Jawa*) which started to grow and exists until this day. Again one sister went ashore and the others sailed on. This sister constructed a village called Ilmarno or Ahili on top of a mountain. However, each day the mountain shook and threatened to destroy the village. No matter what she did the ground continued to shake, so she decided to leave and look for her sisters on the nearby islands of Teun and Davlof. As she sailed pass Amaya the people of Surlialy hailed her and asked her where was she going. They invited her to live at Amaya in return for the land she had just vacated.

According to local narratives, the 'house of Newnuny originates from two lines; Newnuny Udoni and Newnuny Vworlali.

Newnuny Udoni came from Kudon. Two men emerged from one hole, their skin was white and their eyes were like the eyes of cats<sup>8</sup>. They emerged from the place Pudoni Lawatetilini carrying a container of rice. They traveled until they

reached Lilahri Arhumetmo. Here rice from the container fell to the ground and grew, not as rice plants, but as sago palms. Then they descended to the sea and stopped at Luliwawano where, once again, rice fell to the ground and grew as sago palms. Then they went to the river Awnyevnyo at a place called Eriluno, where more rice fell to the ground and grew as sago palms. Then they climbed into the mountains and came to the river Kukutna where more rice fell and grew as sago palms. Then they again descended to the sea and stopped at a place called Ahlidupmo where the rice container fell to the ground and broke and the rice inside spilled out onto the soil and grew into many sago palms. They then walked around, extending their domain, and eventually met with the Awyeti people at Wotdiwuni. Then they parted and the people with the white skin returned and met with the people of Awnyevnyo or Uma Newnuny who originated from the volcano Vworlali.

The 'house' of Newnuny Vworlali originated from the southeastern side of the volcano Vworlali. Two sisters and their younger brother descended from the volcano. The two women were called Tulu and Rawlo and their brother was called Puruwalawo. They stopped first at a place called Aptaralam where they ate and drank together. After their meal they planted the bamboo container (made from *Bambu Betung*) which contained unfermented palm wine. The bamboo started to grow



and can be seen today. Then they left this place and descended to the sea-shore and stopped at a place called Tuinpipitlin or Limmolaro. Here the siblings parted, the two sisters went south following the coast while their brother traveled west. The two sisters eventually met with the two men of Newnuny Pudoni and married them. Afterwards, the sisters went looking for their brother and eventually found him. The brother asked his sisters if they would give him some land, as the land he possessed was too narrow. The sisters told him to follow them and they would solve his problem. They traveled until they reached the beach at Odaro. There the two sisters stood on the beach and pointed out to sea at the two small islands south of Damer. They gave the small island (*Terbang Selatan*) furthest from the mainland to their brother and kept the larger, closer island for themselves, reasoning that they were only women and were not strong enough to travel across the sea. The sisters then said to their brother, "brother you eat from the small island to Limmolaro, whereas we will eat from your boundary to our island and then west to Awnyevnyo". Then the three siblings sang a farewell song, "Odaro mlilweni Parano ntatatluweni" ('Odaro which gives water, parano which is flat'). After this the siblings parted. The brother went east to the village of Wulur and became the 'house' of Rohmode, the sisters went west to live at Awnyevnyo.

Not long afterwards, the people at Awnyevnyo were forced to flee from the Seramese invaders and seek refuge in Amaya. In exchange for protection they divided their wealth and lands between all the 'houses' in Amaya.

The people Umhersuny originated from the mountain Hersuny located near Awnyevnyo. These people were forced to flee their land when the invaders from Seram arrived and seek protection from the people of Amaya.

The ancestors of Umpenawany originated from the place Porori Lepari on the northern face of the mountain Lumtuni. They descended from the mountain to the sea, following the river Aro, until they reached a place called Awattuwaho. Umpenawany had thousands of members and they all lived at Awattuwaho under the leadership of two male commanders named Swormelai and Uhracho. After some time, the people left this place and went to a beach called Akawo where they stayed. Then they left Akawo and traveled until they reached the place called Wenowani [Umpenawany means the 'house of Wenowani'], where they made a village. Unfortunately, there was no water at Wenowani. So one of the men, accompanied by his dog called Korai, went to the sea-shore to look for water. Through a crack in a rock the dog saw water flowing and upon hearing the noise of the flowing water started to bark. The man saw what the dog was barking at and tasted the

water to see if it was sea-water or fresh water. It proved to be fresh water. Upon his return to the village of Wenowani, the man met with the people of Surlialy, who asked him where he came from and then invited him and his kinsmen to come and live at Amaya. The man returned home with this news and discussed the offer with the other villagers. Half the villagers decided to take up this offer and left for Amaya. The other half of the group declined the offer and returned to the place to Akawo and Awattuwaho where they turned into demons with mouths that ran vertically and no eyes. The people who went to live in Amaya were given the title of *Panglima* or 'War Commanders'.

By this time, the 'house' of Surlialy had so increased in size that some people left the ancestral house and took up residence in the house in which the Surlialy heirlooms and weapons were normally kept. This building was referred to as Umkeketony the 'small house'. So this break-away group of people became known by this name Umkeketony, the 'small house'.

In the beginning the people of the 'house' Surlia were not called by this name, their real name was Paknyani. These people originated from the volcano Vworlali. They descended from the volcano and lived in a place called Popi. Afterwards, people of the 'house' Ilwewani or Pomeo came and

stayed there as well. The two groups combined to become known as Popi Ilwewani Ilwiltuno Nadalai. Together they lived at Popi until they decided to descend to the sea-shore. They stopped at a place called Kumur Lama, but this place was unsuitable as it did not have drinking water. They left and went to the village of Kumur where a member of their 'house' became the *Bapak Rajah*. A Paknyani woman named Puiteti became pregnant to a resident of the village, a man called Tetluli. As her kinsmen forbade her to marry this man she fled in shame from the village in the middle of the night. The next morning she arrived at Amaya while the people of the village were engaged in a ritual. According to tradition in Amaya, all foreigners who arrived at Amaya uninvited were killed. The people of Amaya were outraged that the woman had disrupted the ritual and demanded her death. But the Surlialy people took pity on the pregnant woman and ordered that a red pig be slaughtered in place of the woman. Uma Surlialy adopted the woman as a child of the 'house' and changed her name from Paknyani to Surlia, a derivative of the name Surlialy and a sign of her adoptive status. Because of her adopted status and dependency on the 'house' of Surlialy, the woman was assigned the lower rank of uhro or *Bur* (in Ambonese-Malay) and not the higher rank of mahno which was accorded to the other 'houses' in Amaya. Surlialy people decreed that a man from this 'house' would act as the 'mouth' (nungcho) of Surlialy and hold the position of village orator

and act as the physical repository of the history of Amaya. It was also decreed that the people of Surlia would treat the wounded in war and steer the boat used for war.

The people of the 'house' Umkeketony purchased slaves from east Timor. The slaves affiliated to this 'house' were known as Umkeketo, a term which denotes their derivation from the 'small house'. Because of their slave status, these people were assigned the lowest rank of ota.

**Version II: Informant, Kepala Desa**

The ancestors of the 'house' of Surlialy originated from the mountain Lumtuni. From the mountain eight people descended to the sea. The father was called Leyapo davno, the mother Aittev inno, the eldest son Uhrulu uhruliyai while the youngest son was called Marnulu lokeliyawo. Between the eldest and youngest sons were four other children, two boys, Luane and Harmei and two girls, Achleli and Rarlairo. The ancestors then proceeded to mark this site (which was close to the area settled by the people of Awyeti) with their sign. After doing this, the Surlialy ancestors then journeyed to the east. They arrived at the end of a cape and there met with the people of Melu. At this site the Surlialy ancestors also made their mark. Then they returned to the mountain

Lumtuni.

Once again the Surlialy people left the mountain and descended to the coast. On the way they stopped at a place which they called Kokomani after the Koko tree which grows there. They then continued on, stopping at other places on the way until they arrived at Amaya. Here they constructed a stone wall around the confines of the village. Then they set off again in an easterly direction and stopped at the beach Avwara. Here they met with the two Soplero ancestors who were siblings. The Surlialy ancestors invited the two siblings to come and live in Amaya, however, one of the siblings did not want to go. This posed a problem as the siblings only possessed one earthen cooking vessel. To overcome this dilemma, they divided the earthen pot into two parts. The sibling who did not want to accompany the Surlialy ancestors to Amaya took one half of the pot and set out towards the east. The other sibling took the remaining half and went to Amaya.

Later there arrived at Amaya the ancestors of the group Helweljeri, who originated from the southern side of the mountain Lumtuni. The three groups of ancestors came together to form one village, Amaya. The ancestors of Surlialy, because they were the first to arrive at Amaya, divided the village land between the other two groups. Herlwejeri were

given the land at the 'front' of the village while Soplero were given the eastern side of the village area. The 'back' of the village belonged to Surlialy. Those people settled the village which started from that day until the present.

The ancestors of the three groups then formed a decision making body in Amaya. Previously people did not follow government like the government there is today. The government of those people was still 'carried' by tradition and they made a 'government' where one person was leader. Previously, the ancestors of Surlialy were two people, younger brother and older brother. They did not know who of the two should become leader and 'carry' the people of Amaya. Then the older brother said to his younger brother, " I will stay below and I will follow you". From that moment onwards they became uhro and mahno. The uhro person who was the oldest was named Uhrulu Uhrulyai and his younger brother who became mahno was called Marnulu Lokelyawo. From that moment on there existed in Amaya uhro and mahno. The Surlialy people became both uhro and mahno, "they own that history until now". "Those people were related and don't know why one is below the other, why they made it like that, uhro mahno". When the village was finished and had become one, the people of Surlialy, Soplero and Helweljeri assembled and nominated three leaders, one for each 'house'.

Not long afterwards, the war began and the people ran everywhere<sup>9</sup>. Then the people of Awyeti, Ttasuni (Tronanawowoy) and Newnuny came to Amaya. After the war had finished the people from Luang came, the Halono people. Not long afterwards the last to arrive in Amaya came, the people of Wenowani. After they had all arrived there were then seven Ryesro ['leaders'] who controlled Amaya. Each brought their own traditions and little by little these were amalgamated to form the traditions and customs of Amaya. Surlialy invited those people and one by one they came to Amaya. Surlialy then "carried" those people like an older brother "carries" his younger brother and so it has been that way until this day<sup>10</sup>.

The 'houses' of Helweljeri, Soplero and Surlialy together they owned land around the village. When Awyeti, Newnuny and Ttasuni came they brought with them land and gardens. Surlialy, Helweljeri and Soplero allocated to them the southern, 'front' section of the village and in return these people gave their gardens and land to all the people of Amaya so that everyone in the village could use this land. Thus, from the day they came to Amaya until now, this has been the case.

The people who held Amaya when 'tradition' was still powerful were Surlialy and Umkeketony. Soplero joined with Umhersuni to form one Ono (residential aggregate) and because the



'house' of Soplero was originally divided into two groups and each group held one half of an earthen cooking pot, they called the Ono Herweli, 'half'. Helweljeri and Umakpauni ('house large') came together to form one residential aggregate and were then joined by Porhonowey and Haprekunare. Ttasuni (Tronanawowoy) separated from Awyeti, they became separate 'houses' with separate leaders. Newnuny also became a separate 'house' with a separate leader as did the people of Wenowani who became a separate 'house' with its own leader. At the very back came the Kyerani people who originated from the island of Moa. When they arrived at Amaya there was no longer any place for them, so they went to live with Umpenwany. Although they are two separate 'houses' Kyerani and Umpenwany, it is Umpenawany who holds the power. One person from Umpenwany is the leader, the one who governs those 'houses', the people of Kyerani help the Umpenwany leader.

This is how Surlialy is connected to Umkeketony. When Surlialy descended from Lumtuni they brought with them their heirlooms, weapons and cloths. When they came to Amaya they stayed together in one house, the ancestral house of Surlialy. All the objects they brought with them from the mountain, the bed, the golden hand, were too powerful to keep in the same house as the people. So they made a small house for all the objects from the mountain and placed them inside

this house. Previously, there was only one 'house', Surlialy. But because they made another house, a small house which they called Umkeketony, then we hear that one 'house' became two, Surlialy and Umkeketony. But these people are not two different people, but one who live in two houses. This is how they are known today.

Today we have *adat* together with *LMD* and *LKMD*. In Amaya we do not separate government from the seven leaders, the ryesro, they walk together. We speak Indonesian and we refer to the government but we still live in our own land and we still own the tradition of seven ryesro. Those leaders hold *adat* from before until this day. Previously, the *adat* of the original inhabitants of Amaya were separate. Then they taught each other their customs and they formed one body of custom which is called *adat* Amaya. The *adat* of Amaya teach people so that they can live together with their relatives in Amaya. The customs of Amaya are appropriate for the people here, for all people to live by, so that people can live in a humble and modest way. With these customs we can finish things together, like when we thatch the roofs of houses in the village or sit down together and feast. We open coconut fronds and sit down on the ground together and together we eat and drink. We who live in Amaya have to follow these customs, we cannot copy other *adat*. We people of Amaya are very different from others, we are very humble. We cannot

elevate ourselves above others.

### Comments

Both the preceding narrative versions 'emplot' (Ricoeur 1988:4) a number of sequences which can be broadly categorised into three distinct, but inter-connected, phases. Thematically speaking, these phases can be characterised as referring to (1) an initial fragmentation and disorder; (2) a journey and; (3) the restoration of order. The events and sequences of both versions are interwoven to culminate in the dominant theme of the narratives, which to borrow Ricoeur's phrase, can be identified as the "temporal synthesis of the heterogeneous" (Ricoeur 1985:157).

The first phase is generally concerned with describing the fragmentation of existing social and political orders on the island of Damer and the nearby islands of Luang and Dai. The fragmentation or destruction of these original orders is brought about either by internal conflict or by the destructive actions of outsiders. In the case of the two immigrant houses from Luang and Dai and a number of the autochthonous 'houses' (e.g. Soplero, Umpenawany and Surlia) disputation and political instability result in internal division. The disorder and eventual downfall of the remaining

'houses', with the exception of Surlialy, is attributed to the attack launched by the Seramese invaders. In both these narratives, only the 'house' of Surlialy maintains its integrity and autonomy. It is this house which finally overcomes both internal and external destructive forces and brings order to disorder.

The second period recalls the journey or passage of the ancestors, away from the disorder depicted in the first part of the narratives, in their search for order. The places where the ancestors stopped and performed certain activities are transformed into durable "marks" (Ricoeur 1988:120) through the act of naming. In this way, history is incorporated into the physical landscape through the process of inscribing the events and identities of the past onto the physical features of the environment. The narratives, thus, "... bind events to an objective geographical space through the listing of named places" (Munn 1973:214). The geographic landscape becomes an historical text of social events which can be read by the members of Mayawo society. Reference to these points in the landscape, either through narration or by physically visiting these places represents a means by which the present can be engaged to account for the 'reality' of the past.

It is also the case that the emplotment of the activities of

the ancestors in terms of a series of spatial references and coordinates serves to delineate the borders, territories and named places associated with a particular group. Thus, the territorial domains of each Uma group in Amaya are created and recreated through the idiomatic devices and structure employed in local origin narratives (see Bowen 1989:691).

The third and final phase delineated in these two versions of the Mayawo origin narrative refers to the restoration of order through the amalgamation of these different 'houses' to form the *negri* or localised 'state' of Amaya and the subsequent social classification of this difference - a classification which is organised in relation to and encompassed by the founding 'house' of Surlialy. This phase of the narratives represents the final realization and objectification of the social forms and relationships which, until this point, are articulated in the narrative in a state of becoming. In this respect, therefore, the narratives, taken as a total structure, represent a "teological emplotment" (Bowen 1989:691) of the history of the localised state of Amaya. At another level, the actions of the ancestors of Uma Surlialy in creating "system out of chaos" (Sahlins 1985:80) constitutes a cosmogonic act. This phase of the narrative, therefore, depicts the recreation of society and the cosmos.

In both versions of the narrative, relations between the various 'house' groups are, categorically speaking, differentially expressed in terms of origins, age and gender. As I previously mentioned in chapters one and three, these three principles of classification are invoked as the logic for the construction of both social diversity and unity.

In the first version, the ascription of the social classification uhro to the 'house' of Surlia is explained in terms of all three concepts, with specific emphasis on gender relations. Thus, in the narrative, it is because the ancestor of Surlia is an immigrant, female and adopted by the ancestors of the house of Surlialy that this 'house' is accorded the status of uhro. The irony of this relationship is quite explicit - a 'house' that was once the ruling 'house' in another village is reduced to a socially dependent status. It is also the case that the ancestor of this 'house', by fleeing from her source of origin, effects the transformation of herself and subsequent generations from indigenes to strangers. In this sense, the members of the 'house' of Surlia encode the ambiguous identity represented by the 'Stranger-King' (see Sahlins 1985). This transformation from rulers to dependents, from indigenes to strangers is embodied and facilitated by the ancestral female depicted in the narratives. She is represented as sharing the same qualities, status and social relations as both a child

and a domesticated animal - a pig.

The domestic pig constitutes an appropriate sacrificial object, as it symbolically embodies many characteristics which are regarded as human. In Amaya, domestic pigs consume the same foodstuffs as humans, either left-overs or food that has been specifically cooked for the animal. Like humans, pigs occupy specially constructed dwellings and are given pet names. They are also said to be as intelligent as humans. In addition to these characteristics, domesticated pigs are also accorded many of the qualities and values ascribed to women and children. Like women, they are associated with the domestic sphere of the house and are seen as dependents in the same way that children are. Just as child-rearing is largely regarded to fall within the province of women's activities then so is pig-rearing perceived as women's work. The majority of the domesticated pigs in Amaya are female whose reproductive capabilities are largely controlled by their owners. This aspect, together with the overall shape of the pig, suggests that the pig can be seen to also symbolically represent the socially constrained fecundity of women. As a foodstuff, the consumption of pig meat and pig fat is regarded as a powerful and effective means of attaining and maintaining good health and gifts of pig meat to kinspeople is seen to nurture good relations. Similarly, women are depicted in terms of nurturance, in relation to

their role as mothers and producers of food, as well as with respect to the space they occupy upon marriage and their role in facilitating and nurturing relations between 'houses'.

The colour of the sacrificial pig is also significant, as it encodes attributes commonly associated with women. In Amaya, the color red generically symbolises blood. Red refers to menstrual blood and the reproductive powers associated with this substance. It also refers to the transformation of these reproductive powers into the transmission of blood, via women, from one generation to another.

While pigs symbolically codify a number of characteristics identified generally as human and, more specifically, as female and child-like, they also represent, as Valeri observes, "...a distortion, even a perversion, of human behaviour" (1985b:47). Pigs, like dogs, are known to eat human faeces and indulge in incestuous and unrestrained sexual behaviour. Furthermore, pigs are seen as destructive. In their wild state or if they escape captivity, pigs regularly destroy gardens and have been known to attack and injure humans. In this connection, Valeri suggests that the pig symbolically encodes the notion of transgression as well as representing the subject individual as a transgressor (Valeri 1985b:48). The woman in the narrative is portrayed as a transgressor of social values. She is pregnant but not



married, she disregards her social responsibilities and links of kinship by fleeing from her family and village and she disrupts an important ritual event. I would also suggest that while pigs can be viewed as transgressors they can also be seen as mediators (cf. Lattas n.d.). In this respect, pigs mediate the relationship between the forest and the village and between culture and nature, in the same way that women mediate gender and inter-generational relations as well relations between various 'house' groups, the public and the private, the domestic and non-domestic domains of social life (see also Pannell 1989). Thus, in the narrative, the woman is depicted as both transgressor and mediator. She is presented as mediating the relationship between the ruling 'house' and the rest of the village, as well as mediating between the domain of ritual action and non-ritual space and activity (between the sacred and the secular), and between the two villages.

As an animal which inherently embodies a number of oppositions, ambiguities and contradictions, the pig represents an appropriate sacrificial animal. The sacrifice of the pig effects a number of transformations which, broadly speaking, are concerned with changes in the status of relations of origin, gender and generation. Thus, the ruling 'house' of Paknanyi, symbolically represented as female, is transformed to a state of subordination and dependency; the

woman herself is transformed from transgressor to mediator, as well as from outsider to insider - she is once again incorporated into a social context and the bonds of kinship broken when she fled her village are re-constituted albeit through the transformed status of adopted child. The origins of the woman and her 'house' are effectively negated through her encompassment within the protective province of the 'house' of Surlialy. What initially started as an intra-generational conflict between the woman and her suitor is transformed into an inter-generational relationship through the action of adoption.

The notion of inter-generational difference and dependency is also used to describe the relation between Umkeketony, an off-shoot of Surlialy, and the 'slave' house of Umkeketo, which is accorded the classification of ota. The links between these two 'houses' and their derivatives are, in this instance, constructed in terms of the kind of values, obligations and responsibilities ascribed to the parent/child, adopter/adopted nexus and the generational asymmetry which characterizes these relationships.

As I discussed in chapter three, adoption represents one means by which individuals can change their Uma affiliation. Generally speaking, the person adopted is accorded the same rights and responsibilities as the other members of the Uma.

However, in the case of the few individuals in Amaya who originally came from another village and were adopted by a married couple in the village, the situation appears to be somewhat different. In these instances, the adopted person is often assigned a disproportionate amount of domestic duties when compared with the tasks taken on by the other household members and is, generally speaking, treated differently from the other children in the household. It would appear, therefore, that the meaning of the adoptive relationship between Umkeketony and Umkeketo, as depicted in local origin narratives, borrows more from the latter cases than from the former examples which involves indigenous individuals.

In the second version of the narrative, the classifications uhro and mahno are accounted for in a different manner from that presented in the first account. The relationship between the ruling mahno 'house' of Surlialy and the uhro 'house' of Surlia is depicted in terms of the intra-generational difference and complementarity between elder and younger siblings, respectively.

In Mayawo kin classifications, this relationship is terminologically marked. Thus, individuals (male and female) distinguish between their same sex generational cohorts on the basis of whether they are older, kake, or younger, weye, than themselves.

It is also the case that in many households the relationship between male siblings initially represents the core structure around which household relations coalesce<sup>11</sup>. However, in many of these households it is also true that unresolved grievances between the wives of the siblings and between the brothers themselves results in the fragmentation of the household. In these instances, contrary to the narratives, it is the younger brother who leaves the parental house and settles in a new dwelling. In the contemporary context, it is the elder male sibling who usually inherits a title and exercises authority over the affairs of the family in the event of his father's death. Given local accounts of previous Mayawo social organisation (see chapter three), it appears likely that the current, predominant practice of male primogeniture is a recent phenomenon which probably reflects more European, in particular, Dutch values than it does former indigenous ones.

The division within the 'house' of Surlialy, based on the relative age distinctions between the two primal male siblings, does not result in the fragmentation of this 'house'. Instead, this diversity becomes the model or scheme for a new social and political order. The 'house' of Surlialy is in this instance, paradoxically, depicted as the generative source for a series of relations, largely represented in terms of the oppositions and asymmetries of

younger and elder, ruler and ruled, encompassed and encompassing.

Together, the narratives map out the characteristics and values associated with the classifications mahno and uhro. Uhro is collectively defined in terms of those qualities associated with females, children, domesticated animals and older siblings. Mahno, on the other hand, is depicted in the narratives as equivalent to the values ascribed to males, adults and younger siblings. The themes of siblingship and filiation expressed in both accounts, suggest difference and opposition with respect to age and unity and complementarity in the form of common origins. In a Dumontian sense, therefore, the 'houses' are differentiated in their relation to the founding 'house' and unified in their identification with place. Diversity, as depicted in the narrative, is thus legitimated through unity and the integrity of the group, and by dissociation, the person, is constructed as dependent upon the encompassing unity and hierarchical proclivity of the wider configuration (cf. Kapferer 1988).

In addition to the notions of siblingship and filiation discussed above, the relationship between the different 'houses' is also expressed in terms of the temporal and spatial order of arrival of each 'house', which, to borrow James Fox's term, represent "orders of precedence" (1989:52).

Indeed, the emplotment of these 'orders of precedence' constitutes the primary temporal element in the structure of the narrative. In this sense, the arrival of the ancestors of the house of Surlialy at the present-day site of Amaya provides the key point for the subsequent ordering of the story. In turn, the temporal and spatial positioning of each of the other groups serves to define the chronological sequence of the proceeding groups.

Apart from the principle of temporal distance, variously articulated in the two versions of the narrative in the form of the inter-generational asymmetry between parents and their children; the intra-generational opposition between younger and elder siblings and the chronological disjuncture between the arrival of each 'house', a further element is emphasised as a principle of distinction between the groups. In both versions of the narrative, the story depicts how all but two of the 'houses' (Surlia and Umkeketo) are accorded the status of mahno, a classification they share with the first 'house' Surlialy. In order to acquire this classification these groups were required to offer their land, and other possessions including heirlooms, for the use of all villagers. The ancestors of the houses of Umkeketo and Surlia, however, did not possess such valued exchange items. Thus, in the narratives, the distinction between the mahno houses and the uhro and ota houses is also expressed in terms

of the possession or non-possession of property and more specifically, land.

A number of other oppositions are put into play within the context of the Mayawo origin narratives. These include the distinctions between inland and coast, highland and lowland, rulers and ruled, autochthones and immigrants. As I indicated in the body of the narrative, this latter opposition remains a point of contention among members of the differentially classified 'houses' of Surlialy and Surlia, with members of the uhro 'house' Surlia asserting that the ancestors of the 'ruling' house of Surlialy were immigrants from the island of Luang, whereas, their own ancestors were indigenes. This differential interpretation of ultimate origins injects into the claims to authority made by members of the 'house' of Surlialy on the basis of their indigenous origins a degree of ambiguity which, in turn, suggests that the narrative can be read in a number of different ways according to the political agenda of the individual or group. This respective portrayal of the 'house' of Surlialy and the 'house' of Surlia as strange indigenes and indigenous strangers also feeds into and upon many of the themes associated with the Polynesian concept of the 'Stranger-King' (Sahlins 1985:73-103).

Contrary to Dumont's view, where hierarchy within the context of Hindu society, is linked to the "opposition between the

pure and the impure" (1970;66), the concept of hierarchy articulated in both the narrative versions outlined above is not informed or shaped by one singular, dominant oppositional principle. Instead, a plurality of oppositions, asymmetries and disjunctures, which, either singularly and/or in various combinatory relationships, inform, reproduce and refract multiple hierarchical potentialities, are expressed within the framework of these narratives (see Foucault 1978, as well as Fox 1989). I stress here that the narratives do not explicitly define one specific hierarchical structure, rather they signify the symbolic, tropic and ontological configurations for a number of hierarchical possibilities which may be given expression within the context of social action.

An important aspect of these 'histories' is the portrayal of the role of the founding 'house' and the articulation of power and authority within this hierarchical order. According to these 'histories', the reconstitution of order and the construction of a new hierarchical structure is brought about by the benevolent actions of the founding 'house' of Surlialy. It is interesting to note in this connection that the history of the 'house' of Surlialy is presented by the *Kepala Desa* as encompassing the history of all 'houses' in Amaya. This historiographic encompassment reflects the spatial, temporal and political incorporation of these



'houses', on the part of Uma Surlialy, within the structure of local origin narratives. This ability to embrace possible rival groups and re-shape them lends weight to any claim to authority by members of this 'house'.

In both versions of the narrative, violence and force are not the devices employed to create this unified body. Rather, it is the conformity and assent of the differentiated parts which legitimates and empowers the encompassing system. In this instance, power can be seen not as a singular entity but as something which is immanent in the plurality of existing social relations (cf. Foucault 1978).

These accounts represent more than just a "temporal synthesis of the heterogeneous" (Ricoeur 1985:157). They also create and delineate the spatial and social horizons of that difference. Through the plot sequences of both versions of the origin narrative, history and people are mapped onto the physical landscape, and in doing so, the social and territorial boundaries and connections obtaining between groups, kinsmen and villages are cartographically portrayed.

In this way, people and place are presented as inextricably linked to one another and both serve as mnemonic reminders of the past. The grounding of 'history' in both the physical landscape and social groups ensures, what Bourdieu (1977)

terms, "the naturalisation of its own arbitrariness" (*ibid.*:164). That is, the socially produced ideas and ordering of events which are arbitrarily constructed as 'history' are experienced as an integral and aprioristic dimension of the world and are thus taken for granted. The "naturalisation" of history, in turn, substantiates the organisation of society in accordance with the structures and themes of mythological history (cf. Bourdieu 1977:163-164) and thus historical time is made to appear coterminous with the time of the present; the here and now.

This process of conflating the past with the present, is particularly evident in respect of the second version of the narrative, where the *Kepala Desa* has constructed the 'history' of his 'house' and that of the other 'houses' as a continuous, sequential narrative extending from the original time of the creation of Amaya to the present day. The first account, on the other hand, does not attempt to connect the narrative with the present time, instead, it remains located, and isolated, in the distant past. The temporal discontinuity of the first version and the reworking of the temporal structure of the narrative in the second version, can be explained, to a large extent, when both versions are considered within the context of daily life in Amaya. In the following chapters, I argue that the construction of these

origin histories as continuous stories, co-terminous with the present, represents one of many strategies which empowers and accords precedence to particular modes of being and forms of authority.

Mayawo origin 'histories' are locally regarded as, in part, delineating and comprising the broad ideological framework of what is referred to as either hnulcho in the vernacular or adat in Ambonese-Malay. Significantly, hnulcho/adat is largely constructed and defined in terms of local perceptions of the past. Thus, hnulcho/Adat in Amaya refers to those beliefs, relations, practices and concepts which are thought of and identified as comprising the body of Mayawo 'traditions'. This is not to say, however, that within the context of contemporary Mayawo society, hnulcho/ adat now refers to only a handful of resilient cultural practices. As I indicate in the following chapters, local conceptualisations of hnulcho/adat represent a synthesis of the historical and the contemporary, the traditional and the novel, the continuous and transformative aspects of the experiential world. Important here is the realization that hnulcho/adat constitutes a particular way of thinking and doing which is regarded by many people in Amaya as the only 'natural' way to act (see Bourdieu 1977).

Furthermore, these narratives can be seen to inscribe certain

themes which are engaged by local people in the social construction of personhood. In this thesis, I argue that these origin 'histories' disseminate, in a concentrated form, not only the possibilities for an ideology of practice but also the themes for a particular mode of being or ontology<sup>12</sup> - an ontology which gathers significance within the context of everyday life in Amaya.

For the immigrant residents of Amaya, however, local 'histories' of origin do not hold the same value and meaning as they do for other members of the village. These people can be viewed as displaced persons; dislocated from the culturally constituted source of their own identity and not able to fully locate themselves in relation to the social ontology idealized in local narratives. For the immigrant residents of Amaya, alternative modes of being and corporate groups of identification are provided by the symbols, rituals and structures of the Indonesian Nation-State.

### Conclusion

In this chapter and chapter two, both of which I have generally identified as the 'historical context', I have attempted to give some indication of the discursive framework within and against which the people of Amaya articulate and

reproduce their social and cultural identity. The narratives of indigenous and colonial history I have outlined represent more than just a chronological ordering of the past. Like any construction presented as 'history', these narratives conjoin and refract themes of cosmological, ontological and ideological significance and, in this sense, they render culturally meaningful local peoples experiences of and relations with others. The oppositions, asymmetries and discontinuities, together with the continuities, similarities and unities expressed within the narratives of both indigenous and colonial history provide a readily accessible field of possible forms and logic for the articulation of power, the legitimation of identity and the expression of resistance. Indeed, as I argue in the following chapters, these narratives are constructed as the source and locus for local, State and Church expressions of hierarchy.

In order to understand the significance and force of both of these narratives, it is necessary to examine their dialectical engagement within the on-going context of daily life in Amaya.

## NOTES

1. While many of the authors of the anthropological literature on so-called 'Eastern Indonesian' societies have chosen to refer to local accounts of the past as 'myths' (for example see Barraud 1985; Hicks 1974; Pauwels 1985; Platenkamp 1988; Schulte-Nordholt 1971; Traube 1986; Van Wouden 1968; Visser 1984 & 1988) I have elected, for reasons outlined in the text, to speak of these constructions as 'historical narratives'.
2. James Fox (1979), in his discussion of Rotinese historical narratives, also points out that a number of distinctions are made between various local oral accounts. Similar distinctions are, according to John Bowen (1989), also made among the Gayo people of Aceh province in North Sumatra
3. In Western scientific thought, the authenticity of historical events and identities are verified by their existence in documents, monuments and by the rationale of science, i.e. archaeology, paleontology, etc.. Thus, when confronted with the events inscribed in the 'histories' of other cultures we are inclined to dismiss these as impossible and fantastic accounts, purely on the basis of applying our own positivist logic.
4. This semantic depiction of the members of Uma Surlialy as 'descended from heaven' serves to portray them as distinct from the other so-called *asli* ('indigenous') groups. In this sense, therefore, the ruling member of Uma Surlialy fits with Sahlins' notion of the 'Stranger-King' (Sahlins 1985:78).
5. This part of the narrative is somewhat reminiscent of the story recounted in the Bible concerning Noah's journey in the Ark and his eventual arrival on the top of Mt. Ararat. Given the history of Christian proselytisation in the region, it is not altogether unlikely that elements of Christian narratives have been incorporated within local accounts.
6. While discussing the content of this account with a number of people, it was suggested that the events depicted in the narrative occurred at a time when the seas were much higher than they are now. Some speculated that the recession of the sea might have been associated with an ice-age.
7. According to one member of Uma Surlialy, his ancestors originated from the top of the mountain Lumtuni in the centre of the island and are therefore autochthonous. However, according to the version presented by the village orator, Surlialy are immigrants and not the original inhabitants of the island as the members of the orator's 'house' claim to be.

8. This description of the 'house' of Newnuny ancestors as having "white skin" and "eyes like cats" could be a reference to them being European or having European ancestry. Volkman (1985:29), in her study of ritual and change, remarks that among the Toraja, the Dutch were considered to have "cats' eyes" or "white eyes".

9. The 'war' referred to here is said by local people to have been waged between the villages located on the western side of Damer and the invaders from Seram. Some people have suggested that the phrase 'the invaders from Seram' refers more to the fact that the invading forces came from the north and not necessarily from the island of Seram. Other people have suggested that the invading fleet referred to in the narratives belonged to the Majapahit empire.

10. This paradigm of the enterprising and knowledgeable younger sibling and the subordinate elder sibling is also discussed in the works of Forth (1981), Hoskins (1983), Josselin de Jong, de P.E. (1980b.), Van Wouden (1968), and Visser, (1984 & 988), to name but a few. In contrast to this view, Mckinnon (1983), Fox (1989) and van Dijk and de Jonge (1987) discuss other situations where the category of 'elder' is considered 'superior' to that of the 'younger'.

11. Of the 105 households recorded during the period 1986-1987, 16 of these consisted of two or more actual brothers, their spouses and children.

12. My understanding of what is meant by ontology is primarily informed by the works of Theodor Adorno (1973) and Bruce Kapferer (1988). According to Kapferer, ontology refers to "those constitutive principles of being that locate and orient human beings within their existential realities" (*ibid.*:220). Furthermore, I would argue (as does Adorno) that these constitutive presuppositions of human subjectivity are linked to the historical setting in which a human being is formed. Such a view of ontology rejects the "essence-mythology" (Adorno 1973:xvi) view of being exemplified in the works of Heidegger and Buber. For Adorno, the existential philosophy of Heidegger represents a jargon which pretends to make present an idealized form of human subjectivity that is devoid of content and discounts the historical development of human consciousness.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 'THE CHILDREN OF THE PLACE':

#### RANK, RESIDENCE AND MARRIAGE

...in all societies with 'houses', we find tensions and often conflict between antagonistic principles that are, moreover, mutually exclusive: descent and residence, exogamy and endogamy, and, to use medieval terminology, which is none the less perfectly applicable to other cases, right of 'race' and right of election.

Claude Levi-Strauss (1987:152).

#### Introduction

In his examination of local origin 'myths' from the Timorese Archipelago and the Moluccas, F.A.E. van Wouden remarked that "one is struck by the remarkable points of resemblance ... [between] ... the system delineated in these myths ... [and] ... the structure of society" (1968:145). The legitimating potential of local origin narratives alluded to here by van Wouden, has also been discussed in a number of more recent studies<sup>1</sup> of cultural groups in 'Eastern Indonesia', although few of these works extend the analysis of 'myth' beyond the charter paradigm originally proposed by Malinowski (1926) and adopted by van Wouden.

In this chapter I begin to explore in depth the relationship between the past and the present, between narrative and social action which, until now, has only been hinted at in



the previous chapters. In particular, I attempt to show how local 'metaphors of history' (cf. Sahlins 1981) have, in some instances, become idioms of practice. In this connection, I focus upon the social classification and ordering of Uma groups and the individuals who comprise these groups in terms of the thematic oppositions, asymmetries and disjunctions reproduced in local origin narratives. Contrary to the view of 'myth' as charter, I argue in this and the following chapters that in Amaya time is constructed in dialectical terms. That is, the present is engaged to account for and verify the 'truths' of the past which, in turn, is harnessed to and informs contemporary practices and beliefs.

The second part of this chapter is concerned with the incorporation of both differentially classified indigenous Uma and immigrant *Marga* into more inclusive social groups locally known as Ono. In this section, I not only examine the historical formation and transformation of Ono units but also discuss the various means by which different individuals are affiliated to these groups and the implications of such socio-centric categories.

Finally, in the third section of the chapter, I examine one specific context, namely that of marriage, in which the different social classifications ascribed to the various village Uma are hierarchically ordered and expressed.

Marriage is also a context within which individuals come together and act as a collective group through their membership in a particular Ono. In this respect, marriage not only constitutes one context in which both Ono membership and the classification of groups is accorded significance but it also represents a specific instance in which individuals simultaneously express their affiliation to a number of different social groups.

### Social Classifications in Amaya

The seven founding 'houses' of Amaya, together with the six other 'houses' which are locally considered to originate from, or be closely linked to them, are all classified as mahno. The term mahno is derived from the name of the younger of the two primal male Surlialy siblings, who figure so prominently in local origin narratives (see chapter four). In the narrative, the younger brother, Marnulu Lokelyawo, is elevated to the position of leader while the older brother, Uhrulu Uhrulyai, pledges to serve his younger sibling.

Of the two non-mahno 'houses' one, Uma Surlia, is classified as uhro after the eldest ancestral Surlialy sibling while the other 'house' is identified as ota<sup>2</sup>. Members of this latter 'house', Umkeketo, are locally regarded as descendants of

slaves brought from East Timor hundreds of years ago who were adopted by a mahno 'house'<sup>3</sup>.

The large number of local residents classified as 'immigrants' or *pendatang* are not directly incorporated into this system of social classification. However, their very exclusion from this framework effectively structures their placement in Mayawo society in terms of this system of ranking.

Of the 105 residential dwellings in Amaya, 8 are generally regarded as ota households, five as uhro households and 75 as mahno while the remaining 17 households are designated as *pendatang* households. A total of 33 individuals (17 men and 15 women) are identified by the name of the uhro 'house' of Surlia while 46 people (28 men and 18 women) are identified by the name of the ota 'house' Umkeketo. There are, however, many more people, now affiliated with mahno 'houses', who are considered to be descended from either uhro or ota ancestors.

Previously, according to local people, members of the ota 'house' were required to work the gardens held by the 'village leader' (lelechro lato) as well as tend the gardens of other mahno individuals affiliated with the 'houses' of Surlialy and Umkeketyony. Those people classified as ota were prohibited from owning land and were largely dependent upon

their relations with these mahno 'houses' for their well being. The situation with the uhro 'house' of Surlia was somewhat different. Members of this Uma collectively owned tracts of land, which was given to them by the 'house' of Surlialy. Members of this 'house' were also called upon to perform certain non-economic duties for the other 'houses' in the village (see below). Most people concur that radical changes to the economic, political and social relations between the differentially classified persons and groups took place early this century, at the same time that a shift from matrilineality to patrification began to gather momentum (see chapter two and three for more details).

Unlike the account of so-called 'traditional rank' given by King (1985:81-101), this discussion of the previous system of rank in Amaya is at best fragmentary and limited. Very few people in Amaya today can recollect, in any detail, how relations between the differently classified 'houses' were expressed prior to the re-introduction of Christianity and Dutch pacification of the region in the the first decades of the twentieth century. While King is able to draw upon a large body of Dutch and Church literary sources in his reconstruction of the 'traditional Maloh ranking system', extensive colonial accounts of local organisation on Damer do not exist and, for the most part, the literature is confined to a handful of works. Of these works, Riedel (1886) is the

only author who explicitly, albeit briefly, mentions the differentiation of the population into a number of social categories. According to Riedel (*ibid.*:463), the population of Damer is comprised of three categories; the 'aristocrats', the 'ordinary people' and the 'slaves' and that these groups are defined on the basis of whether they are 'free' or not.

In Amaya, the classifications mahno, uhro and ota are also referred to with the respective Ambonese-Malay terms *marna*, *bur* and *stam*. Throughout the region of Maluku Tenggara, similar systems of social classification are invoked by local people with slight variations of the Ambonese-Malay terms employed. In the literature (see de Josselin de Jong 1937:11; Lebar 1972:111; Bartels 1977:24; Renes 1977:225; McKinnon 1983:260; Chauvel 1984:11) these terms are often glossed as 'aristocrats', 'commoners' and 'slaves', respectively. These appellations, I would argue, do not adequately, if they do so at all, convey the meanings and relationships associated with these categories of social identity. Nor do they take into account the shifting and contextual dimensions of that identity. I would argue that the glosses 'aristocrats', 'commoners' and 'slaves' reflect more colonial Dutch perceptions of local social organisation than they do indigenous interpretations.

As I suggested in the previous chapter, the social expression

of these different classifications and values should not simply be perceived in terms of stratification (cf. King 1985) or, for that matter as "caste" (de Josselin de Jong 1937:11; Lebar 1972:111) or "class" (de Josselin de Jong 1947:8). Stratification itself implies stasis across strata and uniformity within these layers, with the origins and persistence of the parts presented as largely independent of the total structure. Caste is an often misunderstood concept which has been applied, inappropriately, to a number of cultural contexts within Indonesia (see Geertz 1963:24; Peacock 1973:101; Forge 1980: 222). As Dumont (1970) argues, caste is, for a number of reasons, confined to Hindu society within the context of India. Class too is an unsuitable term to use to denote the social construction of difference discussed here. As King (1985) points out, "classes are taken to be essentially economic phenomena..." (*ibid.*:13) largely defined on the basis of the differential ownership or exclusive control of monetary wealth, movable property, labour and land. Given the conceptual limitations associated with the terms stratification, caste and class it is obvious that the construction and ascription of difference in Amaya has to be approached from a different perspective.

In this chapter, I argue that the differential classification of local 'houses' as mahno, uhro and ota is best understood when viewed as a constellation of reciprocal, multi-stranded

and hierarchical relations which are culturally expressed and validated in terms of the dialectical interplay of the logic and continuities of local history with present social practices and beliefs.

### Mahno, Uhro and Ota

As I discussed at some length in the previous chapter, the terms mahno and uhro (and their respective glosses, *marna* and *bur*) refer to two different but inter-related social categories which are primarily characterised and defined by the relationship obtaining between elder and younger siblings, respectively. This primary relationship between siblings is, in the narratives, further elaborated upon and extended to incorporate those relations and values obtaining between parents and children and males and females. In particular, the classification uhro is accorded the same qualities associated with women, children and domesticated animals. As I discussed at some length in the previous chapter, these categories of being evoke images of nurturance, domesticity, and dependence. At the same time, however, all three categories, woman, children and domesticated animals, occupy important positions as mediators in the articulation of social relations in Amaya and the construction of social space and time. As such, the relationship between those

'houses' classified as mahno and the 'house' accorded the status of uhro should not be viewed in terms of a strict unidirectional organisation of responsibilities, authority and identity, as suggested by the glosses 'aristocrats' and 'commoners'. Rather, the relationship between these 'houses' should be seen in terms of the kind of reciprocal and complementary relations which structure and define local constructions of gender, age and origins.

One aspect of this complementarity is expressed through the kind of responsibilities accorded the uhro 'house'. According to local people, members of this 'house' were previously assigned the position of steersman on the boats used to wage war against the people on the nearby island of Wetar. Within the context of warfare, members of this 'house' were also responsible for attending to those persons injured in the fracas. Today, with the cessation of warfare, they are no longer called upon to act in either capacity. However, as I discussed in the previous chapter, the senior male of the uhro 'house' still performs his duties as orator of the various 'house' narratives, generally, and, more specifically, as the 'mouth' for the ruling 'house'. The assumption and implementation of each of these responsibilities compliments and is constitutive of the actions of the other 'houses' in the village.



Similarly, the same observations also apply to the classification ota. While, the people accorded this classification are commonly regarded to be the descendants of 'slaves', in local origin narratives this social category is depicted in terms of adoption. Thus, the relationship between the ota 'house' and the other 'houses' in the village should be construed in terms of the kind of values, obligations and characteristics ascribed to adoptive relationships (see previous chapter).

So far, I have discussed these classifications in terms of them depicting certain social relationships. These relationships are also accorded a number of different values by people in Amaya. Thus, when speaking about the relationship between the mahno 'houses', on the one hand, and the uhro/ota 'houses', on the other hand, and the individuals ascribed these classifications, local people often characterised the relationship in terms of the values large and small, high and low, above and below. Thus, mahno 'houses' and individuals are portrayed as "big", "high" and "above"<sup>4</sup> while both uhro and ota 'houses' and individuals are described as "small", "low" and "below". Most people, regardless of their social status, concurred that mahno 'houses' and individuals were ranked "higher" or "above" both uhro and ota 'houses' and individuals. Similarly, the one uhro 'house' and the individuals who comprised it's

membership were ranked "higher" than people affiliated with the ota 'house'. One man from Umkeketony even went so far as to suggest that the system of classification in Amaya was akin to the institution of "monarchy" which exists in Europe. The mahno 'houses', according to this person, "ruled over" the uhro and ota 'houses'.

The ascription of the different values identified by local people organises the various 'houses' in the village into a tri-partite, inter-connected system of rank.

It is important to realise that the different social classifications ascribed to the individual Uma in the village are locally regarded as inalienable (cf. McKinnon 1983:259). The immutable nature of Uma classifications is largely informed by the view that the themes of the origin narratives, which are locally perceived to define these categories, are not themselves subject to change. While Uma, as abstract entities, are not able to change their classificatory status as mahno, uhro or ota, the individuals who comprise the membership of these groups can, paradoxically, manipulate their social status by changing their Uma affiliation.

As I indicated in chapter three of the thesis, the classification accorded a 'house' is an important

consideration in the affiliation of individuals to that group. Given the predominant contemporary practice of patrification, most people are ascribed the rank of their father's 'house'. Previously, however, as recently as one generation ago, the majority of people affiliated with their mother's 'house' and "followed" their mother's rank. In those cases involving marriages between people affiliated with 'houses' of the same rank, local social classifications do not represent a significant issue. Whether a person affiliates with their father's or mother's 'house' does not overly effect the status ascribed to them. However, in those cases which involve marriage between people of differently ranked 'houses', the situation is often not so clear cut, and a number of other considerations are brought into play<sup>5</sup>. For example, in the case of a mahno woman who married an ota man, four of the children from this union affiliated with their father's 'house' and were, thus, accorded the rank of ota. The first born child, a female, however, was accorded membership in her mother's 'house' and assumed the rank mahno. In another case of marriage between a mahno woman and an ota man, again all of the children born to this union, with the exception of the first born child, a male, were assigned membership in their father's Uma. As I discussed at some length in chapter three, the first-born child is often affiliated with the maternal Uma because it is born in the house of the wife's parents or because it is given to the

maternal Uma in place of marriage-related valuables.

There are other instances of marriage between a uhro woman and an ota man where the children affiliated with their maternal Uma, the higher ranked Uma of the two 'houses'. Conversely, there are a number of examples of marriage between an uhro man and an ota woman where the children affiliated with their paternal Uma.

Given the fact that matrification and patrification are both locally regarded as legitimate social means of determining membership in an Uma and both forms of affiliation are practiced, it is difficult indeed to identify hard and fast principles of either group affiliation or rank ascription. Obviously, a person's Uma affiliation determines their social rank but it is also the case that the rank ascribed to a particular Uma will, in some cases, influence the eventual affiliation of the individual. It is important to acknowledge, therefore, that within the parameters of local organisation and classification there exists room for negotiation and manipulation.

While, I have discussed a number of instances whereby individuals born of the union of differently ranked individuals are affiliated, either through their mother or father, to a high ranked mahno Uma, this is not to say,

however, that they are seen as equivalent to those people whose parents, grand-parents and great grand-parents were all affiliated with mahno 'houses'. In practice, therefore, people recognise varying degrees of authenticity or 'purity' within each social category. It is in this connection that the construction of past and present relations within a genealogical framework is rendered meaningful and politically significant.

Genealogical representations of social relations are often used, as Pierre Bourdieu points out, to "...justify and legitimate the established order..." (1977:19). In Amaya, the organisation of relations in these terms is often used to both conceal and reveal the status origins and identity of individuals. For example, the the father of the present head of one mahno Uma married a woman from the uhro 'house' of Surlia. The woman had affiliated with her maternal Uma as had her mother and mother's mother. The son, given the transformation in the principles of Uma membership, affiliated with his father's Uma. In theory, as a member of a mahno 'house', this person is also accorded the rank of mahno. In practice, this is nominally acknowledged. Most people, however, also acknowledge that, as a result of his father's marriage, his status as mahno is not of the same order as someone who is descended from only mahno unions. In the same way that people speak about individuals as 'really'

belonging to another Uma because of the recent change from matri to patrification, then so do they speak about some 'mahno' individuals as 'really' being uhro or ota. In this example, the mixed marriage occurred in the generation adjacent to egos'. However, genealogical memory is not confined to the recent generational past but reaches back several generations. In the case of mixed marriage some generations ago, the possibilities for concealment are far greater. Hence, a prominent mahno man when recalling the exploits of his ancestors and mapping out his relations to other people in the village, conveniently omitted to mention that a female ancestor of his 'house' married an ota man. Much of this kind of knowledge is held by the older members of the village. Very few of the younger State-educated people in Amaya are able to identify their predecessors past the grand-parental generation. It is likely, therefore, that with the passing of this older generation will also go the status skeletons hanging in some people's genealogical 'closets'.

The occurrence of inter-rank marriages, especially between mahno and uhro/ota defined individuals, sets up an apparent conflict of interests and values insofar as an individual's genealogically close relatives may be affiliated to a lower ranked 'house'. For example, the classificatory 'sisters' and 'brothers' (actual MZC) of 'L', a woman from the mahno 'house' Umkeketony who was also married to the ryesro for Uma

Tronanawowoy, were affiliated with the uhro 'house'. Her mother's youngest sister, who was about the same age as herself, had married an uhro man and the children from this union had been incorporated into their father's 'house'. 'L' often spent her afternoons with her MZ, sitting and talking in her house. While the two women were obviously quite close to each other, I never once saw the MZ or her children visit 'L' at her residence (which was situated next door to where I stayed). It was always the case that 'L' went to her MZ's house. I often heard 'L' 's step-daughter make disparaging remarks about the 'lower' status of her step-mother's MZC and comment upon the "arrogance" (*sombong*) of these people.

Just as not all of the people accorded the generic rank of mahno are not regarded as equivalent then so it is the case that not all of the 'houses' classified as mahno share the same social and political status. The ascription of socio-political precedence among the various village Uma is largely contingent upon interpretations of the temporal and spatial ordering of 'houses' depicted in local narratives. As I discuss in some detail in the following chapter, the titles claimed by the different Uma on the basis of 'historically' constituted rights, empower certain groups and individuals within the field of local politics.

I should point out here, that in Amaya, discussion of the

different classifications, their rank and status is most often confined to the discursive areas of gossip and slander (cf. McKinnon 1983:261). For example, when I first arrived in Amaya and began to enquire about the category ota, a mahno man who occupies a prominent position within the village initially denied the existence of such a classification. His response reflected the position taken by the national government which, since the inception of the Republic, had officially prohibited the practice of slavery throughout the archipelago. However, when he realised that I was acting largely independently of the government, he freely admitted that a number of people in the village were indeed categorised as ota. His mother, a woman in her mid-eighties, was not so reticent, and often complained that with the changes brought about by Independence and education those people classified as uhro and ota were "*sombong*" ('conceited') and had forgotten their true position in society. Uhro and ota people, on the other hand, protested amongst themselves and to me that the limited interpretation of such classifications within the context of social life in the village were archaic and were not in keeping with the spirit of the Church or the tenets of the Nation. On no occasion did these people deny their status as uhro or ota or advocate the abolition of this system of classification. What they did argue for were more opportunities to participate in the field of local politics.



In order to understand why it is that uhro and ota individuals do not see the answer to their situation in the termination of this system it is important to realise that the classifications mahno, uhro and ota have ontological as well as social and political meaning. That is, for an individual, they represent the means by which identity can be grounded in the thickness of the past and, through the reproduction of local origin narratives, be connected to other identities in the present. More than this, however, these classifications gather up a number of different values, qualities and concepts which are constructed as constitutive of specific categories of being. Given that these classifications inform and, indeed, are constitutive of the construction of individual and social identity in Amaya, the refutation of a person's rank would ultimately render problematic their placement within the constellation of relations which comprise their social universe. Similarly, the proposed re-evaluation of the symbolic and practical limits of these categories suggested by uhro and ota individuals is equally problematic.

The extension of the social and political horizons of mahno action to incorporate uhro and ota defined individuals would necessarily entail a transformation of the relations between these different social categories and, as such, a transformation of the meaning and values of the categories

themselves (cf. Sahlins 1981). Furthermore, in order for such actions to take place, a re-reading of local historical narratives would be required on the part of all concerned.

As indicated in the following chapters, the re-structuring of local origin narratives is well underway. It is here that the different temporal organisation and continuities expressed in various versions of the origin narrative begin to take on social significance. Generally speaking, the village orator, an uhro man, while not denying the ontological points of reference for his identity, does not attempt through the structure of the narrative to objectify or legitimate this dimension of his identity by folding into his story (sic) narratives of the recent past and discourses of the present. As the following chapters demonstrate, the *Kepala Desa*, on the other hand, weaves together the warp of his own narrative with the weft of Indonesian nationalistic symbols and rhetoric to create a continuous ontological fabric or, perhaps more correctly stated, fabrication. In doing so, he creates a space within which it is possible to re-define the objectifications of the past and project these into a radically altered future.

In the following chapters I explore the different contexts in which mahno, uhro and ota classified individuals attempt to re-define their relations with each other. In particular, I

examine the role of the Church and the State in the process of re-definition and, in some instances, objectification of these social categories.

In the next section, however, I discuss one specific context in which the classificatory status of Uma as mahno, uhro or ota is, at one level, objectified in terms of a configuration of fixed, historically-generated relations and, at another level, subsumed within the horizons of a broader social framework known locally as Ono.

#### Soa: The Debate

From the discussion in chapter three, it can be seen that relatively unique groupings of related individuals are often referred to in terms of spatially-oriented classifications. Uma and uma lavcho represent just two such socio-spatial categories and configurations. Uma lavcho and Uma, together with the immigrant *Marga* groups, are incorporated into more inclusive place-based units, generically referred to in the vernacular as Ono.

Everyone in Amaya, including immigrants, temporary residents, mahno, uhro and ota defined individuals, is incorporated into one of the four named Ono aggregates. The appellation Ono is

also a term of address used to specify a person's actual and classificatory children. Ono groups are commonly glossed as *soa* in Ambonese-Malay.

While a handful of anthropologists confess uncertainty as to the etymology of the term *soa* (Van Wouden 1968; Cooley 1969; Matsuzawa 1980:376), it is now widely accepted that the term *soa* is a Ternatan lexeme (cf. Platenkamp 1984:178; Visser 1984:201; Bartels 1977:25; Chauvel 1984:10). As Platenkamp points out, throughout Maluku often an indigenous term for *soa* exists (cf. van Wouden 1968:163; Cooley 1969: 141; Visser 1984: 201) which suggests that "soa as a word at least has been imported from elsewhere" (1984:178-179). In Ternate, Bartels reports, the term *soa* "...designates a quarter or ward of a town or village" (1977:25). He suggests that, in the Ambonese context, only a handful of villages actually have *soa* which correspond to physical space.

There is some debate amongst anthropologists regarding the nature of *soa*. Some authors argue that *soa* are territorial groups, others state that they are genealogical groups while some conclude that *soa* represent territorial genealogical units. Van Wouden (1968) notes that among the Amehai of Seram, *soa* are patrilineal descent groups (*ibid.*:147), whereas , for the Wemale of West Seram , the term *soa* describes a matrilineal, matrilocal grouping (*ibid.*:148). Van

Dijk and de Jonge, working in the Babar archipelago, also report that the term *soa* is used to specify a descent group (1987:57). On Kei, van Wouden reports that *soa* applies to a descent group and also corresponds to a district. Van Wouden concludes his consideration of the term *soa* by diplomatically stating that it is "both a genealogical group and a territorial group" (1968:149).

Cooley (1969) writing of social organisation in Ambon, suggests that previously the term *soa* may have referred to a land-owning 'kin-group' which underwent radical change as a result of Dutch interference (*ibid.*:147). Kennedy (1955) dismisses this idea of *soa* as land-holding units in favour of seeing them as geographic divisions within the village (*ibid.*:256). Chauvel's (1984) statement that in some Christian villages on Ambon Island *soa* represented territorial groups appears to confirm Kennedy's thesis. However, Chauvel goes on to state that in the Moslem villages of the Hitu peninsula, the term *soa* referred to purely administrative structures. Cooley, on the other hand, argues that while *soa* may in some locations have geographic connotations, they basically denote a "...collection [s] of unilateral descent groups ... which became established at a particular time" (1969:148), that is, an "inter-related migrant group" (*ibid.*:140).

Van Wouden, in a more recent work (1977), writes that on Tanimbar *soa* "occurs between the tribe and the clan" (*ibid.*:199) insofar as it "divides the village into a fixed number of units which are related to the number of title-holders" (*loc.cit*). Van Wouden, in his discussion of *soa*, refers to a work by Roder (1948) in which the author views *soa* as "an organisation of one or more families which may or may not be related, which settles in someone else's territory and there forms a new closed unit, a *soa*" (*loc.cit*).

Matsuzawa, (1980) writing of social organisation among the northern Galela, observes that previously *soa* referred to "a localized kin group" which was flexible enough to permit "the easy incorporation in-migrants" (*ibid.*:345). Today, he states, "the word [*soa*] is used mainly in relation to 'place'" (*ibid.*:376).

It would appear, therefore, that the term *soa* is multivocal in meaning and, when considered in a comparative framework, can be seen to refer to a number of differentially constituted social groups. The widespread use of the term, which is employed throughout the province of Maluku, is testimony not only to the profound influence northern cultural groups exercised upon the rest of the region but also to the systematic and far-reaching dissemination of Dutch colonial administrative structures. As Cooley (1969)

points out, *soa* represented one of the few local organisations that were retained by the Dutch colonial government in order to facilitate effective control over local populations. In the process of appropriation, certain transformations took place with respect to the constitution of *soa*, the degree of authority invested in these groups, the appointment of *soa* leaders (*Kepala Soa*) and the relation of these groups to other organisations and offices within the village.

Given the various interpretations and expressions of *soa*, which are themselves the product of different cultural, historical and political contingencies, it is preferable to speak of local terms and concepts rather than concentrate on the significance of borrowed glosses.

#### Ono: 'The Children of the Place'

In Amaya, each Ono is associated with a particular section of the village space, an association which is encoded in both the name of an Ono and in local origin narratives. Ono names, therefore, reflect both the historical, spatial and social orientation of each group in the village.

According to local origin narratives, the establishment of

the four Ono in Amaya is historically linked to the seven founding Uma. Initially in Amaya, according to these narratives, Ono did not exist. The only social groups were Uma, which were associated with a particular section of the village. The village was (and still is) conceptualized as a dug-out canoe (tena) pulled up onto the shore<sup>6</sup>. The sea-ward, northern side of the village is called atowi, the 'stern/back'[of the canoe]; the land-ward, southern section of the village is referred to as auli, the 'bow/front' [of the canoe].

Given that the members of each Uma were [and still are] referred to as the 'children of the ancestors' (ono mamso) the area to which each Uma was linked to was generally described as livcho ono, the 'place of the children'. With the influx of new groups into the village and the establishment of affinal and other relations with the founding 'houses', livcho ono came to denote a number of affiliated 'houses' located within one of the specified areas within the confines of the village. Over time, the members of these associated 'houses' were collectively differentiated from other groups of 'children' through their emplacement within the village/canoe.

Thus, Ono Aulcheyeni and Atowcheyeni are respectively, the 'children belonging to the bow and stern' [of the canoe],



cheyeni being a possessive suffix. The names of both of these Ono also refer to their location *vis-a-vis* the Bapak Rajah's 'house', which is situated in the middle of the village. Thus, they are also the 'children belonging to the space in front and behind' the ruling Uma. According to local origin narratives, the ancestors of the primary constituent Uma of Ono Atowcheyeni, Helweldery, were the third group of people to arrive at Amaya, after Surlialy and Soplero. At the time of their arrival, the village was divided into two halves, each half associated with the two resident Uma, Surlialy and Soplero. The ancestors of Uma Helweldery were allocated the seaward section of the village, the 'stern'. The other 'houses' which comprise this Ono apparently entered into affinal relations with the 'house' of Helweldery. All of the 'houses' which comprise Ono Atowcheyeni are regarded as mahno 'houses'.

The three primary 'houses' which comprise Ono Aulcheyeni were, according to local narratives, the last of the original founding Uma to arrive at Amaya. As a result of an invasion by 'Seramese' pirates, these three 'houses' were forced to flee their respective territories, located at various points on the western side of the island, and seek refuge in Amaya. Their incorporation within the village and their designation as mahno 'houses' was conditional upon them seceding all of their property to the inhabitants of Amaya. The spatial

association of these 'houses' is not, therefore, linked to relations of affinity but stems from their common experience of adversity.

Ono Suryali, which means the 'children descended from the sky', is situated in the centre of the village. This Ono takes its name from its primary constituent Uma Surlialy, which was the first Uma to arrive in Amaya. The name and the spatial position of this Ono reflects this event. The other mahno 'house' in this Ono is Umkeketony or 'small house', which is locally regarded as an off-shoot of the parent 'house' Surlialy. Given the historically constituted links between Uma Surlialy, Umkeketony and the uhro and ota defined 'houses' of Surlia and Umkeketony, it is not surprising that members of these two latter 'houses' are also affiliated with Ono Suryali.

The name of the fourth Ono, Onherweli, refers to the 'children of the side', who are located in the eastern, middle section of the village. The name Onherweli encodes a time in the distant past when there were only two Uma in the village, Surlialy and Soplero, who each occupied one side of the village. The name could also be interpreted with respect to the symbolic construction of the village space as a canoe. In this context, 'children of the side' are the 'outriggers' (demno) of the canoe and provide stability to the body of the

canoe/village. Certainly this was the case previously, when Uma Soplero, which is the primary constituent 'house' of Ono Herweli, held the position of ritual priests in juxtaposition to the secular authority invested in Uma Surlialy (see diagram 5.1). Uma Soplero and the other constituent 'houses' of this Ono are all regarded as mahno 'houses'.

Although, each Ono consists of a number of Uma, Ono are not primarily defined in terms of either descent or genealogical relatedness. Ono are first and foremost defined with respect to place. The relations between the constituent Uma comprising an Ono, and between different Ono are locally regarded as the product of mythico-historical processes (see chapter four for more details).

Diagram 5.1. The Spatial Demarcation of Ono and the Territorial Associations of Uma and Marga Groups (approximate) within the Confines of the Village of Amaya.

FOREST AND GARDENS

<u>Ono</u> Aulcheyeni - <u>Uma</u> Halono				
<u>Uma</u> Newnuny				
<u>Uma</u> Tronanawowoy				
<u>Uma</u> Lutrunawowoy				
<i>Marga</i> -	Tetiray	Rewi-Rewi	Tromlakor	Rumlaklak
	Maloki	Tetimelai	Woriwon	Rumpeniak
	Septori	Marantika	Leliwiary	Derku
	Mesak	Sakarias		
<u>Ono</u> Herweli -			<u>Ono</u> Suryali -	
<u>Uma</u> Soplero			<u>Uma</u> Surlialy	
<u>Um</u> hersuny			<u>Uma</u> Surlia	
<i>Marga</i> - Kollo			<u>Um</u> keketony	
	Ratuhanrasa		<u>Um</u> keketo	
	Marapai		<i>Marga</i> -	
			Petrus	Ruff
			Leterulu	Romer
			Maurehsi	Kwara
			Penaudi	Pomeo
			Mamou	Laiteti
			Tanodi	
<u>Ono</u> Atowcheyeni - <u>Uma</u> Helweldery				
<u>Um</u> penawany				
<u>Uma</u> Porhonowey				
<u>Um</u> akpauni				
<i>Marga</i> -	Silweta	Menahem	Utomo	
	Imlawin	Ratuhanrasa	Tehuayo	
	Lunmisai	Wathisen	Tio	

SEA-FRONT

For the indigenous residents of Amaya, membership in an Ono is mediated by a person's 'house' affiliation and generally reflects the spatial associations of each 'house' which, as mentioned previously, are inextricably linked to a specific area of the village. The spatial location of Uma in relation

to the four culturally recognized sections of the village - the front, back, side and centre - determines the Ono affiliation of each Uma. Thus, for example, Uma Halono, Tronanawowoy and Newnuny together comprise Ono Aulcheyeni, as these Uma are located in the 'bow' section of the village. A number of people reside outside of the area with which their Uma is identified, yet, they are still members of the Ono which incorporates their Uma. In these cases, actual residence is secondary to a person's Uma affiliation. For Mayawo, as long as the location of the umtuvatvcha ('oldest house'), the ancestral house for each Uma, is maintained the dispersal of Uma members outside of this domain is not regarded as problematic.

While Ono membership for the indigenous inhabitants of the village is primarily predicated upon their Uma affiliation, for immigrants, however, there are other means by which Ono affiliation is established. For example:

Fube Rumpeniak arrived in Amaya from Wulur (a village situated on the eastern side of the island) to teach in the *Sekolah Dasar*. Divorced, she lived with her only child in a house situated in the Atowi ('stern') section of the village. However, Fube was not incorporated into Ono Atowcheyeni but into Ono Aulcheyeni, an Ono associated with the 'bow' of the village. Why? Fube's father is a member of the Rohmode descent group in Wulur. While Fube was given to her mother's group (Rumpeniak), it is her link to her father's group which was instrumental in determining her Ono affiliation in Amaya.

According to local origin narratives, the founding

ancestors of Uma Newnuny (a constituent Uma of Ono Aulcheyeni) were 3 siblings, two sisters and a younger brother. For reasons which are too lengthy to document here, the siblings parted. The sisters went to the west into what is now Mayawo territory, while their younger brother journeyed to Wulur and started the 'house' Rohmode. Thus, the relationship between Uma Newnuny in Amaya and Rohmode in Wulur is historically constructed as EZ/YB. Related to Uma Newnuny as a descendant of one of these apical siblings, Fube was, therefore, incorporated into the same Ono as the 'house' of her 'elder sisters'.

Other temporary visitors to Amaya may be extended Ono membership on the basis of residence. That is, their place of residence determines which Ono they will be incorporated into. Immigrant men and women who marry into the village, on the other hand, are generally incorporated into the Ono of their spouse, which may or may not be the Ono which is identified with their residential location within the village. For example; Nikolas from Kupang married a woman from Uma Soplero. They reside in a house located in the 'stern' section of the village. However, Nikolas is incorporated into the Ono of his spouse, Onherweli and not Ono Atowcheyeni.

Immigrants may also be recruited to an Ono on the basis of previously established affinal ties with an Uma in Amaya. For example, Ferdinand's father, Markus, came originally from the village of Oirata on the island of Kisar. Markus married a woman from Uma Soplero and was, thus, incorporated into Onherweli. While Ferdinand's wife is affiliated with Umkeketo and, thus, with Ono Suryali, he, however, affiliates with the

Ono of his father.

It is evident from local accounts, that the conceptualisation of Ono by Mayawo has been influenced by and transformed through their historical relations with the Dutch. According to many people, Ono constituted relatively loose, place-based aggregates of Uma groups which, in matters concerning all the villagers, came together to act as a collective groups. On these occasions, the respective ryesro of the constituent Uma groups of each Ono were together empowered to represent the interests of the wider group and, in consultation with the members of an Ono, make decisions on their behalf. In short, the ryesro continued to act in accordance with their role and authority as Uma head. However, as a result of pressure and interference by the Dutch, this situation changed approximately 3 generations ago with the initiation of the position of *Kepala Soa* (*Soa* 'head'). It is interesting to note in this connection Cooley's comments concerning the introduction by the Dutch during the 1920's of elected local government members (1969:152). While Cooley observes that "in the Moluccas, one representative was elected from ... each *soa* (*loc.cit.*), in Amaya the situation was somewhat different. According to local people, the *Kepala Soa* was expected to assist the village headman (*Bapak Rajah/Orang Kaya*) with his administrative duties and act as his proxy upon his absence from the village. The position of *Kepala*

*Soa*, therefore, was akin to deputy village headman and, as such, only one *Kepala Soa* was appointed although four Ono/soa existed. The first person appointed as *Kepala Soa* was a man from Uma Newnuny. The second *Kepala Soa* was appointed from Uma Tronanawowoy, the third from Umkeketony, the fourth from Uma Lutrunawowoy and the fifth once again from Uma Newnuny, in fact, the son of the first *Kepala Soa*. In each case, the *Kepala Soa* was nominated by the incumbent *Bapak Rajah* and was not, as Cooley suggests, elected by the members of the village.

In 1985, the present *Bapak Rajah/Kepala Desa* decided that the previous arrangement, whereby one person was appointed to supposedly represent the interests of all four Ono, was a recipe for dispute and disaster. This arrangement was replaced with a system of four *Kepala Soa*, who were each appointed by the *Bapak Rajah*. The new *Kepala Soa* were taken from the 'houses' of Umkeketony, Halono, Umpenawany and Umhersuny to respectively represent the Ono of Suryali, Aulcheyeni, Atowcheyeni and Onherweli. The role of the four *Kepala Soa* in local decision making bodies is, for the most part, minimal (this and other aspects of local political organisation are examined in greater detail in chapter six).

As I discuss in the final section of this chapter and in subsequent chapters, the members of an Ono come together to



form collective action groups in the event of marriage, death, disputes over land, adultery, and pre-marital sexual relations. It is also the case that Ono constitute work groups in connection with the celebration of Church and State rituals as well as providing an important source of labour in community based maintenance programmes.

Ono, therefore, are socio-centric groups which provide a broader social context for the articulation of Uma-based decisions, particularly at the level of marriage grievances. As units which are more encompassing than a single Uma, Ono effectively serve to raise dispute resolution to a more public and socio-centric level than would otherwise be the case in a situation where two Uma were disputing. Being conceptually distinct from Uma, Ono operate at a less personal and more binding level in matters of wider social importance which affect the integrity of not only Uma, but also of the village as a whole.

### Marriage

In Amaya, the differential classification of local groups and their constituent members as mahno, uhro, ota or pendatang is culturally expressed and validated in terms of the dialectical interplay of the logic and continuities of local

origin narratives with present social practices. It is important to note here that the social expression of these classifications is fundamentally contextual and relational. The organisational activities and rituals associated with marriage constitute one specific context in which both rank and Ono affiliation are socially defined and expressed.

"Marriage", according to van Wouden, "... is the pivot on which turns the activity of ... social groups..." (1968:2). Certainly, marriage has constituted the 'pivot' for the organisation of many of the ethnographies on 'Eastern Indonesian' societies. Much of the discussion has focused upon the social and symbolic expressions and implications of alliance relationships. The consideration of marriage within these, somewhat limited, theoretical horizons has often served to obscure the formulation and articulation of other cultural concepts within this context (cf. Pannell 1989).

In the following sections, I present and briefly examine three marriage-related events which took place during the research period. The first incident involves two mahno classified individuals from different Ono. The second example concerns a mahno woman and a ota man while the third case involves an uhro woman and an 'immigrant' man. While elsewhere (Pannell 1989) I have focused upon the use and role of metaphor in Mayawo marriage ceremonies, here I turn my

attention to a consideration of the involvement of Uma and Ono in the negotiations associated with marriage and, more specifically, to the significance accorded the different social classifications discussed so far in the consummation of marriage.

Before I proceed with an examination of the three examples mentioned above, it is first necessary to discuss, albeit briefly, some of the cultural values, social relations and categories expressed and established within the context of Mayawo marriages.

### 'To Marry Outside'

Marriage in Amaya is described as mehlim aliro 'to marry outside' and is a reference to the perceived exogamous nature of Uma. Marriage is not socially prescribed in terms of particular genealogically defined categories of people (i.e. MBD or MMBDD)<sup>7</sup>. On the contrary, it is usually articulated in terms of whom a person cannot marry. Mayawo say that those persons regarded as hruwe dutcho, 'milk kin', are too close. A person should marry someone more distant, a second or, even better still, a third cousin - someone they consider to be hruwe herweli, 'side kin' (see chapter three for a more detailed discussion of these terms). Generally

this is the case, although I have recorded instances of actual MZD and FZD marriages and a number of intra-Uma marriages.

Affinal Relations: Actual and Classificatory

Upon marriage, a person's social horizons may be extended to include a number of people referred to as Malsopanye Yeroyavro - a person's affines. The expression 'Malsopanye yeroyavro' semantically condenses the three categories of affines recognised by Mayawo into one broad referential term (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Mayawo Affinal Terminology<sup>8</sup>

Term of Address	Affinal Category
<u>Mali</u> <u>Osu</u>	male ego's WB, ZH & WZH female ego's BW, HZ & HBW
<u>Yere</u>	male ego's BW, WZ & WBW female ego's HB, ZH, & HZH
<u>Panye</u>	spouse's parents and children's spouses

The reciprocal terms, mali, osu, panye and yere, are used if no recognized consanguineal relation exists between ego and his/her affines. However, if a genealogical tie is considered to exist, then ego refers to these individuals with the

appropriate kin terms (see chapter three). In this situation, consanguineal considerations take precedence over marital ones. But if this is the case, then who does ego call malsopanye yeroyavro? Mayawo get around this apparent dilemma, by recognizing a group of classificatory affines who are assigned to ego upon his/her marriage by the officiating Uma ryesro. The following example clearly illustrates this practice.

Before his marriage, Cun called his WB weye, 'younger brother', as his WB was a collateral relative. He could not, therefore, upon his marriage call him Mali. Instead, he calls a man from his wife's Uma, Mali, because this man is considered to be his wife's classificatory brother.

The ascription of classificatory affines, however, is not automatic. A number of people I spoke to said that they did not have a mali or one or more of the other categories of affines. Their comments suggested that the designation of classificatory affines constituted a reciprocal and consensual arrangement between individuals which involved mutual responsibilities and obligations. According to local people, a man may call upon his mali to assist with the erection of a house or the clearing of large rainforest trees from a proposed garden site. It is also the case that an individual will stand in a relation of classificatory affine to a number of different people. When I recorded the names of those people who stood as malsopanye yeroyavro for an individual, a number of men, for example, identified more

than one person as their mali.

In many cases, the genealogical relationship between ego and his/her classificatory malsopanye yeroyavro is quite tenuous. Indeed, it becomes obvious that genealogical relatedness is not the primary consideration in the identification of a person's affines. What is important is that these classificatory affines are also regarded as classificatory 'brothers', 'sisters', etc. of ego's spouse.

When I asked people to comment on what they considered to be the significance of these classificatory relations, quite a large number of people suggested that the relationships served to "bring together" otherwise distantly related individuals and affirm the alliance between the husband's kinspeople and those people identified with the wife's group, especially those people related through matrilineal ties to the wife's group. It is also the case that in some instances a person's classificatory affines will belong to one of the 'lower' ranked 'houses'. A man from Umpenawany, for example, identified one of his malis' as a man from Umkeketo. When I enquired why this person was regarded as his mali he pointed out that because his wife's father's mother was from Umkeketo, his mali stood as a classificatory 'brother' to his wife and, as such, was, upon his marriage, nominated as his affine.

The nomination of classificatory affines, therefore, serves to recognise and objectify a range of differentially constructed relations based upon a broader range of considerations than those invoked in the construction of consanguineal relations. The social horizons of an individual are extended to incorporate a much wider network of reciprocally defined relations. In this way, individuals located on the horizon of a person's social universe, are brought into sharper relief. As Bourdieu (1977:41) notes,

"...one can always bring closer the more distant relative, or move closer to him, by emphasizing what unites."

To understand why Mayawo define a group of classificatory affines it is necessary to examine the kind of relationship that exists between affines.

To utter the personal name of an affine is to commit a serious breach of social conduct. Thus, affinal relationships are also name-avoidance relationships. Given that a person's actual affines may also be consanguineally related to ego, it is quite unthinkable for many people in Amaya that these relations should also be name-avoidance relations. When asked why an individual was socially prohibited from uttering the name of his/her affines I was told that observance of this prescription was a mark of "respect" for that person. Those people who transgress this

prescription are required to produce one bottle of *sopi* or *arko* ('palm wine'), which is then drunk by those who witnessed the breach and the person whose name was spoken. For example, Frans uttered the name of his mali while in his company and that of another man. Frans was then required to purchase a bottle of palm spirit, take this to his mali's house and drink the palm spirit with him and the other man who witnessed the offence.

Relations between classificatory affines, especially men, are often characterised by joking, teasing, sexual innuendo and semantic word plays such as punning. For example, one night a number of men had gathered at Cun's house to play cards. They teased Habel about his female panye whose Christian name was Agustina. The men tried to get Habel to say the name of the month August (or *Agustus* in *Bahasa Indonesia*). Had he done so he would have been required to produce a bottle of palm spirit. To speak a word that sounds remotely like the name of an individual's classificatory affines also incurs a penalty. Habel argued that because of his job on a local government committee he was exempted from this taboo. However, the other men just laughed at this response and continued to joke about the phonetic similarities between the two names. Another man, Amon, was teased about his yere, a woman named Roksan. The men called him "Rocky" and tried to get him to say the local word for papaya leaf, Udmartovo, which is also the 'Hindu'



name of Amon's yere. Cun's wife Boya was also present, sitting just outside the circle of card players. One of the card players, a man named Paul, was her yere. The men called Boya "Ibu Paul" ('mother Paul') and beckoned to her to sit next to her yere. Boya responded by teasing the men about their classificatory affines.

### 'To Marry Inside'

While the arrangement of marriages is often influenced by genealogical considerations, a number of other factors, such as rank, pre-marital sex and pregnancy, also play an important part. In this sense, marriage can only be understood when placed in a wider social and political context.

In Amaya, affinal relations between groups are also negotiated on the basis of the culturally disseminated belief that "mahno must marry mahno" (mahnoni mehlimo mahnoni). According to this principle of group endogamy, uhro should marry uhro and ota marry ota. However, whether people of these two Uma conform to this prescript or not is not generally considered to be as important as maintaining the integrity of those 'houses' classified as mahno.

Previously, marriages were largely confined to the social parameters of the village. However, in recent times members of the uhro and ota 'houses' have brought in spouses from villages on other islands. The conjunction of the social proscription against marrying someone who is considered to be genealogically close with the social prescription to marry someone of the same social classification creates for uhro and ota defined individuals a conflict of interest. Given that only approximately one sixth of the village population are identified as uhro and ota individuals it is not surprising, therefore, that to resolve this dilemma these people seek their spouses elsewhere. While this practice is not condemned by the other residents in the village it is neither fully condoned. Many of the older members of the village believe that the local language and local practices will be significantly altered by the introduction of these alien others.

### Negotiation and Mediation

In Amaya, marriage is a major, albeit brief<sup>9</sup>, 'rite de passage' (van Gennep 1960), concerned with the movement of both men and women around, within and between different fields of meaning and experience (cf. Kapferer 1979). Unlike many Indonesian contexts (see Barnes 1974; Fox 1980a; Hoskins

1983; McKinnon 1983; Millar 1981), Mayawo marriages are not characterised by protracted negotiations over 'bridewealth' payments and other matters. Relevant negotiations are generally confined to a single meeting conducted about a fortnight before the actual marriage ceremony. The ceremony itself is enacted during the course of a single night and day.

Because a considerable proportion of Mayawo marriages are precipitated by unplanned pregnancies, it is sometimes the case that considerations of genealogical relatedness and rank endogamy, which figure prominently in the marriage of a virgin, are sometimes played down. The relaxation of these prescriptions is largely influenced by which 'houses' are involved in the marriage negotiations. In the case of Uma Surlialy, there are only one or two remembered instances in which members of this 'house' married with individuals from non-mahno 'houses'. Of course, the genealogical memories of members of this Uma are influenced by the rhetoric which produces and reproduces the social and political precedence enjoyed by this 'house'. Individuals from other 'houses', however, do not experience the same kind of social constraints. Notwithstanding the genealogical accounts given by members of other Uma, it is still the case that very few individuals from Uma Surlialy have married with uhro or ota defined individuals.

Matters relating to marriage, dispute and the fining of Uma members for what are locally perceived as socially inappropriate actions are dealt with within the context of an Ono.

It is only when the woman's pregnant state can no longer be concealed (in this regard, Mayawo women are very adept at concealing their pregnant condition under loose *sarongs* and *kebayas*, so that the woman may well be into her seventh month before her condition is noticeable) and, thus, becomes public knowledge and an embarrassment for the parties concerned, that members of her Ono and that of the man's Ono begin to act. Certainly, her parents and other close kin know of her pregnancy, but as women in this situation tend to confine themselves to the sphere of the house and its immediate surroundings, it is not usually the case that others are aware of her condition.

Around this time, the woman usually confesses to her father the name of the man responsible for her condition, although this is not always the case. Some women, fearful of the repercussions for the man, do not confess until after the birth of the child. The father, upon being told the name of the offender, then informs the ryesro for his Uma, the headman for his Ono and other elders of this fact. This information is transmitted by the Uma and Ono heads to the

father of the man as well as the relevant Uma and Ono representatives.

In the case of a woman who is not pregnant, the man informs his father of his intentions to marry the woman. This news is then carried to the parents of the woman by the representative of the man's Uma. The parents of the girl, then inform the members of their Uma and the Uma that constitute their Ono of this proposal.

Prior to the formal announcements, the couple may communicate their intentions in a number of different ways. Young men will often offer to perform small services for the woman's parents. In return, they are invited to sit with family and sometimes eat with them. After a while, the man appears to spend more time in the vicinity of the woman's house than he does with respect to his own household. In this way, a young man can communicate his intentions to those who may be his future in-laws and, at the same time, the woman's parents and close relatives are able to assess the character of the man might one day be their affine.

Once the marital intentions of a young couple (or the unplanned pregnancy of the woman) are known, the respective Ono of the man and woman convene separate meetings to discuss what course of action should be taken.

Ono meetings are always held on Monday night. Due to religious observances, it is forbidden to 'work' on Saturday and Sunday night. For the rest of the week villagers are away tending their gardens. Usually, only one Ono meeting is convened prior to the commencement of the actual marriage ceremony. The meetings are held in the respective umtuvatvcha ('oldest house') of the Uma of the primary actor (i.e. the Uma of the intended bride or groom) and is attended by the male and, to a lesser extent, female members of the associated Ono plus related individuals from other Ono. Women always sit at the back of the house in the space between the house proper and the kitchen (a separate structure). Men, on the other hand, occupy both the interior of the house and the front verandah area.

In these meetings, Ono members discuss the details of the situation and voice their opinions as to what course of action should be taken. In cases where the woman is not pregnant, Ono meetings are also concerned with the procurement of the necessary bride-wealth objects and the pragmatics involved in the organization and celebration of the forthcoming marriage. In those instances where the woman is pregnant, no final decision as to the outcome of the matter is reached in the context of this meeting. Whether the Ono member concerned will marry or not is only worked out in the context of the final meeting. Towards the close of the

Ono gathering a decision is made as to the date of the final meeting, which is usually held on the following Monday. The penultimate meeting, therefore, is a forum in which Ono members are informed about the matter at hand, are given an opportunity to openly express their views and develop strategies for dealing with the situation.

The elderly members of an Ono (both men and women, although men appear to have a more explicit and direct involvement in discussions), together with the male leader of the Ono (*Kepala Soa*), play an important part in any of the negotiations involving their group. In the case of the actual marriage ceremony or those meetings convened to consider a proposed marriage resulting from pre-marital sexual relations between a man and a woman, the male heads of each of the seven founding Uma (ryesro) as well as the village head (lelechro lato/*Bapak Rajah*) are culturally empowered to act as mediators, spokespersons and adjudicators.

The active and influential role played by the above-mentioned individuals in the unfolding 'social drama' (cf. Turner 1974) is illustrated in the following episodes.

Case 1:

At the beginning of November 1986 I attended the marriage of a couple in their early twenties who were both members of high ranked mahno Uma. The woman, Derontji, was the child of a woman from Uma Porhonowey who had never married and, as such, she took the name of her mother's Uma. Derontji was, therefore, affiliated with Ono Atowcheyeni. The man, Dolfinus, took the name of his father's Uma Newnuny even though he had been grown up by his Mother's brother from Uma Surlialy.

A week before the date set for the marriage, the respective Ono of the man and woman met separately to discuss arrangements for the forthcoming ceremony. Because the woman was without a recognized paternal Ono affiliation and the man has been raised as a member of his maternal Ono after the death of both parents, a total of three Ono were involved in these meetings - Ono Atowcheyeni (the woman's maternal Ono), Ono Aulcheyeni (the man's paternal Ono) and Ono Surlialy (the man's maternal Ono ). As a result of these discussions, young men from each of the four Ono within the village were sent out to look for turtles which would be served at the post-marital feast. The women were organized into Ono-based work groups for the purposes of procuring and preparing food and refreshments.



At about 10 p.m. on the night of the marriage ceremony, a large group of people began to assemble outside the respective umtuvatvcha of the intended 'bride' and 'groom'. Both groups gathered on the basis of relevant Ono and kinship affiliations. Seated within each house were the appropriate Uma and Ono heads and various elderly male cognates, including the classificatory fathers of the future 'bride' and 'groom'. Female cognates generally sat at the back of the house and in the kitchen, while female Ono members formed part of the group assembled in front of the house. Members of Onherweli - the group to which neither the man or woman were directly affiliated - sat on the front verandahs (umaneyeni) of both houses. Later, the ryesro of the senior Uma of this Ono, Uma Soplero, acted as the mediator (machtumora or orliro in ritual language) between the two groups while the other six ryesro were variously distributed, according to their Ono affiliations, between the two houses.

Inside his own umtuvatvcha, the 'groom'-to-be sat with the other participants and was actively involved in the unfolding performance. In contrast, his future wife was secluded in a side room of her umtuvatvcha. In this room, she was attended by her mother and other close female relatives. Thus removed, she becomes physically and structurally 'invisible' (Turner 1967:95) to audience and participants alike. In this liminal

state, her condition is one of ambiguity and paradox, for, as 'bride'-to-be, she is "betwixt and between all the recognized fixed points in space-time of structural classification " (Turner 1967:97). This is the period when she is about to be transformed from a single, supposedly sexually inactive girl into a sexually active woman and wife.

By 11.00 p.m. everyone was in place and the performance began. The mediator or the 'one who speaks', was called inside the woman's umtuvatvcha and instructed by the assembled ryesro to proceed to the man's umtuvatvcha with the question, "Who has carved their name on our sago palm (urpisso)?". They refer of course to the woman, who, in her marginal condition, no longer exists as a subjective identity. In this moment, she is transformed from subject to object, from person to palm. This metaphoric movement from an abstract self to a more concrete and apprehensible entity, that of sago palm, is a strategy which, among other things, facilitates the public discussion of socially sensitive issues (see Pannell 1989).

Members of the man's group replied to this question with the name of the 'groom'-to-be, which was communicated to the members of the woman's group by the orliro. The dialogue between the two groups continued for another two hours, facilitated by the actions of the orliro and the various Uma

ryesro. Throughout the discussions, the young woman was referred to as a sago palm. No mention was made of her name or any other detail that might identify her. Having obtained appropriate responses to all their questions, the elders, including the ryesro and Ono heads, seated within the woman's umtuvatvcha once again dispatched the orliro to the man's umtuvatvcha. This time, he was to inform the 'groom'-to-be that if he intended to use their sago palm, then he must compensate them for their loss. The man's group then gave the requisite objects (1 flat golden disc, a patola cloth and a pair of silver ear-rings) to 'open the door' (see chapter three) to the orliro who carried them to the woman's house. The payment and receipt of these objects signaled a new phase in the performance.

In the woman's house, the 'bride'-to-be was readied for the final act in the drama and emerged from her seclusion into the ritual arena, dressed in a white gown. Throughout the entire performance she cried profusely. Her entrance marked the end of her marginal state and signaled the onset of her re-incorporation. From this moment on, she was no longer referred to as an object. She had regained her subjective status as a unique individual.

In the man's house, the groom-to-be also discarded his everyday clothes and donned a white suit. There was a

perceptible air of rising excitement within the house as the party readied itself for the climax to the performance.

At about 1.00 a.m. the groom arrived at the woman's umtuvatvcha accompanied by members of his Uma and Ono, who danced to the music of bamboo flutes and women's singing. The man was led inside the woman's umtuvatvcha by members of her Ono. His steps across the thresh-hold of the house marked the beginning of an undetermined period of uxori-local residence. He stood, sweating in the tight-fitting suit, next to the sobbing woman, under a canopy of young coconut fronds, while his troupe of escorts mingled with the crowd both inside and outside the house. In this context, the two groups were merged into one.

The couple were then addressed, in turn, by each of the Uma ryesro who offered advice and instruction on how to conduct themselves in married life. Finally, the orliro stepped forward and pronounced the couple to be man and wife. Upon hearing the news, the crowd outside rejoiced by dancing and singing. Soon after this, the couple emerged from the house and danced together in the clearing in front of the verandah. This act publicly announced their newly-defined status as a married couple and also marked the completion of the movement from adolescence to adulthood. After a short period spent dancing, they returned inside the house and changed out of

their costumes into the clothes of everyday life and took up their original position under the canopy. Outside the festivities continued until day-break. The following night a feast was held to which all the villagers were invited.

In this case, the rank of the two individuals concerned was not a central issue, as both were affiliated with high ranking mahno Uma. Neither were the negotiations complicated by knowledge of pre-marital sexual intercourse between the two persons concerned, the woman's unplanned pregnancy or perceived close genealogical links. As such, the transactions between the two groups proceeded smoothly and the man's group were only required to present the minimum number of objects considered necessary to 'open the door' of the woman's house in order for the husband to take up uxori-local residence. In this instance, the negotiations which led up to this night and the marriage ceremony itself served to firmly establish and affirm the mahno status of the two individuals concerned.

In this case, the entire village was invited to participate in the marriage celebrations; further evidence of the social legitimation of both the event and the identity of the two primary participants. However, as we shall see below, this is not the case with all marriage related negotiations.

## Case 2:

This case concerned a pregnant woman of mahno status and a man of low ota rank. Only two Ono were directly involved in the negotiations leading up to the marriage. They were the paternal Ono of both the woman and the man, Ono Atowcheyeni and Ono Suryali, respectively. Unlike the previous example, where the marriage involved the entire village, this case was confined to the kinspeople and Ono members of the two parties concerned. The orliro in this case, was one of the ryesro from Ono Aulcheyeni. Ideally, the ryesro from Ono Herweli would also act in this capacity, but on this night he was unable to attend because of illness.

This example is particularly interesting in light of the drama and intrigue which unfolded during the course of the night.

The opening scene is similar to that outlined in the previous example; the audience and the participants were assembled at their respective umtuvatvcha, the ryesro representing the constituent 'houses' of each Ono involved sat inside the respective umtuvatvcha associated with the two primary 'houses' concerned in the affair, the woman was again secluded in a side room in the umtuvatvcha of her Uma, the man sat with the other participants within his own

umtuvatvcha, and the orliro was summoned to the woman's house.

The action started when the orliro was dispatched to the umtuvatvcha of the man with the question, "Who is it that has not only cut their sign on our 'titi-wood tree' (tutunwachno) but has also hacked at the tree with their machete and severely damaged it?"

In this instance, the woman was referred to as a 'titi-wood' tree, the tree primarily used in the construction of a dug-out canoe. Her un-planned pregnancy was metaphorically constructed in terms of something that had been violated and damaged. Thus, her kinspeople and fellow Ono members asked the members of the man's group, 'who is responsible for the woman's pregnant condition'?

Those people assembled in the man's umtuvatvcha replied that, "yes, they were the ones who had carved their name on the tree". However, they emphatically denied damaging the tree in any way. Simply put, they acknowledged that there was one amongst them who wished to marry the woman but this person was not the genitor of the woman's child. If this was the case, then another man was involved in this affair.

The people assembled in the woman's umtuvatvcha, upon hearing

this response, were outraged. They felt that the man and his fellow Ono and Uma members were attempting to shirk their responsibilities and obligations towards the woman. After calming the irate gathering, the ryesro present inside the house, sent the orliro back to the man's umtuvatvcha with the initial accusation, i.e. that the man had not only carved his name on the tree but had also damaged it.

The arrival of this message was met with anger and incredulity on the part of those people present at the man's umtuvatvcha. The elderly men, including the assembled ryesro and *Kepala Soa*, explained to the orliro their desire to conduct the proceedings in a proper manner and because of this, they argued, it was not possible that they were responsible for the woman's condition. They scornfully stated that "even if we had damaged the tree, do you think we would still want to use it". The orliro returned to the woman's umtuvatvcha with the gist of this message.

Feelings in the woman's house by this time were running hot and there was much shouting and gesticulating. The woman's kinspeople believed that the man was lying and, once again, the elders dispatched the orliro to the man's umtuvatvcha to inform those assembled there of their views on the matter.

Meanwhile, there has been a sudden development at the man's



umtuvatvcha. After intensive questioning from the elders present, the man had confessed to having sexual intercourse with the woman on one occasion. This revelation was relayed back to the woman's kinsmen. They accepted this admission of guilt and instructed those present at the man's umtuvatvcha to make the first of the two compensation payments.

However, while the man admitted to being sexually involved with the woman, he strongly denied being responsible or liable for the woman's pregnancy. The members of the man's Uma and Ono argued that sexual intercourse had only occurred once and thus it was not possible that he was the father of the child. They, therefore, refused to pay any form of compensation. Members of the woman's group replied to this stance, to the effect that "once, twice, a hundred times, it makes no difference, the tree was still damaged".

By now it was 3.00 a.m. and very little had been achieved. There was still an impasse between the two groups as to the resolution of the matter.

In the man's umtuvatvcha, it was suggested that maybe the other offender, the one truly responsible for the woman's pregnancy, sat amongst those assembled. Thus, started a series of accusations and counter-accusations, primarily directed at those men who were known adulterers. It was

clear, however, that this behaviour was meant to single out one man who was the subject of many of the rumours circulating in the village concerning this incident. According to local gossip, this man was the actual genitor, not the other. After an hour of heated and emotional debate on the matter, in which the assembled ryesro and Ono heads acted as mediators, the members of the man's house agreed that it was not possible to reveal the identity of the real offender. The older men then decided, largely on the basis of the man's acknowledged sexual encounter with the young woman, to pay compensation to the woman's group.

The first payment of one flat golden disc (karcho) wrapped in a Rp.1000 note (ideally the disc should be wrapped in a patola cloth, but in the absence of such a cloth, a small denomination note is an acceptable substitute) was sent to the woman's umtuvatvcha via the orliro.

However, the objects were not accepted by the members of the woman's house and were returned. As far as the woman's kinsmen were concerned, the public admission of the man's complicity in the affair was sufficient. However, this is not the only reason for their not accepting the payment. The women's kinsmen were highly sensitive to and somewhat embarrassed by the role the woman played in this 'menage a trois'. Rather, than expose the sordid details of the affair

in the course of subsequent discussions, they chose the more honourable exit. Moreover, acceptance of this first payment would have indicated a desire to enter into further negotiations and exchanges and, therefore, signaled to the members of the man's group that they were willing to consider the prospect of marriage between the two parties. By not accepting the first payment, the woman's group firmly retained their mahno status and links while, at the same time, proclaiming the ota status of the man. More importantly, however, the woman's group in not accepting the payment, effectively determined the mahno affiliation of the woman's unborn child.

### Case 3:

This final example concerns another pregnant woman, however, in this case, the woman, as a result of a previous affair, was also a mother. The woman was a member of a low ranking uhro Uma and was affiliated with Ono Suryali. The man, on the other hand, had no assigned rank as he originated from another island. He did, however, belong to an Ono, that of Ono Aulcheyeni. The orliro in this case was the ryesro from Ono Atowcheyeni.

Again, the setting was similar to the previous examples and

because of this I will confine the following description and analysis to those aspects of the performance which were markedly different.

The dialogue between the two groups was initiated when the orliro was sent by the Uma and Ono heads assembled in the woman's umtuvatvcha to the man's umtuvatvcha with the following preamble, "When *Si*<sup>10</sup> Surlia (this is the woman's classificatory father) went down to the beach the other day, he found that one of the out-riggers on his dug-out canoe had been broken. Who is responsible for this breakage?" The canoe in this case, referred to the classificatory daughter of the Surlia man in question. The broken out-rigger symbolised her pregnancy.

In this case, there was no doubt as to the offenders identity and his name was readily offered. In the course of the following discussions, in which the different ryesro and Ono heads played a significant role, it became apparent that neither party was against the marriage of the two individuals and steps were taken to bring this about. Thus, followed a series of payments by the man to the woman's classificatory father. Each of the three transactions involved the payment of one flat, golden disc, one patola cloth and one pair of silver ear-rings.

After several hours spent negotiating the status and quality of the objects used in the payments, the couple were finally married. Unlike the first example, which was concerned with maintaining the integrity and precedence of the mahno classification, the fact that this marriage took place at all suggests that rank integrity and status do not constitute such important considerations in the case of low ranked individuals or 'immigrants'. The celebration of this marriage by only two Ono groups indicates the low social status and significance attached to the two individuals concerned and the event itself.

In this case, the marriage of the two persons concerned was not opposed by the members of the respective Uma or Ono of the individuals. Neither was it opposed by those men socially empowered to act on this occasion, i.e. the various ryesro and Ono heads. Obviously, the marriage of an uhro woman to an 'immigrant' man does not ostensibly effect the social status of the mahno 'houses' through time. Nor does it radically alter the configuration of links which define the relationship between the different 'house' groups in the village or the configuration of values which informs the social categories mahno, uhro and ota. The marriage does, however, signify a notable shift in the relationship between the low ranked 'houses' and the 'immigrant' groups. In particular, the marriage points towards the on-going

sedimentation of social and political alliances between these two groups, mediated and facilitated by membership in an Ono unit.

### Comments

The three examples discussed above clearly demonstrate the important role of Ono groups in the negotiations and events associated with marriage. Ono members are involved in the initial meetings convened to discuss what course of action should be adopted with regards to the problem at hand; they constitute both the participating audience and key actors in the actual negotiations between the parties involved; they are instrumental in organising the procurement of exchange items as well as preparing foodstuffs for the event; in the event of marriage, they actively celebrate the alliance of the two groups; and in those cases where a marriage does not take place, Ono members openly support their fellow member. As such, Ono can be said to delineate the broad social horizons within which events, such as marriage, are enacted.

Moreover, the three incidents narrated above illustrate the kind of relationship which exists between Ono and the constituent Uma and Marga groups. This is particularly illustrated by the significant role played by the different

Uma heads during the course of negotiations. The ryesro in this context mediate relations between the different 'house' members in one Ono as well acting as a vital link between the members of different Ono. In their capacity as socially empowered spokespersons and adjudicators for the members of the constituent 'houses' of the Ono as well as for the Ono itself, ryesro embody the controlled and largely objective expression of social opinion. The aforementioned examples also exemplify how multiple social identities and affiliations can be simultaneously articulated and expressed within the broad parameters of one social event. In this context, social actions serve to define not only an individuals Uma or Marga affiliation but also their associations with more inclusive social units. In doing so, the actions of individuals point to the reciprocal encounter between the part (Uma/Marga) and the whole (Ono).

Furthermore, these marriage-related dramas also serve to delineate the social status ascribed to the different Uma and Marga groups in the village. The social classifications, mahno, uhro, ota and pendatang, and the configuration of values which inform these judgments are, in this context, simultaneously defined, distorted and reified. The fact that a marriage takes place at all points to the occurrence of this process of evaluation and objectification. The two individuals concerned in these negotiations come to represent

the physical embodiment of this assessment. The constellation of values which inform this system of classification are, in this instance, symbolically inscribed upon the body of the person.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, I gather up some of the themes, categories and relations discussed in previous chapters into a broad conceptual framework, organized in terms of the primary referents of rank, Ono affiliation and marriage. In particular, this chapter is concerned with demonstrating the links between the thematic content of Mayawo narratives and local social classifications, categories of identity and specific relations of affinity.

Through an examination of three marriage-related events, I argue that the ascription of social status and the affiliation of individuals to groups is defined in terms of both the context and the social relations obtaining between those persons present. In other words, while local narratives may serve to thematically and semantically objectify local classifications, categories of identity such as mahno, uhro, ota and pendatang are ultimately brought into being and defined through practice.



In the following chapter I pursue this idea through an examination of the conjunction of local social categories and values with the policies and practices of the Indonesian Nation-State. Contrary to Victor King's conclusions to the effect that recent innovations such as Christianity, education and government intervention has resulted in a "...decline in the superior position of aristocrats..." (King 1985:199), I argue, among other things, that the articulation of local cultural categories and beliefs within the ideologically generated framework of the Indonesian State serves to confirm and consolidate the claims of authority and social and political precedence made by the high ranking Uma in Amaya.

## NOTES

1. For recent works on the legitimating potential of 'myth' in 'Eastern Indonesian' societies see, among others, Fox 1971, 1980; Schulte-Norholt 1971; Hicks 1974; Visser 1984, 1988; Barraud 1985; Pauwels 1985; Traube 1986; and Platenkamp 1988.
2. Interestingly, Josselin de Jong reports that in the village of Oirata on the nearby island of Kisar, the terms used to designate the three "castes" are 'Marna, Wuhru and Atan' (1937:11).
3. As indicated in chapter two, slavery was a common practice throughout the region prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. In this connection, the Dutch Resident Riedel (1886:463) reports that the slaves on Damer originally came from neighbouring islands.
4. Interestingly, the sanskrit term 'maha' is also accorded the same meanings.
5. Victor King (1985), in his discussion of the Maloh ranking system, notes that "...inter-rank marriages ...led ... to gradations within ranks and to a blurring of rank boundaries" (*ibid.*:98).
6. The metaphorical construction of both localised physical and social worlds in terms of some type of floating, sea-going craft is quite common throughout the area known as 'Eastern Indonesia'. In the Babar archipelago, for example, van Dijk and de Jonge (1987) report that on the islands of Dawera and Dawelor "the house is represented as a sailing prahu..." (*ibid.*:79). Cecile Barraud (1985) observes a similar conceptualisation of social and spatial categories in Tanebar-Evav while McKinnon (1983) writing of "hierarchy, alliance and exchange in the Tanimbar islands" discusses the ritual and political significance of the boat image.
7. James Fox, writing of marriage in the Rotinese context, observes a similar situation in which he notes that "in This there is no categorical prescription..." (1980:9).
8. In this connection, it is interesting to note the use of the term mali on the nearby island of Kisar. J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong writes that in the village of Oirata on the island, "...a woman's brothers- and sisters-in-law and their brothers and sisters are all mali..."(1937:18). Thus, contrary to it's use in Amaya, the term mali in this context can be used by women to address both male and female affines.

9. Not all 'eastern Indonesian' societies have such abbreviated marriage negotiations and ceremonies. In many cases (cf. Fox 1980a & Barnes 1980), the payment of 'bridewealth' may extend over a number of years or even generations, with the marriage only formalised upon final receipt. In such cases, it is difficult to view marriage as a single spatial and temporal event. This may partially explain why marriage is not presented in the literature as a major rite of passage.

10. The Indonesian term *Si* represents a kind of definitive article used before names (among other things) as a form of reference. In this instance I use the phrase *Si Surlia* ('So-and So' Surlia) to maintain the anonymity of the person in question.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE BODY POLITIC: ENGAGING THE METAPHORS OF THE STATE

Narratives are not only structures of  
meaning but structures of power as well.  
Edward Bruner (1986:152).

#### Introduction

It is often the case that the broader historical and political context in which narratives are constructed, expressed and rendered meaningful is ignored when narratives are conceptualised as epiphenomenal charters for the organisation of local social and political orders (see van Wouden 1968)<sup>1</sup>. However, as the work of Marshall Sahlins (1981, 1985) aptly demonstrates, cultural narratives, in fact, cannot be isolated from the wider social and political context in which they are located. Such narratives are shaped by and gather force from their dialectical engagement with other historically-specific stories (see also Bruner 1986 and Kapferer 1988). In this respect, narratives and the particular cultures in which they are articulated are not as isolated or as pristine as many anthropologists would have us believe.

Although positioned on the geographic margins of the

archipelago, the people of Amaya are directly incorporated within the framework of the Indonesian Nation-State and have long experienced, as indicated in chapter two, the effects of European colonial encapsulation and Christian proselytisation. As a result, local origin narratives are but one of several discursive elements which inform social and political life in Amaya. In this respect, the ideologies and ontologies of Protestantism, Indonesian Nationalism and modern capitalism create "new spaces in discourse" (Bruner 1986:152) within which the politics of identity and authority are given expression. These inter-connected 'spaces' are interwoven with existing cultural forms and meanings to produce new symbols of opposition, new relations of asymmetry and new orders of hierarchy.

It is precisely through their engagement and coalescence with the other discursive structures which inform daily life that the stories contained within local narratives resonate with the same configurations of logic which mediate social action and notions of identity. Consequently, these narratives are held to express stories of ontological and cosmological significance and it is in the circumstances of quotidian life that the themes, relations, and hierarchical possibilities folded into the narratives are realized (cf. Kapferer 1988).

While in the previous chapter I examined the resonance of

Mayawo narrative themes in local systems of classification, in the formulation of more inclusive social groups known as Ono and with respect to local practices such as marriage, in this chapter I focus primarily upon the conjunction of Mayawo origin narratives with the logic and practices of the Indonesian State. In so doing, I 'emplot' (Ricoeur 1988:4) some of the hierarchical relations and disjunctions which are empowered by this nexus. I begin by discussing the social, political and metaphorical construction and expression of the most inclusive social unit in Amaya, namely the 'village' or lato. In this section, I discuss, among other things, the objectification of the narrative themes surrounding the notion of origins (i.e. precedence, age and gender) in terms of an hierarchically arranged system of social titles and politically empowered positions. I then discuss various aspects of the engagement of Mayawo beliefs and practices with the locally articulated administrative apparatus of the Indonesian State. Here I discuss and attempt to re-think that often used but rarely defined concept commonly referred to as the 'State'. In conclusion, I discuss some of the wider social implications of the dialectics of politics and culture at Amaya.

### The Body Politic: Lato

Collectively, Ono constitute and define the social and spatial parameters of the most inclusive group, the village (lato). As I discussed in chapter one, the collective appellation Mayawo, which literally means 'the people of Amaya', is predicated on the notion of shared residence and, thus, semantically constructs identity in terms of common links to a specific place.

The community of Amaya is constructed and metaphorically expressed in terms of the human body. The 'head' of this body is the lelechro lato or 'village leader' (commonly referred to as the *Bapak Rajah* in Ambonese Malay). As I have mentioned previously, the village orator is regarded as the 'mouth' (nungcho) while the rest of the people who comprise the residential population of Amaya are said to be the "arms and legs" (lima eya) of this body politic. In this metaphoric scheme, the different bodily parts form a unified and functioning whole, symbolic of the differentiated social and political order which delineates and informs social life in Amaya.

In more specific terms, the body politic is expressed and objectified in terms of a system of social titles and politically empowered positions. The ascription of these

titles and the respective responsibilities they empower disseminates, in quite concrete terms, the differences thematically articulated in local origin narratives. Thus, the 'house' of Surlialy, which is portrayed in the narratives as the first founding 'house', is widely accorded socio-political authority in relation to the other 'houses' and groups in the village. On the basis of their historically verified temporal and spatial precedence, this 'house' claims, among other things, the title of lelehro lato. In accordance with the logic of precedence, the title and office of 'ritual leader' (ryesro kpawo) is associated with the second 'house' to arrive at Amaya while the position of 'lord of the land' (dochnuda dorraso) or *Tuan Tanah*, in Ambonese-Malay, is claimed by the third 'house'.

In addition to the titles of lelehro lato, ryesro kpawo and dochnuda dorraso, Uma groups also claim rights to a number of other titles of office. Their mandate to make such claims is again, according to the indigenous people in the village, provided by local origin narratives. Of the 13 recognised Uma in Amaya, only eight, however, are authorised to claim title [s] (in some cases, more than one title is claimed). These eight 'houses' are regarded as the 'source' 'houses' for the other five Uma and, as such, are considered to represent the interests of these splinter groups. With the exception of one 'house', the titles are claimed by the seven Uma whose



ancestors are locally regarded to have established the village of Amaya.

As I discussed in chapter three, each of these seven 'houses' is empowered by local narratives to claim the title and position of ryesro or 'house leader'. The 'houses' Umpenawany and Tronanawowoy are further invested with the respective titles of lelechro ora 'leader of war' (*panglima*) and *marinyo* (the village crier), an Ambonese-Malay term which derives from the Portuguese word 'meirinho' (De Josselin de Jong 1987:174). An associate 'house' of Uma Surlialy, Uma Surlia, holds the title of nungcho ('mouth') and acts as the village orator.

Given their different origins and history of settlement, the 'immigrant' groups known as *Marga* in the village are not accorded any of the titles discussed above. Nor do they impose their own system of titles with respect to the internal organisation of these groups. With the exception of the title 'village orator', the uhro and ota 'houses' are also precluded from claiming rights to any of the titles mentioned so far. In this context, the logic which empowers the mahno 'houses' to claim such titles also operates to socially disenfranchise both the low ranked uhro and ota groups as well as the *marga* groups. As we will see in the following sections, this exclusion has obvious implications

in the field of local politics.

The lelehro lato together with the seven Uma ryesro comprise the culturally empowered decision-making body in Amaya known locally as ryesro viti mahnoni po viya or the 'council of eight' (literally, 'seven Uma heads plus lelehro makes eight'). While not semantically indicated in this title or politically empowered to make decisions, the *marinyo* or 'village crier', nevertheless, plays an important mediatory role with respect to the dissemination of information and instructions emanating from this body of elders.

As I illustrated in the previous chapter, these eight men are collectively accorded an active and influential role within the context of marriage ceremonies and meetings concerned with pre-marital sexual relations as well as adjudicating in disputes over land, misdemeanor cases and associated meetings concerned with the fining and punishment of offenders. They are also locally regarded as responsible for the 'proper' observation of hnulcho (or *adat* in Ambonese-Malay) defined practices. As I discussed in chapter four, *adat*, or hnulcho as it is known in the vernacular, refers to all beliefs, relations, discourses, practices and classifications which are locally regarded as constitutive of a distinct Mayawo cultural identity. While many of the beliefs and practices identified as hnulcho are referred to as 'traditions' and, as

such, are considered to have their origins in the past (in this connection, local narratives represent both the source and objectification of these beliefs and practices), within the context of contemporary Mayawo society, hnulcho/adat also encompasses, among other things, local expressions of Christianity, local interpretations of State ideology, local translations of the regional economy and local manifestations of population diversity.

As the name suggests, not all of the 'houses' in the village are represented by this council of elderly men. Only the heads or ryesro of the seven original Uma and the lelechro lato/Bapak Rajah comprise this group. The other village Uma classified as mahno are considered to be represented by their source 'house'. Members of immigrant families, uhro and ota 'houses', as well as women and youths, are prohibited from holding office on this council.

According to local perceptions, the organization of this body of men is structured in accordance with the events and themes delineated in local 'historical' narratives. The men who make up this council are regarded as the most knowledgeable concerning these 'histories'. The position of these men engenders the degree of knowledge they possess which, in turn, substantiates their standing in the political order. Thus, claims of authority made by this body are

legitimated by an ideology empowered by local origin narratives rendered as 'history'. The political justification of this system of authority gains further weight when linked to the logic and practices of the Indonesian Nation-State.

For many of the the immigrant residents of the village, those people affiliated with the 'houses' classified as uhro and ota, women and the youths of Amaya, the State is seen as offering the means by which the disenfranchised can become franchised members of the national community and, subsequently, the local political community. I suggest here that the structures and principles upon which the State operates represent for these people utopian alternatives to what are regarded as restrictive modes of being and strategies of integration. To the historically-generated hierarchies of power and ontology, the State offers the egalitarian alternatives of democracy and equality<sup>1</sup>. However, as I discuss in the following sections, in practice the myths of nationalism and those of local culture are politically folded upon each other so as to appear to delineate similar strategies, oppositions and themes - themes which coalesce around the notions of unity and diversity.

## Imagining the Nation-State

The geographic remoteness of Damer and the physical and social difficulties encountered in traveling between the different villages on the island, the fact that the nearest offices and fully employed officials of the Indonesian government are at least two days away by boat on the island of Kisar and that the only so-called 'representatives' of the government on Damer are the locally chosen *Kepala Desa* ('village heads'), suggest that it is not possible to speak of the State in terms of the more familiar and widespread interpretations of this concept. These conceptualisations, as Clifford Geertz observes, variously depict the State as either "...monopolist of violence within a territory, executive committee of the ruling class, delegated agents of popular will, or pragmatic device for conciliating interests..." (1980:122). Whether Weberian, Marxist, populist or pragmatist in nature, all of these perspectives ultimately pay lip-service to or disregard the symbolic, metaphoric and discursive aspects of the State (Geertz 1980:123).

The State, I would argue, should be considered, first and foremost, in terms of its imaginative and discursive dimensions. Only then will the repressive, integrative and legitimating functions of the State become apparent. In this connection, I argue that the State constitutes an imaginative

and imaginary constellation of ideas, beliefs and relations which revolve around and are concerned with the notions of cosmology, ontology and power. As such, the State embodies and disseminates a particular code for interpreting and acting in the world. This symbolic configuration, which we can generically call 'ideology', is articulated in metaphorical, discursive and functional terms and codified in practice. This codification produces, among other things, a system of government, administrative structures, jurisprudential framework, and policies and practices concerned with education, economic development, moral guidance, the structure of the family and society, and so on. It is important to stress here that the State, conceptualised as such, does not exhaust or constitute the totality of power relations. As Foucault points out, while the State may give the impression of an omnipotent codification of relations, "the state can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations" (1984:64). In Amaya, as I shall demonstrate in this and the following chapter, locally constituted relations and social forms constitute fertile ground for the expression of the State.

Ideology, as conceptualised here, is not distinct from reality nor a distortion of it (*qua* a Marxist interpretation) but is, as Paul Ricoeur (1986) suggests, constitutive of social existence. Following Geertz's thesis that all action

is already symbolically mediated (1973), Ricoeur posits that it is ideology which plays this mediating role. At its most fundamental level, therefore, the role of ideology is one of integration. According to Ricoeur, it is only because ideology operates to integrate that its other functions, that of distortion and legitimation, can manifest themselves (1986). This view of ideology, therefore, emphasises, indeed gives precedence to, the notion that ideology and practice are inextricably folded together. A view not altogether dissimilar from Bourdieu's proposal that the generative schemes of practice are not given as a static code divorced from social action but are situated within the very movement of accomplishment (1977). Both views are complementary insofar as they suggest that the grounding of ideology in practice effectively produces a taken-for-granted world.

The State, however, not only represents and disseminates a particular world view but also, as an integral part of this construction, inscribes a logic of being or ontology on the body of its citizens. In my understanding of the term, ontology is always ideologically informed and shaped (cf. Kapferer 1989). It is not a case of ontology, somehow, waiting outside the parameters of ideology (cf. Kapferer 1988) but that a particular mode of being is always an ideological and, thus, a historical construction. Ontology cannot be separated from ideology just as ideological

creations cannot be severed from the historical context of which they are a product (see Adorno 1973).

Within the context of Indonesia, discussion of the State simultaneously constitutes a reference to the Nation. To best understand what is meant by this term, perhaps Benedict Anderson's definition of the Nation as "... an imagined political community..." (1983:15) provides the most suitable starting point for our purposes. The Nation, regarded as an 'imagined political community', has, I would argue, no permanent, fixed locus but feeds upon and is situated within the ever-shifting possibilities created by the imagination. In the sense that the Nation signifies "a place which exists in no real place" (Ricoeur 1986:16) it can be said to embody the concept of 'utopia'. As such, it represents the referential space of the ideal and the possible. Importantly for this study, the Nation, as a utopian construct, signifies "...alternative ways of living" (Ricoeur 1986:16).

In Indonesia, the Nation is further 'imagined' in terms of the diverse nature of its constituent parts, that is, in terms of the varied cultural and ethnic identities expressed throughout the archipelago. These diverse and often contradictory elements are ideologically unified through their reification and sublimation within the consistent and coherent symbolic forms created and disseminated by the State



(see below for more details). In this respect, the fictions of nationalism are depicted as conterminous with the integrity of the State. In turn, the State affirms and reproduces its claim to authority through the propagation of the utopian sentiments of nationalism. Thus, the Nation and the State in Indonesia are ordered into a dialectical, self-perpetuating unity. It is not the case, therefore, as Kapferer argues with respect to the situation in Sri Lanka (1988), that the Nation is encompassed by the State or vice versa. Rather, the Nation and the State together constitute a self-referential mirroring of ideas, beliefs and aspirations.

An explicit example of the symbolic representation of the Nation-State is provided by the Indonesian national coat of arms (see Diagram 6.1.). The following exegesis of the meaning of each of the symbols contained within the form of this emblem and the relations obtaining between them is based upon a discussion I had with two boys in the village who, in terms of their educational status, had already completed 'junior high school' (*sekolah menengah pertama*). The topic came up when I remarked upon the existence of the national emblem on the back of one of the boy's exercise books and asked them if they could explain to me the meaning of the different parts of the overall design; a design which is replete with multiple and inter-connected meanings.

The central figure of this emblem is the *Garuda*, a mythical bird which, in Hindu cosmology, is revered as the bearer of Vishnu, the God of creation in the Hindu trinity. This figure effectively organises and locates the Nation-State in terms of the past. More to the point, the figure represents a romanticised and utopian rendition of the Nation-State in terms of the golden age of previous, Hindu-inspired empires. This selective harnessing of the past is further inscribed on the body of the bird. The 17 feathers on each wing of the *Garuda*, together with the eight feathers on the bird's tail and the 45 feathers on its neck collectively represent the day, month and year on which the independence of Indonesia was proclaimed, that is, the 17 August 1945.

In its talons the *Garuda* clasps a banner upon which is written, in old Javanese, the national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. Commonly translated as 'Unity in Diversity', the national motto suggests that the modern Indonesian Nation-State is comprised of the various ethnic groups and diverse cultures of the archipelago. The motto symbolically and, I would add, rhetorically represents the State's commitment to recognising and respecting ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. However, the reality of the situation is such that the process of cultural incorporation and creation of a monophonic national identity necessarily entails the homogenization of local and regional culture differences (see

Davis 1979; Atkinson 1983; Acciaiolli 1985). In this context, what is different about local cultures is often objectified and ossified to the point where culture becomes a series of staged 'performances' (Acciaiolli 1985:153).

'Unity in Diversity' represents just one of the central and common themes of the Indonesian Nation-State. Perhaps, the founding principles of the Indonesian republic, referred to as *Pancasila*, represent the most fundamental, pervasive and widely acknowledged symbolic scheme for the arrangement and expression of the Indonesian Nation-State. The 'five principles' of *Pancasila*, which can be gleaned from the back of any school exercise book, refer to 'belief in one God' (*ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*), 'a just and civilised humanity' (*kemanusiaan yang adil dan berab*), 'the unity of Indonesia' (*persatuan Indonesia*), 'democracy guided by the wisdom generated by social consultation/representation' (*kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam permusyawaratan/perwakilan*) and 'social justice for all Indonesian people' (*keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia*) (Feith & Castles 1970:40-50). These five aspirations of the Indonesian Nation-State are also iconically depicted on the official coat of arms of the Republic (see Diagram 6.1.).

Diagram 6.1. Indonesian National Coat of Arms.



# PANCASILA



**KETUHANAN YANG MAHA ESA**

**KEMANUSIAAN YANG ADIL DAN BERADAB**

**PERSATUAN INDONESIA**

**KERAKYATAN YANG DIPIMPIN OLEH HIKMAT KEBIJAK-  
SANAAN DALAM PERMUSYAWARATAN / PERWAKILAN**

**KEADILAN SOSIAL BAGI SELURUH RAKYAT INDONESIA**

Hanging from a chain draped around the neck of the *Garuda* is a heraldic shield. The shield is divided into four outer sections organised around a central section. Each section encloses an iconic representation of one of the five principles of *Pancasila*. The middle section contains a five-pointed golden star (*bintang emas*) which, taken as a whole, symbolically represents the principle of monotheism and, in terms of its five points, signifies the pluralistic expression of this belief in terms of the five world religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism) officially recognised by the State. The head of the wild buffalo (*kepala banteng*), positioned in the upper, left-hand corner, is said to represent the principle of democracy while the banyan tree (*pohon beringin*), located in the upper, right-hand section, is considered to signify the principle of nationalism<sup>2</sup>. The principle of a 'just and civilised humanity' is symbolically represented by a circle of chain. The square and round links in the chain respectively signify the men and women of the Republic. Located in the bottom, left-hand section of the shield is the iconic device for the principle of social welfare. This symbol consists of one stalk of rice and one stalk of cotton which respectively represent the national food staple and the national clothing material. The black, horizontal line in the centre of the shield around which each of the different sections is organised, represents the equatorial line which passes

through and links the far-flung reaches of the archipelago.

In the coat of arms, the *Garuda* is depicted encompassing all other iconic devices. Given that it constitutes the central and dominant character which organises and gives meaning to all other tropes, it is not difficult to see that this figure signifies and symbolically embodies the Indonesian Nation-State. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the principles of *Pancasila* and the national aspiration of 'Unity in Diversity' are both depicted as contingent upon the form of the Nation-State, hanging tenuously as they do from the different parts of the bird. In addition, the Nation-State is also portrayed as the generative source for the meaningful arrangement of time (e.g. the proclamation of independence in 1945 and reference to previous empires) and space (e.g. the equatorial line) and, as such, is depicted as the embodiment of politically relevant, historical events. The depiction of the historical starting point for the ideological foundations and aspirations of the Republic as the 17 August 1945 effectively serves to flatten out, homogenise and conveniently forget the often bloody struggles, on the part of the various ethnic and cultural groups throughout the archipelago, for political and social recognition and autonomy (see chapter two).

I have chosen to discuss the National coat of arms at length

because it incorporates many of the features which Kapferer (1979:11) and Handelman (1979:185), following Grathoff's (1970) definition, identify as characteristic of "symbolic types". Symbolic types are, in Kapferer's words, "constituted above the level of social roles defined and organized in terms of mundane reality and social action" (1979:11). As such, symbolic types are not constrained by a specific context but rather they act to define the context in terms of the consistencies of their own image and logic. As Kapferer points out, "symbolic types are their context" (1979:12). Precisely because symbolic types are reified above a particular context they are also transcendental in nature. That is, symbolic types gather up the contradictions, oppositions and discontinuities generated at the level of social practice into their own unified and consistent form which, as Kapferer argues, transcends 'mundane experience' (1979:12).

The utopian elements (i.e. 'democracy', 'religious pluralism', 'social justice for all', a 'civilised humanity' and a 'unified Indonesia') expressed in the Indonesian national emblem are thus a function of the transcendental nature of this type of symbol. The contradictions and inconsistencies inherent in and emergent from the political anatomy of the State and the articulation of national strategies of encapsulation and integration are flattened out

through their sublimation within the constant, homogenous and ultimately utopian form of this symbol. Moreover, the emblem exemplifies my point regarding the expression of the Nation-State. The ideology of the State, as Foucault (1984:61) suggests, is not necessarily or exclusively disseminated through physical force or overt repression but is more often, as the coat of arms illustrates, articulated through semiotic, symbolic and discursive devices. In this context, the role of ideology is essentially integrative. It is this dimension of ideology which I shall primarily focus upon in the following sections of the chapter.

Linked to and, in fact, emanating from the principles of *Pancasila*, the call for 'Unity in Diversity', and the nationwide affirmation of State constructions of the past are, as various authors have observed (see Anderson 1966; Bowen 1986; Morfit 1986; van Langenberg 1986; Warren 1986; Alexander 1989), a number of other key terms, tropes and concepts which are integral to the presentation and representation of the Nation-State. Of these key themes, the ethos of *gotong royang* or 'mutual assistance', the principle of *musyawarah* or 'consensus' and the organisation of *koperasi* or village-based 'cooperatives' are considered central to this study. In this and the following chapter, I shall discuss each of these concepts at length in terms of their expression within the ethnographic context.



To conclude this section, I suggest that rather than assume that the operation and influence of the Indonesian Nation-State is manifestly uniform throughout the length and breadth of the archipelago, a rhetorical trap so many authors fall into, the Nation-State, if it is to be discussed seriously at all, has to be contextually defined and delineated. By this I mean that in the case of Damer, for example, local people's perception and interpretation of the policies and directives of the Indonesian Nation-State, together with their subsequent actions, ultimately create and circumscribe the State in terms of its content and form.

In the remaining parts of this chapter, I argue that the State, constructed as an ideological, ontological and, ultimately, utopian configuration, acquires and realises its force most effectively when its strategies of integration and schemes of control are dissimulated and objectified within the logic of cultural practices, which themselves are grounded within the discursive and polyvalent province of socially generated fictions. This conjuncture of local culture with the State serves to further reify existing divisions and oppositions as well as producing new inconsistencies and contradictions. In this context, State-sponsored organisations such as *LMD* (*Lembaga Musyawarah Desa*) and *LKMD* (*Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa*) not only generate contradiction and discontent but also, in their

attempt to subsume and resolve discontinuity within their own consistent and unified form, represent powerful 'symbolic types'. Their imagined and actual capacity to transcend diversity through the images of unity and democracy signals their ultimate status as utopian symbols.

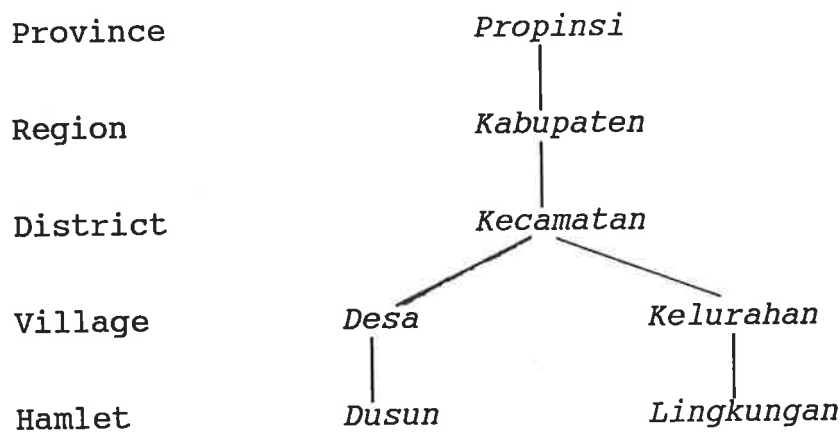
### Hierarchies of Unity

As I indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the 'body politic' in Amaya consists of, and is expressed through, a system of titles and positions which are empowered by the logic of local origin narratives. However, locally generated political configurations do not exclusively constitute the substance of the 'body politic' in Amaya. It is also the case that the administrative categories and positions formulated by the Indonesian government represent an integral dimension of political organisation in Amaya. In the following section I discuss both the form and content of government administrative structures which pertain to the village context.

Since the instigation of Suharto's 'New Order' regime in 1965, the administration of government policies and aspirations has become increasingly bureaucratized. In 1979, legislation<sup>3</sup> was enacted with a view to systematising and

homogenising the articulation of local government structures throughout Indonesia (see Warren 1986). The 1979 Village Government Law delineates a system of local government in terms of a hierarchical ordering of differentiated (in population size, financial responsibility and political influence) administrative units (see diagram 6.2.).

Diagram 6.2. The Structure of Local Government According to the Directives of the 1979 Village Government Legislation.



In this scheme, the province (*propinsi*) is divided into a number of regions known as *kabupaten*. These are further segmented into a series of districts or *kecamatan*. The *kecamatan* itself is comprised of numerous village units designated as *desa* or *kelurahan*, depending upon the degree of autonomy conferred upon this unit. As Warren (1986:222-223) points out, under the 1979 legislation the degree to which *kelurahan* manage their own affairs is severely restricted and

the status of local government officials is transformed to that of salaried public servants whose overt allegiance is to the State.

In the region of Maluku Tenggara, in which Amaya is incorporated, *kelurahan* (eight overall) only exist in the *kecamatan* of *Pulau-Pulau Kai Kecil*, of which Tual is the capital. The village of Amaya comprises one of the 55 *desa* which make up the *kecamatan* of *Pulau-Pulau Terselatan*. *Desa* and *kelurahan* can be further divided into hamlets referred to as *dusun* and *lingkungan*, respectively. In the province of *Maluku*, these divisions exist only on the more populated islands, such as *Ambon*. In the region of *Maluku Tenggara* and in the different districts which comprise this region, *dusun* or *lingkungan*, for that matter, do not yet exist. For the purposes of this study, therefore, the structure of local government is four-fold, consisting of the 'province' (*Propinsi Maluku*), 'region' (*Kabupaten Maluku Tenggara*), 'district' (*Pulau-Pulau Terselatan*) and 'village' (*desa Amaya*).

Within this administrative hierarchy, therefore, the village or *desa* is the smallest unit. The organization of local government in each village or *desa* throughout Indonesia is, in theoretical and official terms<sup>4</sup>, uniform. In practice, however, it is apparent that this is not the case. In this

connection, comparison of some of the literature on village organisation in the different regions of Indonesia quickly dispels the illusion of uniformity (for example, see Goethals 1961; Cooley 1969; Guinness 1986; Brewer 1988; King 1988; Warren 1989). However, notwithstanding local and regional variations, it is still possible to identify a number of common administrative structures and themes.

*Kepala Desa*: The 'Village Head'.

In Amaya, local government is organised and objectified into a pyramid-type structure of authority, influence and responsibility. Situated at the apex of this configuration is the *Kepala Desa* or 'village head'. Among other things, the *Kepala Desa* is responsible for the welfare of residents, the maintenance of law and order, the collection and payment of local taxes, the registration of births and deaths, upholding the principles of *Pancasila* (the five tenets which inform the practices of the Nation-State) and representing the interests of the Indonesian Government. Generally and officially speaking, the *Kepala Desa* is an elected official whose appointment has to be ratified by the district administrator (*Camat*). The office of lelechro lato or *Bapak Rajah*, on the other hand, is one inherited according to local hnulcho/adat-generated practices. The *Kepala Desa* do not

receive a salary as such from the government but are paid a stipend to help cover costs associated with their administrative responsibilities and, to some extent, compensate for inconvenience. The *Kepala Desa* in Amaya receives a quarterly stipend from the *Camat's* office in Kisar which, in the latter part of 1987, amounted to Rp.61,050. While this money is meant to be paid every three months, on Damer it is often the case that local government officials receive their stipend on a more irregular basis, especially since the termination (by government authorities) of a direct shipping link between Damer and Kisar. Given the poor financial returns for what, in reality, amounts to a full-time, highly stressful occupation, it is not surprising, therefore, that very few people express a desire to be appointed to this position. As Cooley observes, "no one wishes to be a radja or kepala soa... it is all work and trouble, with no joy, respect or payment" (1969:163). However, as I argue in the latter parts of this chapter, it is precisely this aspect of the position of *Kepala Desa* which enables the incumbent to accumulate 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu 1977:40) and, thus, present an image to the rest of the village of a dedicated man acting in good faith.

Under Dutch colonial rule, the traditional 'head' of the village was invariably acknowledged by the Europeans as either the *Bapak Rajah* (King Father') or *Orang Kaya*

('powerful person'). From Kolff's (1840) account, written in the early part of the nineteenth century, it appears that on Damer local headmen were addressed as 'Upper *Orang Kaya*'. As Chauvel (1984:12) points out, these individuals played an important mediatory role in relations between the Dutch administration and the local population. Indeed, indigenous political organisation and titles were appropriated by the Dutch administration in order to facilitate their control of the population and disseminate the ethos of Dutch colonialism. As I mentioned in chapter two, the appropriation and institutionalisation of local systems of political organisation by the Dutch effectively served to dissimulate colonial strategies of incorporation and hegemony. For local headmen, recognition by the Dutch colonial regime constituted an alternative source upon which to base claims of authority. Cooley (1969) and Chauvel (1984) suggest that prior to the introduction of this system of colonial rule, the degree of authority and influence wielded by local headmen was derived through and contingent upon consultation with the other members of the village council. However, the coupling of local political forms with the administrative system of the Dutch often produced "authoritarian and despotic" (Chauvel 1984:13) village leaders. Under the colonial administration, 'Upper *Orang Kaya*' or *Bapak Rajah* were invested with wide-ranging and diverse responsibilities. As Cooley remarks, "...the village ruler was virtually a law unto himself, so

long as he satisfied the demands of Company officials" (1969:145). It was also the case that the *Bapak Rajah/Orang Kaya* was provided with suitable housing by the villagers, who were also required to perform special services for the *Bapak Rajah* and his wife. In the Central Moluccas the service provided by men and women of the village was respectively referred to as *kwartodienst* and *hakikil* (Chauvel 1984:15). In addition, the *Bapak Rajah* also received a percentage of the clove harvest, an annual payment (*nahosi*) from the Dutch in the form of various commodities and, between 1875-1932, Christian *Bapak Rajah* were also paid a monetary bonus for each village youth who entered the Dutch colonial army (Cooley 1969:145-146).

In the latter part of the nineteenth century many of the privileges enjoyed by local headmen were abolished. As a result of widespread abuse, the services rendered by the men and women of the village (*kwartodienst* and *hakikil*) were terminated in 1920. Other changes to the system of local government included the introduction of democratically elected representatives on village councils in the 1920's and, more recently, the withdrawal of the judicial responsibilities of the village council resulting from the establishment of the 1950 provisional constitution of the Republic (Cooley 1969:163). In recent times, with the movement towards total State hegemony, ironically articulated



in terms of the idioms of democracy and consensus, and notable changes to the legislation concerning the operations of local government, there has been a trend in the more developed and less remote areas of the Province of *Maluku* for the *Kepala Desa* to be democratically elected from the village population. Thus, the position of *Kepala Desa* is filled by a different individual from that of the *Bapak Rajah*. In these contexts, the traditional leader continues to perform his role as an authority on *adat* matters.

These and other events have resulted in significant changes to the kind of authority enjoyed and exercised by present-day village headmen. On the one hand, these changes have led to a diminution in the responsibility and influence wielded by local headmen. On the other hand, however, the administrative structure of the Indonesian State has effectively empowered local leaders in new contexts and relations.

In Amaya, the appointment of the *Kepala Desa* does not strictly accord with the directives set out in the 1979 Village Government legislation. The *Kepala Desa* is not democratically elected by the population of the village. He (for most people in the village, a female *Kepala Desa* is quite out of the question) is appointed on the same basis as that invoked to determine who will be lelechro lato. That is, the position of *Kepala Desa* is confined to those members of

the 'house' of Surlialy and is determined in terms of a combination of the principles of descent and perceived ability. The men who comprise the decision making body ryesro viti mahnoni po viya ('the council of eight') determine who are the most suitable candidates from the 'house' of Surlialy and it is they who are ultimately responsible for the final selection. The *Camat* in Kisar is then informed of this decision. His recognition of the individual nominated by the council of elders in future transactions with the village serves to reproduce and reify the organisation of political relations which produced this arrangement. Thus, in Amaya the position of *Kepala Desa* and that of lelechro lato/Bapak Rajah are conflated and objectified in one individual only. The *Kepala Desa* is the lelechro lato and vica versa.

The present-day *Bapak Rajah cum Kepala Desa* in Amaya is said to be the seventh person to hold this position since the time when the Dutch first introduced and institutionalised this system of local government. The very first lelechro lato, on the other hand was, of course, Marnulu Lokelyawo Surlialy, who figures so prominently in local origin narratives. It is not known how many lelechro lato there have been since the time of Marnulu Lokelyawo Surlialy.

The present *Kepala Desa* was appointed to the position in 1966, taking over from the previous incumbent who, as I

discuss in the following chapter, was prematurely retired from office. Both the present and the previous *Kepala Desa* are from the 'house' of Surlialy, even though the current *Kepala Desa* is genealogically related to the previous incumbent as his FMMBSS. The previous *Kepala Desa* inherited the position from his father who, in turn, inherited it from his MMB. Interestingly, this person is also the paternal grand-father of the present *Kepala Desa*. From what I can gather from genealogies and people's comments, the line of succession from Mauw Surlialy, the first official *Bapak Rajah*, to the present *Kepala Desa*'s grand-father passed through the male members of the matri-group, that is, from MB to ZS.

Born in 1940, the current *Kepala Desa* has, by village standards, an interesting and varied work history. He spent the first twelve years of his life in Amaya and for six of those years attended the "*Sekolah Rakyat*" ('People's School') in the village. In 1952 he moved to Kisar in order to finish the last three years of his schooling at the 'People's School' in Wonreli. In 1955 he entered the *Sekolah Pendidikan Guru* ('Teacher's College') in Wonreli intent on becoming a teacher. According to the *Kepala Desa*, he was delayed in finishing his course and, as such, missed being assigned a teaching post in the province. He decided to return to Amaya and teach in what was now the *Sekolah Dasar* ('primary

school'). This he did until 1963 when he decided to go to Ambon and enroll in one of the government run *Sekolah Menengah Atas* ('senior high school') in order to further his education. Unfortunately, money for his schooling was short and he was, therefore, forced to work as a tuna fisherman for short periods during his time in Ambon. In 1965 he stopped working on the tuna boats and took up an administrative position in the 'Department of Fisheries'. This move enabled him to devote more time to his studies. However, he did not complete his studies. In October 1965 he received an urgent call from the elders in the village to return home and take up the position of *Kepala Desa/lelechro lato*. He was appointed, at the age of 25, to this position in early 1966. Two years later he married and in 1969 his wife gave birth to their only child, a boy.

In view of the State's emphasis upon educational qualifications, reflected in recent State local government legislation (1979) which stipulates that appointees should have achieved a minimum schooling level of 'junior high school' (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*) or acquired 'equivalent experience', the *Kepala Desa's* educational qualifications together with his experience of government bureaucratic structures make him an ideal candidate for the position of *Kepala Desa*. On the other hand, his affiliation to the 'house' of Surlialy contributes to the perception, in the

eyes of local people, of him as an appropriate appointment for the position of lelechro lato/Bapak Rajah. Furthermore, the *Kepala Desa*'s personal sacrifice of a promising career, his unstinted investment of time and labour, and his apparent financial disadvantage resulting from what is a poorly remunerated public position is collectively perceived by local people as constituting a generous, disinterested gesture by an honourable and selfless man. In this context it could be argued, in line with Bourdieu observations, that the "...egoistic, private, particular interests [of the individual are transmuted] "into disinterested, collective, publicly avowable, legitimate interests" (1977:40). The accumulation of symbolical capital in the form of honour and prestige, through the actions of 'good' deeds, produces a socially recognised and legitimate pool of credit which is readily converted to and consumed as material and symbolic goods and services. In Amaya, the conversion of symbolic capital to these other forms is evident in a number of different contexts. I shall discuss these at length later in this and the following chapter. It is important to point out here that the *Kepala Desa* does not have a monopoly on the accumulation of symbolic credit. There are a number of other men who, through their appointments as local government officials, also maximise the symbolic dimensions of their structural position.

*LMD*: The 'Village Consultative Committee'

According to the formal administrative structures of the State, the *Kepala Desa* is also the head of the State-sponsored local government body in the village known as *Lembaga Musyawarat Desa* ('village consultative committee'), which is commonly referred to with the acronym *LMD*. In theory, this committee consists of an elected secretary, treasurer and a dozen or so elected representatives from the *desa* population. However, in practice this is not always the case. In Amaya, the 'village consultative committee' (*LMD*) is comprised of the *Bapak Rajah*, the seven Uma heads, the heads of the four territorial aggregates known as Ono (or *soa* in Ambonese-Malay), the *Marinyo* or 'village crier' and the *sekretaris desa* or 'village secretary'. The 'village secretary' is one of the few positions which actually conforms to State prescriptions for the organisation of this body. However, I should point out that the 'village secretary' belongs to the same 'house' as the lelechro lato/*Kepala Desa* and is, in fact, the ZS of the present ryesro for Uma Surlialy. In addition to the State-prescribed position of 'village secretary', there is also the office of 'treasurer' (*bendahara*). In Amaya, there are two 'treasurers' both of whom are also Uma ryesro. One holds the cash box of the village while the other holds the key which opens this box. This system, I was told, was initiated to prevent the

illicit siphoning of village moneys. With the exceptions of the *Kepala Desa*, the 'village secretary' and one of the treasurers, the men who comprise the *LMD* have only rudimentary primary school education and no prior work experience outside of the village. The 'village secretary' completed 'junior high school' (*SMP*) while one of the treasurers worked as a civil servant in the Department of Agriculture.

The members of this committee are not appointed on the basis of merit or prior work experience. Neither are they democratically elected by the residents of the village. Rather, the positions are either inherited by mahno men, as is the case with the *Kepala Desa*, the seven Uma heads and the *Marinyo*, or nominated by the *Bapak Rajah* himself, as is the situation with the four Ono heads and 'village secretary', who are also affiliated with mahno 'houses'. This system of selection effectively precludes immigrants, uhro and ota persons as well as women and youths from holding these positions and consequently, they are marginalised within the local political domain.

The core of the *LMD* is thus the culturally constituted political configuration known as ryesro viti mahnoni po viya. The logic which organises and legitimates this body of elders is also used to appoint the 'village secretary'. As I

discussed previously, this person is appointed on the basis of his affiliation to the mahno 'house' of Surlialy and his genealogical links to a member of the above-mentioned body. As such, his appointment to what is, in practice, a key position in the organisation of the *LMD* effectively serves to consolidate and condense the authority claimed by the members of Uma Surlialy. The addition of the four *Kepala Soa* and the *marinyo* to this body reproduces the organisation of local government in terms of the images and forms which prevailed during the time of Dutch colonial rule.

The 'village consultative committee' is also referred to as *staf pemerintah* ('the staff of government') or *badan saniri*. While Cooley (1969:139) and Bartels (1977:26) suggest that the term *saniri* collectively refers to the 'village council', in Amaya the term is used as a generic gloss for the different Uma ryesro. In this context, therefore, the appellation *badan saniri* denotes the 'body' of men referred to as ryesro in the vernacular<sup>5</sup>.

Prior to the 1920's, the *badan saniri* in Amaya consisted of the *Bapak Rajah*, the seven ryesro or *saniri*, and the *Marinyo*. It was this body of men who comprised the operative administrative structure in the village under Dutch colonial rule known as the 'village council' and it was through this structure that the Dutch channeled their policies and



propaganda. As I indicated in the previous chapter, as well as in earlier sections of this chapter, in the 1920's the *badan saniri* was extended to include a *Kepala Soa*. The *badan saniri* retained this form until the mid 1980's when *Kepala Soa* were appointed for each of the Ono/Soa groups in the village and the *badan saniri* took on its present-day appearance.

The 14 members of the 'village consultative committee' or *LMD* meet each Monday morning in the house of the *Kepala Desa/lelechro lato*. While the men are seated around a table in the central room of the house, the wives of these men congregate at the back of the house in the kitchen and help the *Kepala Desa's* wife prepare refreshments. Minutes of the meeting are recorded by the 'village secretary' in an exercise book kept in a special cupboard in the *Kepala Desa's* house. The 'treasurer' who holds the key also holds the book which contains the financial records of the *LMD*. At these meetings, the men discuss topical issues such as the illegal poaching of fish from local waters by Butungese fishermen, the provision of reticulated water during the dry season, and preparations for the celebration of specific auspicious occasions. These events are not necessarily directly linked to the State. In fact, of the numerous State instigated holidays celebrated in Indonesia<sup>6</sup> only a handful, such as National Independence Day, are actually recognised in Amaya.

Other events which are commemorated are largely religious in origin and include, Martin Luther's Birthday, the establishment of the Protestant Church of Maluku, Christmas, Easter, and the establishment of the women's group associated with the Church. Other issues discussed are more concerned with the day-to-day affairs of the village such as, the collection and payment of taxes, misdemeanors committed by village residents and appropriate fines and punishments, village sanitation, the movement of individuals and locally-owned boats to Ambon and other areas, and the organisation of men and women into work groups to undertake government sponsored community development projects, the harvesting of the *desa*-assigned coconut plantations to produce copra and the dismantling and erection of resident's houses. As the above suggests, the *LMD* is not solely concerned with the issues associated with local government and village development, but the influence and authority of the *LMD* infiltrates every dimension of social life in the village. As a body, the men who comprise *LMD*, who are also recognised as the members of ryesro viti mahnoni po viya, the local *adat*-constituted decision-making body, effectively delineate the parameters of experiential reality. In this context, it is no longer possible to distinguish between the operations of these two bodies, as the following example illustrates.

An uhro man had committed incest, on a number of occasions,

with his daughter who, as a result of this, had given birth to two children. While the people in the village were outraged by such behaviour they also reasoned that such behaviour was to be expected from someone of that rank. Given that the incest was committed by someone of low rank and the violent disposition of the man in question, it was sometime before a meeting was convened to discuss this affair.

The meeting was held in the ancestral house of Uma Surlialy and was attended by the seven Uma heads, the *Bapak Rajah* and the four Ono heads. In short, the men who comprise the bodies ryesro viti mahnoni po viya and the *LMD*. The perpetrator was summoned to the house and, after heated argument, was ordered to pay a fine of three karcho (flat golden discs) to the head of the Ono he was affiliated with. However, the man refused to pay this fine. Faced with this resistance and realizing that it was not sufficient on this occasion to rely solely upon their authority as *adat* leaders, the *Bapak Rajah*, now acting as the official representative of the Indonesian government, threatened to report the matter to the local authorities and, in particular, to the police. This ploy had the desired effect upon the man and he proceeded to make arrangements for the payment of the fine. In this incident, *adat* and the State were collapsed into an authoritative unity which effectively served to subvert the basis for resistance and rebellion and legitimate the authority of those empowered

by this nexus.

Given the range of issues discussed, it is not unusual for *LMD* meetings to last all morning. While the discussion of these issues and concerns is conducted in both the vernacular and *Bahasa Indonesia*, it is fair to say that the bulk of the conversations are phrased in the local language. At the end of these meetings, the *marinyo* is ordered to go around the village and announce the decisions arrived at by the members of the *LMD*.

The *LMD* can only be said to be a 'consultative committee' insofar as there is consultation (*musyawarah*) between the different individuals who comprise the members of this body. As far as I could discern, this represents the extent of the consultative process. Certainly, the villagers were never given an explicit opportunity to comment upon *LMD* generated schemes or directives nor was the implementation of these decisions contingent upon wide-spread consensus (*mufakat*). Indeed, it became apparent once I had witnessed a number of *LMD* meetings that the processes of consultation and consensus were not fully operative even within the context of these meetings. The *Kepala Desa* in this context, who was one of the few men present who had been educated past primary school level, often dominated the proceedings and was largely responsible for the ideas behind community development

projects and other village-based schemes. Most of the time, the other members went along with these proposals. In fact, I rarely witnessed dissent or prolonged discussion about the merit of such plans. It became obvious that the *Kepala Desa* held the power of veto in this context and that he was, ultimately, acknowledged and empowered as the most authoritative person present at these meetings.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, the location of these meetings in the *Kepala Desa*'s house. I enquired why the meetings were held in this place and why they were not convened in a more neutral location. I was told by various members of the *LMD* that until such time as a community hall was built, the *Kepala Desa* had offered his residence as a venue for these meetings. Such an offer could be interpreted as another example of the accumulation of symbolic capital on the part of the *Kepala Desa*. This viewpoint gains weight when it is noted that, in this context, the other members of the *LMD* are effectively reduced to the status of guests and, as such, are expected to behave accordingly, taking pains not to offend their host. The elaborate preparation of refreshments by the women and the consumption of these items during the course of the meeting further supports this view. Thus, while the objectives of *LMD* meetings can be identified as fundamentally political, the means for achieving these ends is ostensibly articulated and performed in terms of the idiom

of sociality.

The status of the *Kepala Desa*'s house as the political and authoritative epicentre of the village is given further symbolic expression by the exclusive presence of numerous State images on the interior and exterior walls. Inside the house, hangs a large, framed photograph of President Suharto, around which are situated a number of honourific certificates awarded to the *Kepala Desa*. Outside, under the protection of the verandah, are located certificates awarded to the village of Amaya for its outstanding participation in and contribution to the celebration of National Independence Day. Other framed certificates point to their status as one of the place-getters in the annual *Perlombaan Desa* or 'Village Competition', conducted by the Department of Home Affairs in recognition of outstanding achievement in village development. Most of these certificates date from the 1970's and early 1980's. Any doubts as to the central socio-political role accorded the *Kepala Desa* are quickly dispelled by a large wooden plaque affixed to the front of the house. On this sign is written the name of the village and its *Kecamatan*, *Kabupaten* and provincial affiliation. It stridently proclaims to the observer that this site signifies the locus of the State at the local level.

*LKMD*: The 'Village Maintenance Organisation'

The *LMD* oversees the working of the next level of local government known as the *Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa* ('village community's maintenance organisation'). In theory, this body consists of a number of officers, including a chairman, deputy chairman, secretary and treasurer, with the entire population of the village comprising the general members of this institution. The *LKMD* is divided into ten sections, with a leader appointed to each section. The 10 sections within *LKMD* are broadly concerned with, religion (*agama*), the ethos and practice of *Pancasila* (*pedoman, penghayatan, pangamalan, Pancasila*), law and order (*keamanan ketertiban masyarakat*), education (*pendidikan dan penerangan*), lifestyle (*lingkungan hidup*), economic development (*pembangunan, perekonomian dan koperasi*), health and family planning (*kesehatan kependudukan dan keluarga berencana*), youth sport and art (*pemuda olah raga dan kesenian*), welfare (*kesejahteraan*), and family welfare and development (*pembinaan kesejahteraan keluarga*). As I discuss in the following chapter, only two of the 10 sections of *LKMD* can be said to be 'operative'. These are the sections concerned with 'development' (*pembangunan perekonomian dan koperasi*) and the 'family' (*PKK*).

The institution of *LKMD* is a recent phenomenon in Amaya,

having been formed in late 1984. The *Bapak Rajah* is the chairman of the *LKMD*. The executive members of *LKMD*, including the positions of secretary, treasurer, deputy chairman, are appointed by the *Bapak Rajah* and consist solely of mahno men, two of whom are also members of the *LMD*. This executive body appoints the leaders of each of the ten sections which make up the formal structure of *LKMD*. Three of the executive officers are also section leaders. Interestingly, in this instance, one of the section leaders is a woman and another is an uhro man. Notwithstanding these recent appointments, in practice, the different sections of *LKMD* represent nominal structures.

An indication of the nominal status of the various sections which comprise the institution of *LKMD* is provided when one examines the implementation of the annual programme delineated for each section.

Each year, the secretary of *LKMD* is required to report to the *Camat*'s office upon the projects undertaken by the ten sections of *LKMD*. The different activities assigned to each of the *LKMD* sections is determined by the men who comprise the *LMD*. These projects take place during the period of what is referred to as *bulan bakti* or the 'month of service/dedication'. *Bulan bakti*, in this example, fell in the month of March. In order to implement these programmes,



LKMD receives some financial assistance from this office, however, the residents of Amaya provide the bulk of the money.

Table 6.1. Details (amended) of the 'Village Development Programme' in Amaya, 1985/1986\*.

Section	Activity
Religion	replace roof on church building
<i>Pancasila</i>	quiz about the principles of <i>Pancasila</i>
Law and Order	Lecture on <i>adat</i> law
Education	mend school furniture
Lifestyle	clean the paths in the village
Economic development	clean the village coconut plantation
Health and family planning	clean around the village well and lecture by women of <i>PKK</i> on family planning
Art and Youth sport	Volleyball and soccer competition
Welfare	renovate the community hall
Family welfare and development	cooking demonstration

\* Source: *Program bantuan desa 1985/86. Daftar kegiatan dan penggunaan dana bantuan langsung untuk pelaksanaan bulan bakti Lembaga Ketahanan Masyarakat Desa. Desa Amaya. Ketua Umum LKMD, 15 Juni 1986.*

The report submitted for 1986, records that at different periods during the month of March each section of LKMD was engaged in a specific community-oriented project (see table

6.1). Other details reported include the amount of money provided by the residents of the village, the number of people engaged in these activities, and the type of work involved (i.e. whether the project involved extension, rehabilitation or new work).

Given that the different projects identified in table 6.1 were supposed to have taken place in March 1986, some two months before my arrival in Amaya, I was, therefore, surprised to see the men of the village repairing the roof of the church building some time after my arrival. When I queried this with the secretary for *LKMD*, a couple of months after the report had been submitted, I was informed that up to that point in time only two of the nominated projects (repairs to the church and the volleyball and soccer matches), had actually been undertaken and completed. Some of the other activities planned were completed in November of that year (e.g. lecture on *adat* law and cleaning the village coconut plantations). One project, which involved repairs to the school furniture, was commenced in November but was not finished until late 1987. Two other nominated projects, which supposedly involved repairs to the community hall and tidying around the village well, were physically impossible to carry out, given that there was no community hall at this time and that work on the village well was not completed until late 1986. Work on the construction of a community hall did not

commence until June 1986 and was still in progress when I left Amaya in December 1987. The other nominated activities did not take place even though funds and labour were allocated on paper to these projects. In this connection, it is interesting and, perhaps somewhat farcical, that in 1986 the *Kepala Desa*, the *LKMD* and the population of Amaya were together awarded a certificate of excellence from the *Camat's* office in Kisar for their outstanding participation in the *Lomba Bulan Bakti* or 'month of dedication competition' conducted throughout the entire *Kecamatan*.

The money that was received from the district administration for projects undertaken during *Bulan Bakti* was used to purchase materials for the construction of a community hall, village well and a meeting house for the women's organisation, *PKK*. Those projects which were undertaken and completed were not, however, conducted under the auspices of the relevant *LKMD* section but were carried out either by the various *Trop* work groups in the village or by the different *Ono/Soa* units. The organisation and participation of these groups for this purpose was determined by the men who comprise the decision making body known as *LMD*.

Within the context of Amaya, it is apparent that the codifications of the State, represented here in the form of *LKMD*, only exist insofar as people in the village give

substance and meaning to their existence. However, it is not only the actual existence of these organisations which is contingent upon local interpretations, but also their form and content. Thus, the structure and function of *LKMD*, for example, is ultimately determined by the people in the village who, as the above example illustrates, are just as capable of generating fictional realities as the state is of promulgating realistic myths. In this context, the logic which informs and organises the local decision making body known as the 'council of eight' (i.e. ryesro viti mahnoni po viya) is also invoked to give meaning to the edifices of the State.

This state of affairs becomes even more apparent within the context of so-called *LKMD* meetings, which also highlight the nominal authority and significance accorded to this organisation.

*LKMD* meetings, for the most part, follow a general and identifiable format. On Sunday evening, the *Marinyo* goes around the village and informs the residents that a meeting of the *LKMD* will be convened on the following morning. Generally speaking, so-called *LKMD* meetings are convened when the members of the 'village consultative committee' (*LMD*) wish to inform the residents of Amaya of any new developments or directives. The meetings are always held on a Monday when

they usually follow the *LMD* meetings. I should point out here that while meetings of the *LMD* were generally convened every week, *LKMD* meetings were only convened approximately once a month. Like the *LMD* meetings, most of what transpires at an *LKMD* meeting is expressed in the local language. Indonesian is used to articulate concepts and terms which have no equivalent in the vernacular. In this context, the immigrants in the village are severely disadvantaged and rely upon translations given by indigenous speakers.

In principle, *LKMD* meetings should involve all adult members of the community, however, in practice it is only the male residents of the village who are required to attend. Once again, the house of the *Kepala Desa* provides the spatial locus for local government meetings. The executive of the *LKMD* together with the members of the *LMD* sit on the front verandah of the house while the general members are seated on the ground in front of the house.

The meeting starts with the 'village secretary' taking roll call. The names of the men are organised on the roll in terms of their Ono/Soa affiliation, starting, of course, with Ono Suryali, followed by Onherweli, Ono Atowcheyeni and concluding with Ono Aulcheyeni. Only the names of men over the age of 18 are called. Those not present at the meeting are required later to furnish reasons for their absence. Once

the roll call is completed, the 'village secretary' formally welcomes the men and opens the meeting. Interestingly, this part of the meeting is conducted in Indonesian. The rest of the meeting is largely taken up by a series of announcements and propositions. For example, in a *LKMD* meeting convened on the 7 September 1987, the following items were announced. The first item on the agenda was the proposed visit of a doctor and nursing team to the island. The 'village secretary' read out a letter that had been received from the *Camat's* office in Kisar concerning this visit and a proposal to establish official mid-wifery positions in each of the villages on the island. The *Kepala Desa* then stood up and informed everyone that they were required to make themselves available for this visit and that upon returning home after the meeting they should tidy up any rubbish around their houses. In this connection the *Kepala Desa* told those assembled that it had come to his attention that the water in the village well had become dirty as a result of negligence on the part of the villagers. "The water in the well", he informed the residents, "was for drinking purposes only".

The next announcement made by the 'village secretary' concerned the sale of copra to the trade stores operating in the village. The men were informed that they should take their copra to one of the stores and have it weighed. They could then collect their money from the *LKMD* secretary. The

sale of all copra and *lola* in the village is controlled and mediated by *LKMD*. It is forbidden to sell these products independently of this institution. In this connection, the men were warned against accepting credit at the shops in lieu of money.

The following announcement concerned renovations to the roofs of resident's houses. The men were told to register their name with their *Kepala Soa* if they needed to have their roof replaced.

The last item to be announced related to the current community development project. The men were informed that all six *Trop* work groups were required to work on construction of the new community hall (*balai desa*). They were also told that a decision had been made to the effect that each of the 120 *Trop* workers would be required to purchase or pay the equivalent of one sack of cement (Rp.6,500). Those men who were too old to work would be required to pay for 1/2 a sack of cement.

At the end of the announcements, there is a session in which the executive answers questions from the general audience. Only a handful of men ever use this opportunity to voice their opinion about the matters at hand. In the case of the above meeting, questions were raised by only four of the 120

men assembled. Their questions were concerned with, the kind of work one specific *Trop* was assigned to (I shall discuss this issue in more detail in the next chapter in the section devoted to *Trop*); what was to be done about one of the residents who was mentally disturbed; whether the tools required for the construction of the *balai desa* had been purchased and, if so, where were they; and a query regarding the workings of the new system, implemented by *LMD* for the purchase of copra. Both the *Kepala Desa* and 'village secretary' took it in turns to respond to these questions. Once a response was given by one of these two individuals nothing further was said about the matter.

When it becomes clear that no further questions are forthcoming from the audience, the 'village secretary' announces that the meeting is officially closed and thanks the men for attending.

In these meetings, it is apparent that the executive members of the *LMD* constitute the key actors (remember that these men, for the most part, also comprise the decision making-body known as the 'council of eight'). Thus, it is the 'village secretary' and not the *LKMD* secretary who acts as the spokesperson for the men assembled on the verandah. He is directed by the members of the *LMD* and not the representatives of the *LKMD* committee. When the 'village



secretary' is not speaking to the assembled audience then the *Kepala Desa* is. The *Kepala Desa*'s role in this context is both paternalistic and dictatorial, a reflection of his dual identity as lelechro lato and official representative of the Indonesian state. In many of *LKMD* meetings I attended, the *Kepala Desa* lectured the audience about the kind of lifestyle and values that they should aspire to. These monologues were invariably peppered with references to the principles of *Pancasila*, the ethos of *gotong royong* ('mutual assistance') and local *adat* practices and prescriptions. The communal nature of social life in Amaya was frequently cited as both the means and the objective of village development. On one particular occasion (26/10/87), the *Kepala Desa* invoked a local saying, "usso delusso tawok wokpo tonlo, Vio klakusso tawok wokpo temunlo" ('we eat together from one banana, we drink together from one glass') to signify the common origins and reciprocal relations engendered in local constructions of Amaya as a community. On other occasions, the *Kepala Desa* was less conciliatory and the audience were specifically instructed by the *Kepala Desa* as to what they could and could not do. For example, the villagers were forbidden to trade directly with the Chinese shop owners or with visiting ships; were required to participate in all village-based development programmes as well as attend meetings; the women were prohibited from hanging their wet washing on the front of their houses and, in addition, were required to keep their

house and the immediate area clean and tidy.

The various section leaders of *LKMD* do not actively participate in these meetings. For the most part, they sit silently on the front verandah. It is interesting to note, that the only female section leader rarely took up her position at the front of the house with the other members of *LKMD*. Instead, if she did attend the meeting, she would sit at the back of the house with some of the other women who had assembled there.

While these meetings and the *LKMD* in general may appear to operate along democratic lines, it is apparent that the views of the general members have little political weight in influencing the outcome of any meeting. The majority of issues have already been decided prior to the convening of the meeting. The State promulgated notions of consultation (*musyawarah*) and consensus (*mufakat*), which are promoted as both necessary and integral elements of local government organisation and its expression, exist here as symbolic devices only. Many people in the village were aware that these idiomatic 'tools of democracy' represented rhetorical and empty terms. Often I would hear complaints, expressed by mahno as well as uhro and ota men, relating to the manner in which decisions affecting all residents were made, the relevance of the proposed village development projects, and

the abuse of power in terms of the privileged access to resources by those inculcated in local government or exemption from participation in village development projects. For instance, during question time at an *LKMD* convened on 26 October 1987, one of the men in the audience remarked that "when the bell sounded for everyone to start work, the executive members of *LMD* and *LKMD*, together with the *Trop* [work groups] supervisors, quickly gathered up their machetes and headed for their gardens, while the rest of the men were required to work for the village". On another occasion when the assembled men had been instructed that they would have to 'donate' money for the purchase of zinc sheets to roof the house of one of the *LMD* executive members, a number of men got up and asked "why they should bear this financial burden when their own houses were only roofed with sago leaves". In response, the *Kepala Desa* pointed out that, "in keeping with the ethos of *gotong royong* ('reciprocal assistance'), they were required to offer assistance to their fellow-villagers in return for the assistance they had previously received from them". Within the context of these public forums, it was generally mahno men who openly expressed their discontent or disagreement. Rarely did I witness an uhro or ota person directly questioning the authority of the *LMD* executive. Instead, these people chose to articulate their discordant views in more exclusive contexts or through alternative structures of identification (for a more detailed discussion

of this subject see the following chapter).

Indeed, much of the dissension in the village is not articulated in such public contexts as *LKMD* meetings but is expressed privately between small groups of individuals. This is certainly the case with respect to some of the development projects the people in the village have been required to participate in. In this connection, the construction of a breakwater on the foreshore at the behest of the *Kepala Desa* represents a good example. Every Monday and Tuesday during the latter part of 1987, the able-bodied adult residents in the village, both men and women, were required to carry rocks from the edge of the village and along the sea-shore to the site where the breakwater was being constructed. As they carried the rocks down to the beach, I often heard people complaining about the nature of their task and, indeed, about the stupidity of such a project. Even the *Kepala Desa's* mother ridiculed the project proclaiming that her son "saw himself as Moses holding back the sea". Many people voiced the opinion that the breakwater would never be finished in their lifetime and that it required machinery not manual labour to execute and complete this task. Given the enormity of the task and the approaching wet season, the construction of a breakwater represented, for the majority of people in the village, an exercise in futility.

However, notwithstanding the ability of people to sometimes see through these images, it is still the case that the discourse offered by the State has the power to seduce the disenfranchised (i.e. uhro and ota identified individuals as well as women and youth of the village) and, in some contexts, subvert the claims to authority made by those empowered by the logic of local origin narratives. The subversive and seductive powers of both the State and local political hierarchies as well as local resistance to these schemes will be examined in more detail in the following chapter.

#### The Body Politic:Desa as a Metaphor for Community

Through its multiple and varied parts, the institutions of *Kepala Desa*, *LMD* and *LKMD* collectively, and effectively, denote the social and political horizons of the State-generated unit *desa*. The *desa* is here constructed in terms of the hierarchical ordering and relation of parts to wholes. The principles of *Pancasila* (namely pluralistic monotheism, nationalism, humanitarianism, democracy and social justice), and the notions of consensus and consultation, which inform the configuration and expression of the State, are also the same principles which determine the nature of the parts of local government, the form of their inter-connectedness as

well as defining the *desa* as a whole. In this sense, the internal organisation of the different local government institutions (i.e. *Kepala Desa*, *LMD* and *LKMD*) and their collective arrangement as a differentiated but unified hierarchical order can be seen as a microcosm of the political anatomy and values constitutive of the Nation-State. In this context, hierarchy and differentiation serve to unify rather than divide.

These 'hierarchies of unity' are further defined and legitimated through the practices which contribute to and are contingent upon the notion of *desa* as community. These practices include, among other things, the collective organisation of labour for village-based development projects, as well as various village-based State and local rituals. In this connection, the so-called 'village competitions' mentioned above, which are sponsored by the State, represent just one instance of *desa* constructed as a semantic and symbolic device for the expression of State notions of unity and community (other salient instances are discussed in the following chapter). The perceived and real capacity of *desa* to sublimate the diversity and contradictions generated by the conjuncture of local culture with the State within the logic of its own consistent and unified form points to its status as a 'transcendental symbol' (Kapferer 1979:12). As such, *desa* functions to

produce and reproduce social contexts and relations in terms of its own image. In doing so, *desa* becomes its own context (Kapferer 1979:12).

The State-sponsored notion of *desa* as community is particularly compelling and appealing for a number of reasons. At one level, the contextual construction of *desa* as a unified socio-political entity serves to temporarily sublimate the emphasis placed upon difference in the village. As the reader will recall, local origin narratives represent, among other things, discursive celebrations of diversity articulated in terms of origins, gender and age. Rather than emphasising heterogeneity, the villagers acting as *desa* members choose, on certain occasions, to depict themselves as a homogenised group. For the disenfranchised members of Amaya, this fictional representation of unity provides an important, referential index of identity. Identity, in this case, is located with respect to their involvement, as citizens, in the Indonesian Nation-State. For those inculcated in the apparatus of local government, the promotion of Amaya as a *desa* community further empowers them in their actions.

At another level, *desa* as a trope for community harnesses local conceptualisations of reciprocity as well as local identifications with space as meaningful place. As I

discussed in chapters one and three, social relations in Amaya are constructed in terms of sharing substance and space. Indeed, the village as the physical embodiment of relatedness provides one of the primary idioms of sociality in Amaya. The reciprocal and collective nature of sociality is expressed, as I have previously mentioned, on such occasions as marriage and death. In these and other contexts, local social groups such as Uma and Ono perform an important mediatory role as well as contribute to the overall form and content of the event.

It is evident, therefore, that the political construction of *desa*, as a unified community, borrows from and is informed by elements of Mayawo culture. Thus, as I hinted at the beginning of this chapter, the body politic in Amaya represents a complex configuration of relations and values which, in practice, engages the epistemologies of both the State and local culture. This articulation forms the focus of the next chapter.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, I have been largely concerned with establishing the structural field of local politics in order that I may discuss, in the following chapter, the symbolic



and discursive elements of political relations as they are expressed within a number of different contexts.

In Amaya, it can be seen that it is the decision-making body ryesro viti mahnoni po viya cum *LMD*, and not the *LKMD*, which wields power and influence in the community. In short, this body has taken on the role of the State at the local level of village government. The 'body politic' in this context refers to more than just a particular structure of political organization or the individual as a politicised subject. It delineates a systematic and coherent constellation of strategies, mechanisms and modes for the communication and integration of relations of power and identity.

The conflation of local cultural beliefs and practices with the principles and policies of the State illustrates the power of the imagination to create quite novel arrangements of relations and meaning from a 'heterogeneous' repertoire' (Levi-Strauss 1966:17) of symbols. However, unlike Levi-Strauss' 'bricoleur', the people in Amaya are not restricted to a limited set of 'signs' or 'means' in their re-interpretation and re-construction of reality. Nor do the constituent elements of these new creations represent the symbolic debris or surplus produced from the expression of social relations. Rather, the act of innovation and its recognition by others in this context results in its

inclusion as part of an unlimited, cultural repertoire of possible actions, concepts, symbols, beliefs and relations which inform and transform social practice (for an interesting discussion of the generation of novel events see also Lewis 1989).

In the following chapter, I explore, in more detail, the novel articulation of events, meanings and relations which are generated from this ideological conjuncture. In particular, I examine the production and reproduction of the 'body politic' in terms of the two operational sections of *LKMD* (associated with the economy and women), the organisation of labour for community-based projects, previous attempts to establish a permanent village cooperative, and the celebration of local and State rituals respectively represented by the erection of the umtuvatvcha ('oldest house') for Uma Surlialy and 'National Independence Day'.

## NOTES

1. An allusion to the five principles (*Pancasila*) of 'nationalism', 'humanitarianism', 'democracy', 'social welfare' and 'pluralistic monotheism' which constitute the ideological foundation of the Indonesian Nation-State.

2. For many people in Indonesia, but not all, the banyan tree is said to be the place where the ancestral spirits of a particular community reside and, as such, is locally regarded as a 'sacred' tree. It is often also the place where village meetings are conducted. At another level, the banyan tree signifies an integrated and unified whole comprised of many diverse parts. As such, it ideally embodies and symbolically expresses the principle of a 'unified Indonesia'.

3. *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia No. 5, Tahun 1979, Tentang Pemerintahan Desa.*

4. Official strategies and formulations of the structure of local government at the village level are set out in two State decrees; *Peraturan Menteri dalam Negri No. 2, 1981, tentang Pembentukan Lembaga Musyawarah Desa* and *Peraturan Menteri Dalam Negri No. 27, 1984, tentang Susunan Organisasi dan tat kerja LKMD* (see also Warren 1986).

5. Cooley (1969) states that the term *saniri* is of Seramese origins and was used in it's original context to denote "...the council which used to govern the region of the Three Rivers..." (*ibid*:139).

6. Clifford Geertz (1960) identifies the following national holidays; "*Hari Lagu Kebangsaan* (Holiday for the National Anthem), *Hari Ibu Kartini* (Princess Kartini's Day...), *Hari Pelawan* (Heroes Day...), *Hari Angkatan Perang* (Armed Forces Day), *Satu Mei* (First of May...), *Hari Gerakan Wanita* (Women's Movement Day), and *Hari Kemerdekaan* (Freedom Day...)" (*ibid*.:375).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE FALL OF THE 'KING': RITUALS OF RESISTANCE AND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY.

In order to establish its own setting and base of power, discourse binds itself to the institutional structure that legitimates it in the eyes of the public and, at the same time, makes it dependent on the play of social forces.

Michel de Certeau (1983:135).

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I pursue, and explore in detail, a number of the issues, arguments and concerns raised in the previous chapter. In particular, I focus upon the articulation of the 'body politic' (defined as a symbolic, discursive and pragmatic configuration of relations) in terms of a series of, to borrow Bourdieu's phrase, "ritual strategies and strategic rituals" (1977:41)<sup>1</sup>. Within the context of these highly charged, symbolic domains the politics of origins and identity are played out. As this suggests, these contexts represent meaningful social fields for the expression of both authority and dissent. In this chapter, I introduce the notion of resistance (which is further examined in the following chapter) and discuss the significance of state-sponsored groups for the disenfranchised residents in the village. I should point out here that resistance is not the exclusive domain of the disenfranchised, although, in many

contexts, they do represent the most vociferous and active of those who criticize the structures of authority in Amaya. In Amaya, there is, to quote Foucault, "no single locus of great refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions...Instead there is a plurality of resistances" (1978:96). While the 'points' or nodes of resistance are spread throughout the village, around some of these focal points, however, resistance is knotted in a far greater density so as to produce, on certain occasions, the cleavages and fractures which often characterise relations between mahno and non-mahno persons, indigenes and immigrants, men and women, and the old and the young.

Resistance in this context is largely articulated in terms of various discursive forms (i.e. gossip, slander, accusation, rumour, narrative, stories, etc.) rather than through organised, public hostility. In this respect, resistance to authority represents, what Scott terms, "...an exchange of small arms fire...in a cold war of symbols..."(1985:22). In Amaya, this exchange is characterised by the struggle to colonize both old and new spaces and symbols in order to construct the past and the present in terms of the meanings which empower and legitimate the actions of the colonizers (see Scott 1985). The State, replete with a myriad of symbolic forms, represents one such space.

In this chapter, as in the previous chapter, I argue that the different organisations associated with the State represent alternative and, paradoxically, 'utopian' (Ricoeur 1986) structures of identification for those people identified as uhro, ota, immigrants, women and youths. For these people, the principles and practices of the Nation-State encode the notion of utopia precisely because they introduce doubt about the legitimacy of existing orders through the offer of 'alternity' (Lewis 1989). This questioning of the taken-for-granted world is, according to Ricoeur, "the main value of utopias" (1986:300).

However, notwithstanding the real experience of alternative modes of being and other units of identification provided by the Nation-State, the situation in Amaya is such that the principles and beliefs which inform locally-constituted groups and hierarchies are extended to encompass these new forms of affiliation and identity. The projection of the categories of Mayawo origin narratives onto the apparatus of the State at the local level effectively serves to consolidate the authority of those already empowered by the metaphors of history and limit the expression of resistance. In this context, where ideology is distorted through dissimulation, the utopian ideals and aspirations embodied and expressed by the Nation-State are unmasked in terms of their pathological meanings and functions. That is, they

represent, to quote Ricoeur, "the completely unrealizable" (1986:310).

While I discuss several different and, what appear to be, disparate situations and contexts, these events have been selected because they are exemplary rather than extraordinary. Each of these instances, I argue, are internally organised and interconnected by a number of common thematic threads. These threads are identified as refracting the same themes which inform and shape local origin narratives, local constructions of identity and the organisation of local government.

### 'Ritual Strategies'

The first section of this chapter continues the discussion of State sponsored organisations examined in chapter six. As in the previous chapter, this section is concerned with identifying the many contradictions, inconsistencies and oppositions generated by the articulation of the State at the local level. It also examines the way in which organisations linked to the State encode and promote many of the features associated with 'symbolic types' (see chapter six). Accordingly, organisations such as *LKMD*, *PKK* and *Trop* represent powerful symbolic forms which gather up and flatten

out diversity and dissent.

**The Fall of the 'King': The Village Cooperative as a Metaphor  
of Local Resistance.**

Between 1960 and 1967, most economic activities relating to the cash sector in Amaya were articulated through the village cooperative. *Koperasi Amaya*, as it was known, was headed by the village orator, an uhro man. His deputy during the period of the cooperative's operation also held the position of Uma ryesro. While this person was the ryesro for a mahno Uma, his mother was from the same 'house' as the village orator. The link between these two men was not only genealogical but also affinal, as the deputy was also married to the village orator's sister. The treasurer of *Koperasi Amaya* was the current *Kepala Desa*' mother's brother.

Rather than foster 'cooperation' and a sense of community spirit in accordance with the rhetorical ideals of the State, the cooperative in Amaya fermented dissent, suspicion and animosity. The operation of the cooperative and the expenditure of cooperative funds were regarded by many mahno people in the village as "corrupt". One individual said that, "only the family of the head and deputy of the cooperative actually benefited from this organisation." He suggested that



"because people in Amaya did not understand how a cooperative operated, it was easy for these two people to siphon off money". Other people in the village argued that the fact of the village orator owning the only sewing machine in the village at that time points to his abuse of the system. However, the village orator, in his defence, stated that he had sent men from the village to Java to get this sewing machine in order to "demonstrate what the cooperative was capable of doing".

The situation regarding *Koperasi Amaya* became even more vitriolic when the *Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah* at this time decided to establish another village cooperative in the mid 1960's. This venture was actually a branch of a cooperative founded in Kisar called *Koperasi Kopra Terselatan* or the 'Southern Copra Cooperative'. The establishment of a new cooperative would obviously undermine the operation of the existing one as well as affect the status and position enjoyed by the village orator and his brother-in-law. Consequently, the *Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah* was accused by these men of "starting up his own cooperative" which, it was suggested, would exclusively benefit the members of his 'house'.

The whole situation came to a head in 1966, when the village orator, his brother-in-law and a number of other men from

non-mahno 'houses' submitted a report to the *Camat's* office in Kisar requesting the resignation of the *Kepala Desa*. In this report, they alleged that he was corrupt, licentious and basically not suitable to hold this position. According to the current *Kepala Desa*, the previous *Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah* did not receive any support from the members of his own 'house' because the ryesro for Uma Surlialy at the time was "an alcoholic and weak-willed man who was easily influenced by others". It was also the case, that many of the members of this 'house' were dissatisfied with the way the *Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah* ran village affairs. So rather than support the *Kepala Desa* in respect of these allegations, the members of his 'house', together with the village orator and his supporters, actively campaigned to bring about his downfall. The outcome of all this politicking was the abdication of the *Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah* and the installation of the current *Kepala Desa*. Initially, this person kept the village cooperative but changed the executive personnel. The *Kepala Desa* himself became the head of this organisation and his MMZSS was appointed as his deputy. According to the *Kepala Desa*, the cooperative was disbanded in 1967 when he received notification from the *Camat's* office in Kisar that only one cooperative was permitted in the district.

Reflecting on these events, some twenty years after their occurrence, the current *Kepala Desa* expressed his belief that

the 'fall' of the previous *Kepala Desa/Bapak Rajah* was largely orchestrated by low ranked individuals. According to the *Kepala Desa*, "they wanted to bring about the downfall of Amaya. They wanted to change and even abolish the system of ranking". "However", he concluded, "this didn't happen as the system of ranking is *adat* and is determined by history and the ancestors".

The *Kepala Desa* is perhaps right in suggesting that the low ranked individuals in the village wanted to transform the system of social classification. However, to abolish it altogether would leave these people ultimately dislocated and dispossessed from the ontological source of their identity. In this context, it is more appropriate to view the actions of uhro and ota persons as an attempt to extend the ontological locus of their identity so as to incorporate the modes of being constructed by the Nation-State.

According to the village orator, however, the events surrounding the 'fall of the King' represented an attempt to slander and undermine even further the position of his 'house' in the village. He said that, at the time, he had even contemplated taking the necessary action to "fine" the previous *Kepala Desa* for his libellous accusations. Mahno people in the village, according to the village orator, were concerned that non-mahno individuals, facilitated by the

structures and rhetoric of the State, would gain access to resources and authority which had always been the prerogative of mahno 'houses'. The village orator, together with many uhro and ota people, believes that low ranked individuals are denied the space in which to effectively articulate their identity, rights and responsibility as citizens of the Nation-State.

#### **Purchasing the Store: The *LKMD* as a Hegemonic Trope**

Largely as a result of the village cooperative debacle, the purchase and sale of the primary cash products copra, *lola* and *batu laga* (the latter two items are nacreous sea-shells) in Amaya since 1967, and until quite recently, has been the preserve of the three trade stores operating in the village. The organisation and control of the cash sector of the village economy has, therefore, moved from one extreme to the other.

As I mentioned in chapter one, all three of these stores are owned and funded by Chinese merchants located either in Kisar or Ambon. Immigrant men residing in Amaya are employed to provide the venue and run the shops. The exclusive involvement of 'immigrants' in this domain further serves to marginalise them in the eyes of the indigenous residents.

This is largely because of the association of these 'immigrants' with the non-Christian, often non-Indonesian, Chinese and the fact that, for most people in the village, social relations with these immigrants are never expressed as relations of generalised reciprocity but are articulated via the medium of commodities. The commodification of social relations, in this context, places the immigrants on the margins of the network of relations constructed through Mayawo notions of sociality.

The system which operated with respect to the procurement of these products was essentially competitive and individualistic. Local people would take their copra or the seashells they had collected and sell them to the store offering the highest price. Generally speaking, there was very little difference between the prices offered by each of the stores. A number of people opted for credit at the store in lieu of direct financial remuneration. For the shopkeepers, credit represented a far better financial ploy than straight-out payment. Under this system, most people took goods from the store far in excess of their opening balance and, as such, soon got into debt. In order to pay off this debt they were required to sell their produce to the store at which they were in debt. Often this meant that they did not receive the highest price for their products. A number of people in the village are still in debt to the

stores even though the system was changed in 1986. One shopkeeper I spoke to, indicated that he was owed Rp.2 million as a result of this system of credit and debt. Given that some of these people were also genealogically related to him, he confessed that he felt awkward asking for the money directly. He expected that in the long term he would have to write off these debts completely. Until then, he extracts the debt owing to him in the form of material goods (e.g. timber, bamboo, sago leaf roofing units) and services (e.g. the erection of his house, construction of a new garden, etc.).

The members of the *LMD* believed this system to be disadvantageous to all parties. Moreover, they perceived that the different Chinese merchants who ran the stores in Amaya strategically worked together to keep the purchase price of local products low. After the unsuccessful attempts to establish a permanent village cooperative (*Koperasi Desa*) in the 1960's, the members of the *LMD* decided instead to activate the section of *LKMD* concerned with economic development in order to circumvent these problems.

Under this new system, the different trade stores in Amaya interested in purchasing local products were required to lodge the full amount of the money they envisaged they would outlay in procuring these items with the secretary of *LKMD*. For example, in September 1987 the manager of *Toko Indrah*

deposited Rp.500,000 with *LKMD* for the purchase of copra. Note that the money is not lodged with the leader of the economic development section, who is an uhro man. In the case of copra, the different stores independently determine the price they will pay for it. During the research period, the price of copra oscillated between Rp.200 and Rp.300 per kilogram. The individual shops weigh the copra and keep records of their purchases. These records are later submitted to the *LKMD* secretary for him to tally the amount of copra purchased by the shop against the amount of money deposited with the *LKMD*.

The situation with *lola* and *batu laga* is quite different. Whereas villagers are permitted to produce copra throughout the year, and the stores are allowed to purchase copra all-year round, the gathering and purchasing of *lola* has a limited season. It is the members of the *LMD* and not the executive of the *LKMD* who decide when the *lola* season will commence, where the men can look for it, whether they can use goggles or not to look for it, who of the Chinese merchants will purchase the shells, what price the villagers will accept for the shells, when the villagers will receive their money and when the *lola* season closes.

The Chinese merchants are required to submit tenders for the purchase of *lola* and *batu laga* to the *LKMD*. However, it is

the men who comprise the executive of *LMD* who actually receive the tenders. At the final year *LKMD* meeting in December 1986, the three letters of tender lodged by the Chinese merchants were all addressed to the *Kepala Desa* and not to the *LKMD*.

Upon receiving the tenders, a *LKMD* meeting is called to inform the villagers (read men) of the different offers. In the meeting mentioned above, the Chinese merchants who own the three stores in Amaya each lodged a tender. They tendered for the price of *lola* (regardless of size) and submitted separate prices for small and large *batu laga*. The different tenders were read out to the assembled audience by the 'village secretary'. The *Kepala Desa* then got up and suggested to the audience that they accept the highest tender for each item. In this case, the tender for *lola* received from *Toko Usaha Baru* was accepted while the tender for *batu laga* was accepted from the shop *Seberaneka*. There is a belief amongst the villagers and the members of *LMD* that the Chinese merchants have actually decided amongst themselves not only who will purchase seashells from which village but the price they will pay for these products. This conspiracy belief is supported by the fact that the right to purchase seashells from the different villages on the island is evenly distributed between the different Chinese merchants represented on the island and the fact that the tenders



submitted are usually within Rp.100 of each other.

Once a tender has been accepted, the so-called 'successful' shops are then required to lodge a large sum of money with the *LKMD* secretary to cover some of the purchases, though obviously not all. Usually, a sum of between Rp.2 - 3 million is initially lodged with *LKMD*. The deposition and acceptance of this money also represents a symbolic gesture of good faith on the part of both the Chinese and *LKMD*, especially given that the total amount expended on these purchases is in the vicinity of Rp.17 million.

The villagers are instructed when they can take their *lola* and *batu laga* to the shops to be weighed. This operation is overseen by the leader of the *LKMD* section for 'economic development'. He also records the weight of the shells for each person on scales owned by the *LKMD*. Many people in the village do not trust the Chinese merchants or the people who run their stores. They believe that, in the past, they have been cheated by these people. The *Kepala Desa* has warned people against selling their products to these people illegally or exchanging their copra and shells for cigarettes. The shopkeepers, themselves, accuse each other of acting in an illicit manner, purchasing *lola* and copra independently of *LKMD*.

Once the shells have been weighed, the villagers wait for an announcement from the *LMD* as to when they will be paid. They are then required to go to the house of *LKMD* secretary to ask for the money owing to them. However, they do not receive the full amount as 10% of the total purchase price is deducted as a tithe for the Church. In addition to this deduction, the *LKMD* charges the Chinese merchants Rp.50 for every kilogram of seashell weighed. An extra charge of Rp.35,000 is levied on each Chinese merchant to cover administrative costs.

Once the Chinese merchants have fully paid for the seashells they then attempt to extract this money from the village by stocking their shops with new goods. Throughout the year, the stocks in the stores are allowed to run down. The items remaining in the shops do so because they are either old stock or are of no use to people in the village. However, once the Chinese merchants have purchased sea-shells from the village it is a different story. The stores are stocked to over-flowing with clothes, food items, medicines and household goods. In 1986, for example, the different Chinese merchants spent a total of approximately Rp.35 million for the purchase of seashells in Amaya. The very next day after this money had been paid to the villagers, Chinese-owned boats arrived at the village to re-stock the usually empty shops. Siblings of these Chinese merchants came and set up temporary shops in private residences in the village (in

return, the owners of these residences received a percentage of the profit on all goods sold). For the next fortnight, the villagers went into a consumption-driven frenzy and, by the end of this period, most of the Rp.35 million paid to the villagers had been transferred back to the Chinese and, as such, channeled out of the village.

While there are a number of interesting economically-oriented conclusions which can be drawn from the above account, my main concern here is with the politics of identity insofar as it relates to the establishment and operation of former village cooperatives, the role of *LKMD* in the village economy and its relationship with *LMD*.

At one level, narratives concerning the former village cooperatives represent powerful metaphors of resistance. They demonstrate the ability of non-mahno people to manipulate and subvert local hierarchies of authority and control. For the disenfranchised people, these narratives graphically depict the State as the utopian means for achieving a radical re-ordering of relations in Amaya. Resistance to the hegemony of the mahno-dominated order is here articulated within the 'new spaces' provided by the State.

The State, however, also represents the means by which those empowered by the logic of local origin narratives can extend

their area of influence. Thus, the new *Kepala Desa* was able to change the executive of the village cooperative and, in fact, abolish the cooperative altogether precisely because of his structural position as the representative of the Indonesian government. Through the organisation *LKMD*, the State also represents the means to emasculate and effectively control the actions of both immigrants and low-ranked persons.

The narratives concerning the village cooperative also represent powerful moral critiques of the actions of non-mahno persons (cf. Bamberger 1974). The low-ranked actors in the stories narrated by the *Kepala Desa* are depicted, for the most part, as socially irresponsible and morally corrupt. A mahno individual from the 'house' of Surlialy, legitimated here by the State, is once again called upon to restore order to disorder. A common theme, it would appear, in most Mayawo narratives (see chapter four).

With the abolition of the village cooperative, it is interesting, therefore, and perhaps ironic, to note that the village orator's younger brother now occupies the position of leader for the *LKMD* section specifically concerned with 'cooperatives' and 'economic development'. However, it is apparent that the *Kepala Desa* and the other members of the *LMD* have learned the lessons of history. Thus, while the

younger brother of the village orator appears to occupy a position similar to that once occupied by his brother, it is also the case, however, that this person is only accorded a minor part in the overall operations. He is certainly not involved in the decision making process and does not handle *LKMD* funds. Indeed, it is apparent that the secretary of the *LKMD* is the key and central figure in this domain. However, the *LKMD* secretary is not empowered to decide the course of events and it is also obvious that the executive of the *LKMD* are in a similar position. Authority in this instance is located with the men who comprise the *LMD* who are also, in effect, the men who comprise the cultural decision making body known as ryesro viti mahnoni po viya. The executive of *LMD* is empowered to act and influence every dimension of social life in the village precisely because it embodies and articulates this dual identity. The actions of the *LMD* are, thus, legitimated by the edifice of the State and further empowered by the ontological and cosmological imperatives of local origin narratives. In this context, the possibilities for staging effective resistance strategies are severely limited.

A similar situation can be identified with respect to the articulation of the only other operative *LKMD* section, *PKK*.

**PKK: The Construction of Women as Corporate Bodies  
and National Symbols**

While the title of the section *Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* explicitly refers to 'family welfare and development', *PKK*, as it is most commonly referred to, is widely regarded by both the State and local people, as an exclusive organisation for women. The construction of women in terms of the 'family' (and all that the notion of the family invokes), engendered here by the title and organisation of this section, has been commented upon, in a general sense, by a number of authors (e.g. Ortner 1974; Rosaldo & Lamphere 1974; Ortner & Whitehead 1981; Manderson 1983). More specifically, Norma Sullivan (1983) discusses this link with respect to the operation of *PKK* in Javanese urban *Kampungs*. As this suggests, *PKK* is a national organisation with representative groups in most villages throughout the archipelago (see Sullivan 1983 for an expanded discussion of the formation of this organisation).

*PKK*, as a national women's organisation, was established in 1973 and enshrined in legislation in the following year (Sullivan 1983). Sullivan states that one of the key motivations and explanations for the founding of this group was "...the participation of women in national development..." (*ibid.*:148). The family, conceptualised as

the keystone of society, was targeted by the State as the primary and most fundamental social unit for the dissemination and manifestation of State policies and nationalistic aspirations. Women were identified as the most important, key figures in this domain. In this context, the essential role of women in society is constructed by the State in terms of the associated images of women as wives, mothers, nurturers, educators, producers and reproducers (see Sullivan 1983:148). Women are regarded as responsible not only for the welfare of society but also for the well-being of the nation. Thus, as Sullivan points out, the *PKK* programme also promotes the view of women as citizens in their own right and as the source of future citizens. As such, the reproductive capacity of women is harnessed in such a way as to depict reproduction as the moral, economic and spiritual prerogative of the Nation-State.

While women are portrayed, in rhetorical terms, as the generative source of the Nation-State, it is the State, however, which defines the limits of this fecundity. Associated with the *PKK* organisation, and indeed an integral part of it, is the State promulgated 'Family Planning Programme' (*Keluarga Berencana*), known throughout Indonesia with the acronym *KB*. In order to limit the fertility of its citizens, the State has embarked upon a programme which promotes the widespread use of contraceptives, sterilisation,

two-children families, increasing the age at which individuals marry and the monetary and material benefits of such actions (see Robinson 1989).

The role of *PKK*, therefore, as far as the State is concerned, is to provide the means by which women can accomplish, affirm and apply state-generated beliefs, aspirations and directives.

In Amaya, the operation of *PKK* broadly conforms to the social and moral imperatives of the State. It is also the case, however, that *PKK* in Amaya also embodies and disseminates local categories of being and local structures of authority.

*PKK* was introduced into Amaya, along with *LKMD*, in late 1984 and became operational in early 1985. To date, *PKK*, as an on-going concern, only exists in the villages of Amaya and Ihli on the island of Damer. In the other villages, *PKK* exists as one of the 10 non-functioning sections of the *LKMD* structure.

It is the structure of *PKK* in Amaya, in particular, which is of interest here. Like all State-instigated organisations in Amaya, *PKK* represents a bureaucratic and byzantine labyrinth of positions and titles. Since its inception in late 1984 and up until the end of the research period, the organisational structure of *PKK* has been formulated in two, related modes.



Notwithstanding apparent differences, both modes are hierarchical in form and expression.

Initially, the structure of *PKK* was divided into three, ranked levels of authority and responsibility. The first and highest ranked of these levels is the *badan pengurus* or the 'executive body'. The executive is comprised of a number of officers including the usual 'chairperson', 'deputy chairperson', 'secretary' and 'treasurer'. In addition to these positions, four officers are appointed to head the sections concerned with 'education' (*seksi pendidikan*), 'organisation' (*seksi organisasi*), 'work' (*seksi usaha*) and 'welfare' (*seksi kesejahteraan*). Overall, the executive body of *PKK* consists of eight women. Most of the women who occupy these positions do so as a result of the structural positions accorded their husbands or brothers. Thus, the wife of the *Kepala Desa* is the 'chairperson' while a close relative of her husband acted as the 'deputy chairperson'. The position of 'secretary' is filled by the sister of one of the *Kepala Soa/Ono* while the wife of another *Kepala Soa* is leader of the 'welfare' section. The wives of the *LMD* and *LKMD* secretaries fill the positions of 'treasurer' and 'work' section leader, respectively. The other two women who occupy positions on the executive do not have such obvious social connections to politically empowered men and could be said to have been appointed in terms of merit rather than in terms of

their associations with others. However, merit is certainly not taken into consideration with the appointment of the women who comprise the the next organisational level of *PKK*.

This second level is referred to as the 'consultative body of *PKK*' and has a membership of 13 women. The women who comprise this body are, without exception, the wives of the men who make up the *LMD*. That is, the wife of the *Kepala Desa*, the wives of the Uma ryesro, the wives of the four *Kepala Soa*, the wife of the *sekretaris desa*, and the wife of the *marinyo*.

The officers of both the executive and consultative bodies of *PKK* are appointed by the *Kepala Desa*. I should add here that while women exclusively constitute the members of this organisation, the leader for this section of *LKMD* is, ironically, a male.

The final organisational division of *PKK* includes the general members of *PKK* who, in 1986, numbered 150 women. Membership of *PKK* is open to all women in the village over the age of 17 years.

Under this structure, the general members were not involved in the decision making process nor were they ever consulted about the relevance or viability of proposed *PKK* projects. Their role in the organisation was limited to the provision

of labour for the implementation of programmes developed by the executive and ratified by the consultative committee.

In August 1987, the structure of *PKK* underwent a radical transformation which effectively served to further consolidate the authority and influence of members of the executive. The new organisation was even more hierarchical than the previous one. Under this new structure, the wife of the *Kepala Desa* is positioned as the supreme authority. She is assisted in her duties by two deputies as well as a secretary and a treasurer who, in turn, are also appointed assistants. The seven women who form the new executive are drawn from the previous executive committee. The consultative body was abolished and replaced with four work groups, which are each directed by an executive consisting of five women. For the most part, the women who served on the previous executive and consultative committees are now appointed as the directors of these four work groups. Of the 27 women who comprise the officers of *PKK*, only one woman is affiliated with a non-mahno 'house' and only two women are associated with 'immigrant' *Marga*. However, the positions held by these three women (all three women are assistants to the directors of one of the four work groups) are minor in importance when compared to the offices occupied by mahno women. Under this new system, the general members of *PKK* still constitute the labour force. However, now they are instructed to work under

the aegis of one of the four work groups when required to do so.

Each year, the *LMD* receives a subsidy from the government to assist with implementation of development programmes in the village. A proportion of this money is ear-marked for *PKK* projects. In 1986, Rp.1,350,000 were received from the government. Two hundred and fifty thousand *rupiah* of this sum was allocated by the government to *PKK*. In previous years, some of the money allocated to *PKK* was appropriated by the *LMD* for village development projects. Since its inception in 1985, most of the money received for the operation of *PKK* has been channeled into the construction of the *rumah PKK* or '*PKK* house'. The construction and completion of the *PKK* house is largely contingent upon the goodwill of the members of *LMD* who assign men, on an irregular basis, to undertake this work. Located close to the *Kepala Desa's* house, this structure when completed will provide a venue for *PKK* meetings and house *PKK*-owned property. At the moment, the sewing machine, cake tins, and wool purchased with *PKK* money are kept in the *Kepala Desa's* house. The decision to purchase these items was made by the previous executive members. In addition to these objects, development booklets received by *PKK* from the departments of 'village development', 'agriculture', 'justice', 'home affairs' and 'labour' are also kept in the *Kepala Desa's* house.

During the research period, the *Kepala Desa's* house also served as the venue for *PKK* meetings. Under the original structure, *PKK* meetings were held on a weekly basis. As a result of changes to *PKK* executive personnel in 1987, *PKK* meetings became less frequent and were often poorly attended by the general members. A number of times *PKK* meetings were canceled due to a lack of interest.

The format for *PKK* meetings is similar to that employed for *LKMD* meetings. The secretary of *PKK* calls the roll and registers the names of those absent. The executive members occupy the front verandah of the house while the general members assemble outside. The meetings are conducted in both Indonesian and the vernacular. Under the new structure information is disseminated to the members by the secretary, however, previously this had been undertaken by the deputy chairperson.

This person was largely responsible for the regularity of *PKK* meetings and the active participation of *PKK* members in these fora during 1986. This woman had previously lived, for some time, in Ambon and Kisar and, while there, had been actively involved in *PKK* activities. Upon returning to Amaya, she brought with her many of the ideas and practices associated with the operation of *PKK* in urban areas. During *PKK* meetings, it was this woman and not the *Kepala Desa's* wife

who acted as both chair- and spokesperson. Under her guidance, *PKK* in Amaya embarked upon a number of ambitious projects, including the construction of a *PKK* house and a plan to establish and harvest lemon trees as a cash crop. She often chided the women for their lack of interest in the organisation and accused them of acting like "*suku terasing*" or 'primitive people'. She initiated a programme whereby each week the women were required to donate one kilogram of copra so as to assist with fund-raising. During *PKK* meetings she constantly reminded the women of their obligations in terms of the idioms of *Pancasila*, *gotong royong* and local *adat*.

Unfortunately, this woman became ill with cancer and died in June 1987. Soon after her death, the structure was altered to the format outlined above. With this change in the organisation of *PKK* came an increasing emphasis upon the ideology of Indonesian nationalism, represented by the principles of *Pancasila*, the notion of *gotong royong* and State constructions of women and the family.

Under the new system, the ideological framework of Indonesian nationalism was employed to demarcate time. Thus, the first week of each month was set aside as the week in which one of the four work groups of *PKK* would concern themselves with *pedoman, penghayatan dan pengamalan Pancasila* (more commonly known as *P4*) or *Pancasila* studies, conducted through a series

of lectures and 'simulation games'. The second week was designated *gotong royong* week and the women were supposed to engage in activities which would benefit the organisation as a whole. The third week was proclaimed as an *anjangsana* or 'house-to-house campaign' in which the executive of each of the four work groups would visit and inspect the houses of the general members for cleanliness and tidiness and also instruct the women on how to appropriately conduct themselves as mothers, wives and housewives. The final week of the month was dedicated to the teaching of domestic skills such as cooking, sewing, crocheting, etc.

Now, while the secretary of *PKK* submitted reports to the *Team Penggerak PKK* ('*PKK* activities team') in *Kisar* every three months detailing the involvement of the women in the activities outlined above, like the activities of the *LKMD*, many of the listed *PKK* programmes were not carried out at all or were not undertaken in the time-frame nominated in the report. Resistance from the general members is one of the reasons why some of the proposed activities were not undertaken. Many of the women objected to the proposed visits by the executive to inspect and comment upon the manner in which they organised their household. In the case of the proposed *Pancasila* studies, the women felt that they were not sufficiently educated to give lectures on this subject. The *Kepala Desa* was approached to perform this function.

In fact, the *Kepala Desa* played an active role in the operations of *PKK*. Often he would attend the meetings and lecture the women on their behaviour. For instance, at one meeting I attended in August 1987, the *Kepala Desa* addressed the women about their role in village development. He informed the assembled women that "as part of *gotong royong* they were obliged to look after their husbands and family in order to ensure the harmonious nature of the community". He said that "while *Pancasila* has to be in accordance with the people of the village, the people themselves have to act according to *Pancasila*". He further instructed the women that they should "develop a work schedule in their household" and that "they should really write up a roster for each member of the household". In addition to these comments, the *Kepala Desa* also instructed the women to "use discipline and control" when planning their family. Many of the women laughed at this suggestion to the effect that they could, independent of their husbands, control their fertility. The *Kepala Desa* concluded his lecture by reminding the women that they were prohibited from hanging their washing at the front of their residence and were required to take the household rubbish to the beach and not just dump it anywhere.

The organisation of *PKK* in Amaya is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it represents a more inclusive unit of identification than locally constituted groups such as Uma,



*Marga* or *Ono*. The principles which determine membership in *PKK*, namely age and gender, are less restrictive than the notions of descent and filiation which form the primary means of affiliation to local groups.

Secondly, notwithstanding the inclusive nature of *PKK*, it can be seen that in practice *PKK* effectively precludes low-ranked and 'immigrant' women from holding office. The key positions in *PKK* are held by *mahno* women who are related through affinal and kinship links to the men who comprise the body known as *LMD*. *PKK*, therefore, represents an emasculated mirror image of the *LMD*. The democratic and consultative ideals which inform the ideology of *PKK* are just that - ideals. In practice, *PKK* is a highly hierarchical and exclusive structure which serves to marginalise the marginal.

Thirdly, while *PKK* is recognised by the State as a women's organisation, it is apparent in Amaya that women do not exercise exclusive control over the operation of the organisation. Again, the men of *LMD* and, in particular, the *Kepala Desa* are influential in determining the amount of money received by *PKK*, who is appointed to the executive of *PKK* and the amount of village time and labour devoted to *PKK* projects. This accords with Sullivan's observations that "the theorists of the *PKK* program are predominantly male" (*ibid.*:151).

Finally, while *PKK* is promoted as a 'women's movement' aimed at increasing the participation of women in national development and improving the position of women generally, it is apparent from the kind of activities *PKK* women are engaged in and the language used to promote participation in these programmes that women are constructed by the State in terms of those traditional and conservative images of women as mothers, wives, and nurturers. Notwithstanding the significance of *PKK* to women and the benefit they may derive from their involvement in this organisation, *PKK*, as Sullivan points out, has not effectively "changed the social status of women at any level of Indonesian society *vis-a-vis* men" (*ibid.*:169). Indeed, *PKK* has served to further objectify women's position and association with respect to the domestic sphere. It could be argued that the construction and appropriation of the domestic domain by the State as an important and integral dimension of national development strategies effectively delineates this space and the activities and persons associated with it as possible sources of influence and authority. In Amaya, however, the images associated with the domestic space and female labour do not represent effective symbolic or pragmatic domains for the exploitation and accumulation of political capital by women. This is clearly illustrated by the fact that the head of this section in *LKMD* is a man, that women are not represented on the executive of any of the local government bodies and the

appropriation of *PKK* monies by the *LMD* for *LMD*-inspired projects. In fact, what has happened is that not only does *PKK* provides 'new spaces' for the dissemination of State-generated nationalism but it also opens up new and legitimate horizons for the articulation of historically-grounded hierarchies. The 'body politic', empowered by the thematic content of local origin narratives, colonizes and encompasses yet another socially defined space.

#### The Exchange of Labour and Time: *Trop* and Other Work Groups

Discussion of the two operative sections of *LKMD* clearly illustrates the pervasive and hegemonic influence wielded by the body of men who, for the most part, comprise both the 'council of eight' and the *LMD*.

In fact, it could be argued that these people, masquerading as the 'village consultative committee', largely define the temporal, spatial and practical limits of *desa* life. The demarcation of time in Amaya, in particular, reflects both the control exercised by these men and the degree of local identification with and participation in the village or *desa* constructed as a cohesive community.

In Amaya, Mondays and Tuesdays are designated as community

work days and all able-bodied adult residents of the village are required to participate in the State-funded village development project at hand. The State-promulgated community development ethic of *gotong royong* or 'mutual assistance' is frequently cited as the logic which informs many of these community-based activities.

As Bowen points out, the use of the Javanese term *gotong royong*, as both slogan and concept, by national politicians can be traced back to the early 1940's (1986:549). However, the phrase was truly elevated to the status of a 'key symbol' on June 1, 1945 in a speech, entitled *Lahirnya Pancasila* or the 'Birth of *Pancasila*', given by Sukarno to the Investigating Committee for the Preparation of Independence. In this speech, Sukarno proclaimed that "...the State of Indonesia which we are to establish must be a *gotong royong* State. Is that not something marvelous: a *gotong royong* State!" (Feith & Castles 1970:49). Sukarno, intoxicated with this idea, then went on to define what he understood by the term *gotong royong*. "*Gotong royong*", he announced, "means toiling hard together, sweating hard together, a joint struggle to help one another. Acts of service by all for the interest of all" (*loc.cit.*). The concept of *gotong royong*, as far as Sukarno and a number of other politicians were concerned, was not solely confined to its function as the organising principle for the Indonesian

State but could also be harnessed to a number of other contexts. Thus, a "*gotong royong* cabinet" (*ibid.*:85), a "system of *gotong royong* government" (*ibid.*:88), a "*gotong royong* democracy" (*ibid.*:139) and a "*gotong royong* parliament" (*ibid.*:140) were all proposed. The novel application and extension of the concept *gotong royong* to these different contexts and relations effectively serves to transform and multiply the meaning of this term so that *gotong royong* became a 'summarising symbol' (Ortner 1973) of nationalistic ideology par excellence.

In the early years of the 1960's, the notion of *gotong royong* was increasingly linked to the process of national development (see Feith & Castles 1970:393 & 406). Since the abortive coup attempt in 1965 and the associated inception of Suharto's 'New Order' regime, the concept of *gotong royong* has been systematically and actively appropriated by the State to facilitate and legitimate development programmes in the rural sector (see Bowen 1986; Warren 1986).

An important part of this programme of national development has been the establishment, throughout the Indonesian archipelago, of the village development programme known as *Inpres* (an acronym for Instruksi presiden) *Desa* or 'Presidential Instruction [relating to the] village'. As Bowen points out, this programme is more commonly referred to

as the 'village subsidy' in acknowledgment of the financial subsidy received by each village from the office of the district administrator (*Camat*) (Bowen 1986:553).

The village of Amaya first started to receive this grant in the 1973/74 financial year. Elsewhere in Indonesia, the village subsidy was paid as early as 1969 (see Bowen 1986:553). In the first year, the village received a grant of Rp.100,000. This money was used to purchase tools and equipment for the work groups organised to carry out development projects. In the following year, the subsidy was increased to Rp.200,000. Subsequently, the development grant was increased by Rp.50,000 each year until 1980 when it jumped to Rp.750,000. This was also the year in which a proportion of the money received was ear-marked for *PKK* activities for the first time. Over the next two years, the grant was increased by Rp.250,000 each year. However, in the 1984/84 financial year, no subsidy was received by the village. In 1986, the amount received by the village for community development work amounted to Rp.1,350,000. However, Rp.250,000 was allocated to the *PKK* organisation. Since the initial receipt of development monies in 1973, the grant has been used for a number of purposes. In some years it was used exclusively to purchase equipment such as an out-board motor, radio, and work tools. In other years, the money has been used to purchase building materials for the construction of a

village well, concrete steps, water storage tanks and a community hall. The subsidy received by the village is not intended, by the government, to cover all costs incurred in village development neither is it intended to be used as salaries for laborers. The village is required to supplement the money received from the government with locally raised funds and undertake all development projects with time and labour given freely by the residents in the village. In this context, the notion of *gotong royong* serves to delineate the mode of social exchange as well as the medium of exchange. It is constructed as the ultimate moral, social currency used in these exchange transactions.

As I pointed out at the beginning of this section, Mondays and Tuesdays in Amaya are set aside for community development projects. On Sunday evening, the *marinyo* is instructed by the *Kepala Desa* to go around the village and proclaim where each of the six work groups known as *Trop* will work.

Men between the ages of 17 and 50 years are enlisted as workers for community development projects. These men, who number approximately 100, are organised into six work units generically referred to as known as *Trop*. The term *Trop* is of Dutch origin and can be glossed as 'troop' (see Chauvel 1984:15). The different *Trop* are known by no other name than the number, from 1-6, assigned to them. Each *Trop* is headed

by a supervisor assisted by a deputy supervisor who, with the exception of one *Trop*, are all mahno men. Including the supervisors, the average number of men in each *Trop* is 17. The members of a *Trop* are quite heterogeneous in terms of their 'house' affiliations, their rank, their status as 'indigenes' or 'immigrants' and their residence in the village. When I enquired what principle (s) were invoked to determine membership in a particular *Trop*, I was informed that there was no one specific principle involved. The men of *LMD* had purposely attempted to "mix up" the membership of the different *Trop* groups.

The members of the *LMD* and the executive of the *LKMD* are not required to become *Trop* members. They are supposed to, however, perform a general supervisory role with respect to the work undertaken by the different *Trop*. However, as I indicated in the previous chapter, this is not always the case and these men are often criticized by the *Trop* workers for their lack of interest in development projects.

On Mondays and Tuesdays, the men who comprise the 6 *Trop* groups generally start work on the project they have been assigned to by the men of *LMD* around 9.00 in the morning. However, if a *LKMD* meeting has been scheduled for Monday morning, then the *Trop* units start work after the meeting. The men work until lunch-time when they return home. About



3.00 in the afternoon they return to work and finish for the day around 5.00 p.m. While the week is demarcated to accommodate community work it is also the case that the year, as a meaningful temporal construct, is delineated in terms of "work seasons". Community development projects are conducted in the village between April 1 and 20 December. From December to April, the 'wet season', the villagers are at liberty to process sago in the southern reaches of the island.

For the most part, *Trop* are involved in projects aimed at improving the material infrastructure of the village. During most of the research period, the majority of *Trop* were assigned to work on the construction of the new *balai desa* or 'community hall'. Specialist tools such as hammers, planes, saws, chisels, used on this project were purchased with money deducted from the *lola* sales of each *Trop* member. In September 1987, Rp.10,000 was levied upon each *Trop* member for this purpose. Many of the *Trop* workers believed that the government should be responsible for the purchase of tools used for development purposes. Others believed that not all of the money deducted for the purchase of tools was exclusively used to this end. As such, rumours circulated amongst the *Trop* men that the members of the *LMD* and *LKMD* had appropriated some of this money for their own benefit.

In addition to this kind of infrastructural work, the

different *Trop* groups are periodically called upon to tend and harvest the two *desa* coconut plantations. *Trop* members are also required to produce copra from the 'village' plantations and the money from the sale of this copra is used to finance development projects in the village.

During the latter half of 1987, the different *Trop* units were assigned to one of three projects; the erection of the community hall, the construction of a small, open wooden boat which would carry the village out-board motor, or the manufacture of school furniture for the local primary school. For most of the time, *Trop* 1, 2, 5 and 6 worked on the community hall whereas *Trop* 4 and 3 worked at the school and on the boat, respectively. In the case of *Trop* 3, their assignment to work on the village boat was a source of constant embarrassment and humiliation. The reason for their reluctance to work on the boat is associated with the way in which the previous 'village boat' had been used.

Until it basically fell apart, the previous 'village boat' had been used almost exclusively by the *Kepala Desa* and his family. The boat was meant, as was the out-board motor, to be used by all the residents in the village or for their benefit of the village as a whole. However, in practice this was not the case. The *Kepala Desa* often used the boat, with out-board motor attached, to visit his garden a couple of kilometres

south of the village. On a number of occasions, he used the boat to ferry young banana plants between his different gardens dotted around the coast. As a result of this incident, the boat soon became known as *anak pisang* or 'baby banana [plant]'.

While working on the new 'village boat', the men of *Trop 3* were constantly teased by other *Trop* members walking past the work site about the above incident. In fact, *Trop 3* became known among the other *Trop* as *Trop anak pisang*. The situation came to a head at a *LKMD* meeting convened in September 1987. The supervisor of *Trop 3*, a mahno man, tendered his resignation to the members of the *LMD* seated on the verandah of the *Kepala Desa*'s house. Initially, when asked by the village secretary the reasons for his resignation, the *Trop* supervisor said that "the responsibilities were too great". The *Kepala Desa*, probably aware of the real reasons behind the resignation, stood up and told the assembled men that "work on the boat would continue and that *Trop* were required to do the work they were ordered to do". The supervisor then got up and gave the real reasons why he wanted to resign. He told the members of the *LMD* that "he was tired of being ridiculed and referred to by others as '*anak pisang*'". He concluded that, upon completion, the so-called 'village boat' would be used exclusively by the *Kepala Desa*. Upon hearing this the *Kepala Desa* asked the assembled men, "if at times he

could use the fruits of their labour for his own purposes". Of course, there was no response to this rhetorical question. The *Kepala Desa* went on to say that "anyone could use the boat and the Johnson motor as they are both the property of the community". "To think that the situation was other than this", he concluded, "was to act contrary to the teachings of the Bible and the ethos of *gotong royong*".

Notwithstanding these comments from the *Kepala Desa*, the supervisor of *Trop 3* still insisted on handing in his resignation. The *Kepala Desa* accepted his resignation and told the men he would nominate another leader. The *Kepala Desa* informed the men that "if no-one was prepared to be the supervisor for *Trop 3* then he himself would take on this role and under his guidance *Trop 3* would always work on the boat". The *Kepala Desa* not only accepted the supervisors resignation but also took it upon himself to remove the supervisor from his positions as leader of a *LKMD* section and deputy chairperson on the local Sunday school board. The *Kepala Desa* then asked which *Trop* was deficient in men and assigned the ex-supervisor to that *Trop*.

The above incident clearly illustrates the hegemonic authority exercised by the *Kepala Desa*. It also demonstrates that resistance to this authority is not necessarily the exclusive province of non-mahno, non-indigenous people. There

are a number of mahno people who are also dissatisfied with the way in which the decision making process is relegated to just a handful of individuals. More than anything, the above incident illustrates that, unless a person is supported by others, attempts to change current practices are necessarily doomed to failure.

For most of the time, *Trop* are involved in infrastructural projects at the village level. However, it is also the case that sometimes the men of the *Trop* units are called upon to give their labour and time to assist in development projects at the *Kecamatan* level. On their annual visit to Amaya, the Police requested that the villagers contribute sago leaves and timber for the construction of new government buildings in the *Kecamatan* seat of Wonreli on the island of Kisar. On other occasions, the *Kepala Desa* received notification from the *Camat*'s office itself requesting the villagers to supply materials for projects in Kisar.

In addition to their involvement in *Desa* and *Kecamatan*-based development projects, *Trop* groups are also mobilised to perform work for the Church. During the height of the *lola* season in late 1986, *Trop* members were instructed that they had to look for *lola* for the Church. Each *Trop* member was required, in the space of one week, to procure 8 kilograms of *lola* (approximately 32 shells). The *Kepala Desa* instructed

the men as to the areas in which they could search for *lola*. He informed the men that the *lola* collected by the *Trop* groups would then be sold to the Chinese and the money raised would be used to finance a conference involving representatives of the different Church-based organisations on Damer. The conference was scheduled to be held in the village in September 1987. Upon hearing the nature of the task set for them, there was much muffled discussion among the assembled men. Many believed that the quota set for each *Trop* of 832 kilograms of *lola* was too excessive. Others objected to this infringement of their time as they had already planned other activities. In addition, devoting this time to search for *lola* for the Church would, given the short *lola* season determined by *Kepala Desa*, limit the amount of time they themselves could spend looking for *lola*. Notwithstanding the widespread dissatisfaction with the proposal, no-one stood up and expressed their opinion on this matter publicly.

While *Trop* represent the primary work units for men engaged in community development projects, a number of other groups in the village are also mobilised to perform similar tasks. For example, on the occasion of 'National Independence Day' in 1987, the four work units associated with the structure and operation of *PKK* were mobilised to prepare the food that was consumed at a village feast on the night of 17 August.

These *PKK*-based work units are also employed to perform duties associated with the celebration of Church events, such as the founding of the 'Protestant Church of Maluku' (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*). Ono are also frequently used to organise the women of the village into active, development-based work units. For instance, each year before the onset of the wet season in December, the *Trop* groups are engaged to work on the re-roofing programme carried out in the village. Villagers who need a new roof on their house are required to inform the head of their Ono, who is also a member of the *LMD*, of this fact. In 1986, 17 houses plus the community hall were re-roofed by the different *Trop* units in a two month period. While the men were busy re-roofing the houses with new sago-leaf units, the women were organised along Ono lines to prepare food for a large feast, attended by all adults in the village, to celebrate the completion of the re-roofing programme for 1986. When not working re-roofing houses, a number of the men in the village, who are renown for their hunting skills, were sent to look for turtles for this feast. However, these men were not organised into groups in terms of their *Trop* affiliation but formed a work unit on the basis of their Ono affiliation.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that Uma and *Marga* groups, however, are not mobilised to perform village-based development work. The members of these two units are

only called upon to contribute their time and labour for the benefit of other members of their group. That is, for projects which do not directly involve or benefit the entire village, such as, the erection of a new residence for an Uma member.

A number of other groups in the village also function as work units which, in some instances, can be hired to perform tasks for individual households. All of these groups are associated with the Church and, as such, I will discuss them in more detail in the following chapter.

Whether carried out by *Trop*, Ono or *PKK* units, development projects in Amaya are rationalised and facilitated by the logic of *gotong royong*. The members of the village are constantly urged by the *Kepala Desa* and the men of *LMD* to *tolong-menolong* or 'help one another' through their participation in community-based activities. One of the primary reasons for why the State-promulgated concept of *gotong royong* is so seductive and effective in achieving national strategies of development and integration is because of its resonance with indigenous practices and constructions of social relatedness (see also Bowen 1986; Warren 1986, 1989).

While Bowen suggests that, in Java, the demands for labour



made upon the villagers by State-sponsored development programmes are perceived as "... the continuation of a stratified system of service duties..." (1986:556) which originated in pre-colonial times, the same cannot be said with respect to the situation in Amaya. Previously, only persons identified as uhro and ota were required to contribute their labour and time for the service of the *Bapak Rajah*. The activities undertaken by these people for the village headman, on the whole, did not benefit the entire village. Following the logic of Bowen's argument, today one would expect, therefore, that only uhro and ota men comprised the membership of the *Trop* work groups. As I have pointed out previously, this is certainly not the case. Nor can it be said, given their relatively recent invention, that the origin of *Trop* can be traced to pre-colonial times. In fact, it is the recent formulation and heterogeneous composition of *Trop* groups which largely accounts for their appeal, especially to the disenfranchised individuals in the village. For uhro, ota and immigrant men, *Trop*, like the organisation of *PKK*, provide a legitimate context in which they can participate in local affairs while, at the time, expressing their involvement, as citizens, in the development of the Nation-State. For the disenfranchised men in Amaya, *Trop* represent alternative structures of identification which, in theory at least, appear to be constituted and organised outside of the ontological and epistemological domain

delineated by local origin narratives. However, in practice we see that the operation of *Trop*, like *PKK* and the economic section of *LKMD*, is contingent upon the dictates of local hierarchical forms which, are themselves, the projected endpoints of the categories of local origin narratives. Thus, the men who constitute the core of the 'body politic' in Amaya also determine the content, form and expression of *Trop*. In this context, the driving force behind *Trop*, i.e. *gotong royong*, is not exclusively articulated in terms of the nationalistic aspirations of the State but is firmly grounded in local, cultural understandings and practices.

In Amaya, *gotong royong* is seen as reflecting cultural ethics of generosity, generated by kinship relations and shared residence. Indeed, the term *gotong royong* is often used to characterise local, *adat* prescribed practices of reciprocity. This involves sharing food, assisting with manufacture of a new canoe, the construction of a new garden, etc. However, in these instances, the degree to which this reciprocity is 'generalised' is, as Sahlins points out, informed by "the span of social distance between those who exchange..." (Sahlins 1972:196). Thus, in Amaya, genealogically and spatially close individuals will be more likely to engage in 'generalised' (Sahlins 1972) forms of exchange more often than those persons who are consanguineally and spatially distant from each other (see chapter three for more details).

This is particularly the case with respect to the limited number of highly-valued commodities in the village, such as chain saws, tape recorders, radios, etc. The members of an Uma, therefore, engage in 'generalised' acts of reciprocity precisely because they believe themselves to be the 'children' of the same ancestor(s).

The logic which informs the expression of social relatedness between individuals in Amaya is also the same logic which now structures the sum of all social relations as the 'desa community'. In this context, kinship represents the idiom for the expression of both the community and associated development strategies. The *desa* is thus constructed as the ultimate kinship unit while the implementation of State-sponsored development programmes constitutes the collective expression of these 'official' kinship relations.

The articulation of national development policies and practices in terms of the logic of local, cultural forms serves to secure the misrecognition of the villagers and produce "...the naturalisation of its own arbitrariness" (Bourdieu 1977:164). Thus, the principles which organise social relations in the village appear to correspond with the logic of State-sponsored programmes and, in doing so, tend to produce a largely taken-for-granted view of the world.

This mode of being-in-the-world is further re-inforced by the appropriation of indigenous cultural categories for community development purposes. The logic which organises Ono as inclusive, socio-centric groups mobilised to mediate and maintain the integrity of the parts (Uma) which comprise the lato as well as the whole itself, is also harnessed to facilitate State-inspired development programmes. The organisation of Ono, along gender lines, to undertake culturally meaningful and customary tasks such as cooking and hunting produces the semblance of Ono acting according to their customary social role.

The organisation of village labour for development projects in terms of the ethos of *gotong royong* or along the lines of locally constituted groups such as Ono effectively serves to blur the distinction between the State and local society. Indeed, in Amaya it is no longer possible to identify the policies and aspirations of the State as separate from the culturally-inspired practices and forms of local hierarchies. The two have been strategically folded together to create a pervasive and powerful 'body politic'.

The following incidents clearly illustrate the ideological and functional entanglement of the State with locally-grounded hierarchies.

## 'Strategic Rituals'

The second half of this chapter is devoted to an examination of what are, in effect, commemorative rituals. As Kapferer (1979) suggests, one of the significant features of such rituals is the way in which the contradictions and oppositions generated in the context of social practice are rendered harmonious and homogenous through their incorporation within new symbolic forms constructed at a 'higher level'. As such, rites of commemoration signal a transcendence and transformation of context and identity but, as Kapferer points out, in many cases this is "only for the duration of their performance" (1979:13).

In both the rituals which follow, the divisions and fractures which mark social relations in Amaya are subsumed within the consistent and coherent forms of the 'symbolic types' and 'transcendent moments' created and harnessed within the context of the unfolding ritual event. In this connection, the village (as both lato and *desa*) constructed as a community represents one such symbolic type. Local origin narratives, the new community hall/ancestral house, the newly built *perahu*, and the festivities associated with the celebration of 'National Independence day' are just some of the ritual forms invested with the properties associated with symbolic types or transcendent moments (see chapter six this

thesis as well as Kapferer 1979:11).

Significantly for the argument presented here, the two ritual contexts discussed below do not effect a transformation in identity beyond the social setting of the rituals themselves. Indeed, as Kapferer (1979) argues, the transcendent nature of commemorative rituals, i.e. their capacity to reify, subsume and unify inconsistencies generated in other contexts, effectively limits the transformative process. In the case of the two rituals discussed below, the identities of the participants are transformed only for the period of the ritual. The end of the ritual marks the re-establishment of prior contexts, identities and relations. What is effected in these contexts is (1) the reification of existing relations and (2) the creation and legitimation of consistent and unified symbolic forms which, when harnessed to other contexts, function to order reality in terms of their own image.

#### **Narrating the Past, Legitimizing the Present: The Erection of a New Ancestral House/Community Hall.**

In the 1984/85 financial year, the *LMD* submitted plans for a new community hall (*balai desa*) to the *Camat's* office in *Kisar* and received a subsidy of one million *rupiah* towards

the estimated total costs of three and half million *rupiah*.

The *LMD* decided that the new community hall would be built on the site occupied by the 'ancestral house' (umtuvatvcha) of the *Kepala Desa/lelechro lato*. So on a Monday morning late in June 1986, the men of the village tore down the bamboo and sago leaf constructed ancestral house. In its place they would erect a new concrete, zinc-roofed community hall which would also continue to function as the ancestral house of Uma Surlialy.

In November of that year, the wooden frame of the building was erected. The erection of the main posts in the construction of a house is an important ritual event in Amaya and is usually celebrated according to local *adat* practices. On these occasions, it is the members of the Uma concerned who provide the labour. However, on this occasion, because the ancestral house of Uma Surlialy was also designated as the future community hall and, as such, represented a community development project, the labour was provided by the different *Trop* groups.

The day set aside for the erection of the posts was proclaimed a holiday by the *Kepala Desa* for the 100 or so school-age children and the entire village assembled at the house site. The local representatives of the Indonesian

government, the *Kepala Desa*, and members of the *LMD* and *LKMD* committees, wore their official State uniforms on this occasion. Before the frame was erected, the origin 'histories' of each of the seven founding Uma were narrated in order of their arrival at Amaya. According to *adat*, this task is the prerogative of the village orator, a man traditionally selected from the uhro 'house' of Surlia. However, on this occasion, it was decreed by the *Bapak Rajah* that the orator would only narrate the 'history' concerning the origins of the first 'house' to arrive at Amaya, that is, the narrative for Uma Surlialy. The 'histories' of the six other founding 'houses' were consequently narrated by the respective ryesro for these 'houses'. No reference was made to the origin 'histories' of the numerous immigrant residents in the village or to the ancestry of those 'houses' classified as uhro and ota.

Afterwards, the *Bapak Rajah* spoke at length to those assembled in front of the *balai desa/Umtuvtuvcha* about the shared 'historical' traditions of the mahno, uhro and ota members of the village and reminded all those present (both 'indigenous' and 'immigrant' residents) of their community responsibilities and obligations as members of both the *desa* of Amaya and the nation of Indonesia. "The founders of this village", he concluded,



were two men and two women. The men were called Luane and Harmei and the women were called Achleli and Rarlairo. The people who are referred to as the founders of this village are the ancestors of Surlialy. Their ancestral house has recently been renewed. The section below is called the *balai desa* ['community hall'] and is the office while above is the ancestral 'house'. They will finish this building soon. People who are young don't you forget this history, carry it with you everyday. If you are far away, you remember, don't you forget at all.

With the conclusion of this speech, the *Trop* men then proceeded to erect the wooden frame of the new *balai desa/umtuvatvcha*.

There are a number of interesting points to emerge from this event. The construction of the new State-subsidized community hall on the site of the ancestral house of Surlialy affirms, in a most concrete manner, the position and authority of the *Bapak Rajah* and his 'house' in the political order of the village. On this occasion, he simultaneously wears the hat of the official representative of the national government and that of *adat* head. The two positions are effectively homogenized into a single identity.

The actions of the *Bapak Rajah* and others in this incident are not seen for the political strategies they are. For many people, the *Bapak Rajah* and the members of his Uma have given their ancestral house for the benefit and good of the community. Such an act is viewed as an honorable gesture made by a virtuous man. By acting in 'good faith' towards the

other members of the community, the *Bapak Rajah* secures the misrecognition of the community and amasses the symbolic capital necessary for the reproduction of these strategies of integration (cf. Bourdieu 1977). In Amaya, the consent and cooperation of the residents which empowers local strategies of integration arises from the sharing of a common ontological ground and the transformation of relations of power into symbolic relations, articulated in an idiom of good faith (cf. Bourdieu 1977). In this process, the mechanisms of power are masked in order for it to operate (cf. Foucault 1978:86). When harnessed to the administrative structures of the State, this process of mythic seduction ultimately distorts the ideological foundations of the body politic.

Thus, the decision, in the above incident, to prevent the orator, a uhro man, from demonstrating his knowledge of the narratives is an act which consciously shifts the accent of power away from him to those already inculcated in the apparatus of authority. This subterfuge on the part of the *Bapak Rajah* and the seven Uma heads is part of an on-going process of political consolidation and denotes the continual tension that exists between their claims of authority and the belief offered by the members of the community.

On this occasion, the commemoration and re-enactment of the

founding events depicted in local origin narratives represents as, Ricoeur points out, "a fundamental ideological act" (1986:261). It serves to integrate the residents of Amaya as a group not only in space but also in time. In this context, the meaning of local origin narratives which, in other contexts, beat out an exclusive ontology for indigenous residents, is extended to incorporate and account for all individuals in Amaya. In this setting, local histories come to represent origin narratives for both the local *negri* ('State') of Amaya and the national *negara* ('country') of Indonesia.

At another level, the conflation of this event with elements of the central Mayawo origin narrative by the *Kepala Desa* not only serves to further legitimate his own authority and that of his 'house' but also ensures the status of this event as an historical and immutable truth. In this incident, the hierarchical possibilities disseminated in local narratives are spatially and politically given expression. In turn, the event is injected back into the narrative to produce a dialectical inter-play of meaning and form.

According to Baudrillard, "when the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning" (1983:120). This nostalgia for the past is expressed by the production and reproduction of origin stories. While the above account

specifically deals with the significance of the reproduction of local origin narratives, the following account examines the reproduction of the nostalgic (his)stories of the Indonesian Nation-State.

### The Spectacle of Simulation: National Independence Day Celebrations

The nation-wide celebration and re-enactment of *Hari Merdeka* ('Independence Day') each year on the 17 August reminds one of Marx's observation to the effect that history repeats itself, "...the first time as tragedy, the second as farce" (1977:300). In the case of Indonesian history, the proclamation of Independence has, up to and including the research period, been repeated not twice but a total of 42 times. While the celebration of this historical event contains elements which may be identified as 'farcical', to see it solely in these terms is to view only one particular aspect of its myriad of forms and expressions.

The annual commemoration and re-enactment of the proclamation of Indonesian Independence clearly illustrates the essentially integrative function of ideology (Ricoeur 1986:261). On this day, in thousands, if not tens of thousands, of villages throughout the length and breadth of

the archipelago, nearly 200 million individuals collectively express and celebrate their identity as citizens of the Indonesian nation through the enactment of State rituals (see Ellen 1988:126). A monumental example of 'unity in diversity' in action. On this day, space is collapsed into one, all-encompassing referential and highly ritualised field of action and time is condensed into one mega-origin narrative; its starting point the seventeenth of August 1945.

The ideological seduction of this particular ritual of the Indonesian State is further enhanced when harnessed to the ritual celebration of local, cultural events.

The observation and celebration of *Hari Merdeka* in Amaya in 1987 was, for the anthropologist, both interesting and confusing.

Preparations for the celebration of this event were underway at least a month before the actual day. At a meeting of the *LMD* members convened on 20 July, a committee was formed to organise and supervise the events associated with the celebrations. The chairperson of the '17 August Celebration Committee' (*Panitia Perayan Tujuh Belas Agustus*) was the *Kepala Desa* while the deputy chairperson was the head of one of the four Ono. The positions of 'secretary' and 'treasurer' were filled by the same people who occupy these offices in

the *LMD* organisation. Responsibility for organising the forthcoming events was distributed between six sections which respectively dealt with 'work' (*seksi usaha*), 'equipment and facilities' (*seksi perlengkapan*), 'sport' (*seksi olah raga*), 'art' (*seksi kesenian*), 'safety' (*seksi keamanan*) and 'hospitality' (*seksi ramah tamah*). In this last instance, the women who sat on the *PKK* executive and the wives of the men who comprise the *LMD* were among those responsible for this part of the celebrations. With the exception of this last section, the persons assigned by the elders of the *LMD* to be responsible for the other sections were all men. In this case, the role of women in Amaya is once again constructed in terms of the activities associated with the domestic sphere. The 'hospitality section' was responsible for preparing and serving food and refreshments at the events scheduled on the 17 August. Three of the leaders of the six sections were either Ono or Uma heads. Of the 40 people who made up the 'Celebration Committee', only two people could be identified as non-mahno. Meetings of the 'Celebration Committee' were held at the *Kepala Desa*'s house. At one of these meetings it was decided by the committee that each of the three shops in Amaya would 'contribute' Rp.15,000 to help finance the events planned for 'Independence Day'. In addition, two persons who regularly sold cigarettes in the village were required to give Rp.5,000 each, and the two largest church choirs in the village, the church youth and women's groups and the three

church sectors were all required to 'donate' Rp.2,500. It was also decided that entrants in the canoe race scheduled would pay a Rp.500 registration fee.

A number of events associated with the celebration of 'Independence Day' took place in the week leading up to 17 August. Minor round basketball and football matches took place each morning and afternoon during this week. Interestingly, the groups involved in these competitions were exclusively associated with the Church. Thus, in the basketball matches the different Church choir groups, sectors and the women's group all vied for the position of out-right winners. While the basketball teams were composed of both women and men (in many cases, the men did not necessarily belong to the group they were playing for), the football games were an all-male affair. For this competition, the male members of the Church youth group were divided into four competing groups.

At night, the respective Church groups as well as the students of the local 'primary school' practiced the songs and dances they would perform on the night of 'Independence Day'.

Meanwhile, down on the sea-front, the last touches were being applied to the construction of a wooden *perahu* ('sailing

boat') so that it would be ready for launching on 17 August. This boat was jointly owned and constructed by 6 men who were either recent 'immigrants' or were descended from 'immigrant' or uhro individuals in the adjacent generation. For some of these men, the boat would facilitate the implementation of economic activities independent of the *LKMD/LMD* nexus. One of the owners suggested that the boat would be used to transport live pigs to Ambon for sale in the markets there<sup>2</sup>.

On a Sunday, about a week before 'Independence Day', a service was held at the boat to signal its completion. The resident priest in Amaya at the time officiated at this ceremony, which was attended by everyone in the village. The service lasted for an hour in which time a number of prayers, bible readings and hymns had been performed. Notable during the service, was the low profile of the *LMD* members. After the service, the assembled adults were served tea and cakes by the women related to the owners of the boat. Soon after the refreshments had been consumed, everyone departed for their homes.

Early in the afternoon on the day before 'Independence Day', the *PKK* women gathered at the house of the *Kepala Desa* to cook bread and clean the rice. Later in the day, everyone in the village assembled at the so-called 'sports-ground' to watch the children from the 'primary school' compete in a



series of games and races, which included such things as the 'sack race' (*lomba karung*), 'bottle race' (*kepala botol*), and the 'stone and spoon race' (*gigi sendok*). After the finish of these games, the *PKK* women returned to the *Kepala Desa's* house to prepare more food. That night, the main actors involved in the actual 'Independence Day' ceremony (i.e. the men of *LMD*) assembled on the sports-field to rehearse their roles. Part of these rehearsals involved the raising and lowering of the national flag. In another part of the village, the Church orchestra, *Orkes Nijinot*, was also busy rehearsing for tomorrow's performance. Much later in the night, the village secretary could be seen, seated on the verandah of the *Kepala Desa's* house, typing out the programme for tomorrow's ceremony. At midnight, the *Marinyo* went around the village and informed everybody that tomorrow they were required to be at the sports-field by 8.00 a.m. he also informed the villagers that each household had to raise the national flag, on the bamboo flag-poles now erected outside every house, by 6.00 on the following morning.

At 5.30 a.m. on the morning of 17 August, the Church orchestra, complete with drum, saxophones, trombones and flutes, arrived at the *Kepala Desa's* house and, standing in front of the house, played a series of tunes for the next hour and a half. After this, they proceeded to circle the village, playing as they walked. Soon after their departure,

the *PKK* women arrived and started to prepare the refreshments.

Running slightly behind schedule, the men of *LMD*, dressed in their government uniforms, and the members of the 'Celebration Committee' assembled at the *Kepala Desa's* house at 8.00 a.m. The *PKK* women were resplendent in their new outfits of gold or silver *sarong*, white camisoles and lace over-shirts. Soon after, the 10 men of the local 'Civil Police Force (*Petahanan Sipil Polisi* more commonly known by the acronym *HANSIP*) arrived at the *Kepala Desa's* house dressed in their military-styled uniforms.

While the official representatives of the Indonesian government were assembling at the *Kepala Desa's* house, the rest of the villagers were congregating at the sports-field. By 8.15 a.m. everyone was assembled ready for the ritual to begin.

The ceremony lasted for 45 minutes and was clearly organised around the central act of raising the Indonesian national flag. While the flag was being hoisted up the pole, the assembled villagers sung the national anthem. This was then followed by a reading of the principles of *Pancasila* and the Proclamation of Independence. After these two readings, a prayer was said followed by the singing of the nationalistic

song *satu nusa, satu bangsa...* ('one people, one country...'). The ceremony finished with a number of speeches in which the various participants were thanked for their involvement. At the end of the ritual, the 'village secretary' informed the villagers that they were invited to the *Kepala Desa's* house for refreshments. However, before this they would witness a display of physical exercises performed, to music, by the students of the local 'primary school'. Dressed in the national *SD* uniform of red and white, the students symbolically embodied both the ideals and aspirations of the Nation-State.

The main speakers and actors throughout the course of the 'Independence Day' ceremony were the *Kepala Desa* and the 'village secretary', who occupied key positions on either side of the flag-pole. The other members of the *LMD* and 'Celebration Committee' were, like the rest of the residents, largely spectators of the unfolding events.

An hour or so after the refreshments had been served, a bell sounded to call the villagers down to the beach for the launching of the *perahu*. While the men strained to pull the wooden boat to the water, a number of men, intoxicated with palm wine, stood on the deck of the boat beating drums and gongs. After four hours of pulling and manoeuvring, the boat was finally launched. For their efforts, the men were

served tea and cakes. Again, the members of the *LMD* were noted largely by their absence from this event

Soon after this, the *marinyo* announced the start of the canoe race. Most people by this time had returned home to await the evenings entertainment and, thus, the canoe race was poorly attended.

Early in the evening, the area in front of the new community hall or ancestral house of Surlialy was swept and sprinkled with sand. This was the chosen site for the forthcoming festivities which, as it turned out, proved to be a veritable smorgasbord of cultural hors-d'oeuvres. At 9.00 p.m., the evenings celebrations, which consisted of several dances and songs, commenced. The members of the *LMD* and the 'Celebration Committee' were seated on one side of the thoroughfare while the villagers sat on the other. The dances and songs were performed by the primary school children, the members of the different Church sectors and the Church youth group<sup>3</sup>. It is interesting to note that these performances constituted a mixture of borrowed, invented and indigenous cultural routines. One of the dances performed was identified as being from Sorong in Irian Jaya while a number of the songs were of Ambonese origins. Not only is culture in this context aestheticized in terms of that which can be danced or sung, but it is also the case that the concept of culture expressed

here reflects, what Acciaiolli terms, the "homogenizing strategies of aesthetic corporatism" (1985:157) articulated by the Indonesian Nation-State. In short, these strategies represent a form of hegemonic 'bricolage' in which the State appropriates and isolates fragments of different cultures and works them into a creative and corporate cultural collage of national significance. The resurrection of these symbols in a new system of meaning, delineated by the Nation-State, ensures their simulation in quite novel contexts. Thus, in Amaya those songs and dances which have no refraction in the logic of Mayawo culture are, nevertheless, perceived as meaningful expressions of culture precisely because their index of reality is located in the hyperreal constructions of culture generated by the Nation-State (Baudrillard 1983).

The next day, the eighteenth, was largely devoted to the preparations for the feast that would be held that night. The owners of the *perahu* donated a buffalo and three pigs for the feast. One of the owners came to the *Kepala Desa*'s house to ask for assistance with the slaughtering and butchering of these beasts. The *Kepala Desa* drew up a list of 10 men to perform these tasks. The women of the village, organised into one of the four *PKK* work groups, spent most of the day preparing and cooking the meat and vegetables that would be later consumed at the feast. While the women were busy preparing food, a number of the men in the village were busy

getting drunk on palm spirit (arko). They wandered around the village drinking arko and beating drums.

In the late afternoon, the football finals were conducted. This was largely an all-male affair as the women of the village were busy cooking.

The feast was held at the same location as that used for the previous nights activities. In fact, this site is the usual location for all village feasts. In the evening, the children of the village were called to eat first. Seated on either side of arranged palm fronds, they were served by the women. After the children had finished eating, the men and women of the village sat down together to eat. A number of young women served food to those assembled while a handful of young men passed out palm spirit and cigarettes to the men. The *Kepala Desa* said the opening and closing prayers for this meal.

After everyone had eaten, one of Ono leaders stood up and spoke, in Indonesian, about the relevance of 'Independence Day' for the people in Amaya. This speech was followed by two other speeches given by Uma ryesro. In these speeches, spoken in the local language, the ryesro also spoke about the duties of those present as citizens of the Indonesian nation. The two men also spoke about the launching of the *perahu* and the importance of maintaining *adat/hnulcho*. The youth, in

particular, were reminded to "follow adat and work hard".

Dance and song performances by the different Church groups and the students of the primary school followed the speeches. At the end of the dancing, the members of 'Celebration Committee' handed out prizes to the winners of the various competitions which had been staged during the past week. Upon completion of the formal and official part of the nights celebrations, the villagers were free to dance until morning. At this stage in the proceedings, the members of the *LMD* and most of the members of the 'Celebration Committee' went home.

The celebration of 'Independence Day' in Amaya in 1987 is interesting and confusing for a number of reasons. Interesting, because it represents yet another context in which local, cultural beliefs and practices are conflated with the rituals and symbols of the State. Confusing, because often it is no longer possible to disentangle the constituent elements of this nexus.

Above all else, the celebration of 'Independence day' in Amaya clearly demonstrates the integrative function of ideology; whether it be the ideology of the State or the ideology which is constitutive of local culture. Indeed, the dominant, related themes woven through all of the events associated with 'Independence day' are incorporation and

encompassment. In this connection, this ritual aggregate composed of many strategic parts can be delineated as a mega-ritual of inclusion.

Thus, the celebration of 'Independence Day' in Amaya involved not only the groups, individuals and symbols associated with the State but also those units, identities and signs which are either sponsored by the Church or informed by local culture. In many instances, throughout the course of the celebrations, State, Church and cultural modes of being were collapsed into a single, multifarious identity. In other cases, however, it was strategic to define and delineate these identities as distinct. This was particularly the case with respect to the events surrounding the launching of the boat, where the owners of the boat traded upon this physical symbol of their initiative, cooperation and commitment to enhance their status as 'immigrants' and low-ranked persons. Indeed, the possibility existed for the 'Independence day' celebrations to be hijacked by these people and their associate groups, especially given the low profile kept by the *Kepala Desa* and the other men of the *LMD* during the events associated with the *perahu* launching. In this context, the key actors were the owners of the boat, their relatives and friends. The symbolic significance of cultural titles and State positions was largely rendered redundant. However, while the *Kepala Desa* and the other men of the *LMD* played a



minor role with respect to the launching of the boat, on all occasions they represented the central, organising body which effectively demarcated the use of time and space by the people in the village.

Indeed, one could argue the opposite line - that what represented an important cultural event was hijacked by the state. The staging of the 'Independence Day' celebrations in the same space as that used for the celebration of local, cultural events, such as marriage, is indicative of the appropriation of symbols which so often characterizes the relationship between the State and local cultures. In this connection, it is interesting to also note the manner in which the villagers were seated during the feast and the way in which the food was displayed. The arrangement of the villagers on either side of opened palm fronds and the placement of food at intervals on these fronds is referred to in Amaya as "eating raksoni-style". Raksoni, according to one person in the village, "is the basis of *adat* in Amaya". "From raksoni", according to this person, "stems *gotong royong*, *kasih-mengasih* ('generalised reciprocity') and *tolong menolong* ('mutual assistance')". "Raksoni", he concluded, "is a metaphor. It acts to unite the villagers and reduce them to one level". The *Kepala Desa*, in his version of the Mayawo origin narrative (see chapter four), also refers to the communal connotations of raksoni when he states that, "we

open coconut fronds and sit down on the ground together and together we eat and drink". Within the context of the celebrations surrounding 'Independence day', however, the meaning of eating 'raksoni style' is extended to signify the collective and homogenous identity of the villagers as citizens of the Indonesian Nation-State. In this context, local cultural practices serve to "open up new spaces" (Bruner 1986:152) for the hegemonic practices of the Indonesia State. The State is able to empower and legitimate its own order, which is shot through with its own logic of oppositions and syncretic symbolism, through its dissimulation within local, cultural forms.

At another level, it could be argued that the launching of the *perahu*, sandwiched as it was between the 'Independence Day' ceremony and the canoe race, became just another spectacle in a spectacular procession of State-ordered simulacra (see Baudrillard 1983). In the engulfing practices of nationalism, disparate cultural practices and social identities are often flattened out or distorted to form a unified narrative of political consensus and social experience. What is different about local cultures is often objectified and ossified to the point where "...culture has become art, ritual has become theatre and practice has become performance" (Acciaioli 1985:153).

## Conclusion

As I pointed out at the beginning of chapter six, local expressions of knowledge do not exist as independent narratives but are influenced by and connected to wider structures. The practices empowered by local origin narratives also provide a readily accessible field of possible forms and logic for the articulation of State-generated power, the legitimation of a State-sponsored identity and the expression of State-controlled difference.

For the disenfranchised in Amaya, that is, those people who are excluded from actively participating in the decision making process and whose voices are not proportionately represented by local political structures, the State, I have argued, represents a utopian alternative to the configuration of local, hierarchical relations which are informed by local origin narratives. In this sense, the State appears to respond to local hierarchy and authority with the seductive and utopian notions of cooperation, egalitarianism, consensus, and democracy.

These fictions promulgated by the State have wide-spread appeal not because, as Ricoeur points out, "they are mere dreams outside reality" but because, for the disenfranchised in Amaya, they appear to "shape a new reality" (Ricoeur

1986:309).

The fictions of the State thus open up new, and legitimate, spaces for the expression of resistance to the existing cultural forms of authority. However, in Amaya, the ideologies of both the State and local culture, as codes of interpretation, have moved beyond their basic function of integration to the point of dissimulation. The symbols, rituals, relations and discursive devices which are employed to specifically and distinctively express the ideologies of local culture and the State are now collapsed into a unitary field of meaning and practice.

Thus, the thematic logic inscribed in local 'histories' of origin serves to circumscribe the parameters of what is constructed as hnulcho/adat and, in so doing, informs the content and context of social and political action in the village. The themes of unity and diversity, which structure social and political relations in Amaya, are represented as corresponding with the logic which pervades and organizes the political anatomy of the State. The symbols, rites and administrative structures of the State are thus interpreted and represented in terms of the categories and meanings which also inform local hnulcho/adat practices. This ideological appropriation further serves to legitimate what are already regarded as historically verified forms and practices.

Within these ideological horizons, strategies of integration are dissimulated and 'naturalized', the diverse interests of the non-indigenous and dis-enfranchised members of the population are homogenized while the objectified classifications of rank, age and gender operating within the community are given a semblance of orthodoxy (cf. Bourdieu 1977). Within this context, local origin narratives produce the "naturalization of their own arbitrariness" (Bourdieu 1977:164) because no cultural distinction is made between the ideal and the real. The logic which 'history' produces is also that which mediates social reality.

The utopian alternatives offered by the Nation-State, in this context, are revealed in their most pathological forms as ethereal and insubstantial ontological spaces. Under these conditions, the "field of the possible" (Ricoeur 1986:16), represented here by the notion of 'utopia', must necessarily shift its ground away from the State to alternative forms of being and experience. For the disenfranchised, the Protestant Church in Amaya represents one such locus for the exploration of the 'possible'.

## NOTES

1. My borrowing of these terms from Bourdieu does not necessarily mean that I subscribe to the overall theoretical premises delineated in his work *Outline of a theory of practice* (1977). Bourdieu, in his formulation of a 'theory of practice', limits the power of the imagination to the realm of strategy and strategic manipulations. In using his terms 'strategic rituals' and 'ritual strategies' I hope to go beyond the theoretical and structural limitations of Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social practice to explore and highlight the innovative dimensions of the imagination.

2. Unfortunately, these aspirations were never put into action as the *perahu* capsized between Damer and Teun in early 1989 with the loss of seven lives.

3. A number of the songs performed and composed by the different Church groups contained nationalistic references and emphasised the collective identity of both participants and audience alike as Indonesian citizens. The following opening lines of two of the songs performed exemplify the content of the majority of the compositions;

*Negri kita Indonesia sangat subur dan indah*  
'Our country, Indonesia, is very fertile and beautiful'

*Bangsa kita terlepas, kita bebas selama-lamanya*  
'Our people are liberated, we are free forever'.

and;

*Hai, marilah semua rakyat Indonesia...*  
'Hey, all the people of Indonesia come...'

*kobarkan terus semangat kemerdekaan*  
'arouse the spirit of Independence'.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### 'BEHIND THE STONE WALL': THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN AMAYA

#### Introduction

The historical acceptance of Christianity, in particular Protestantism, on the island of Damer has been both long and varied. Notwithstanding the chequered history of Christian proselytisation on Damer, the influence of Protestantism, without doubt, has been significant. For many people in the village, the introduction of Dutch Reformed Protestantism has been instrumental in effecting transformations to local beliefs and practices (see chapters two and three).

Today, in Amaya, the Church, in the form of the 'Protestant Church of Maluku' (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*), or *G.P.M.* as it is more commonly known, plays an important and central role in the lives of all of the villagers. Considerable time is spent attending religious services and participating in Church-sponsored groups and activities. For many of the disenfranchised people in the village, however, the Protestant Church represents more than just a sanctified, physical and metaphysical space for the expression of religious beliefs. It symbolises, in the same way that the

state does, a 'utopian' (Ricoeur 1986), and hence alternative, possibility for the construction of identity and the articulation of resistance to extant hierarchical orders which, as I have discussed in previous chapters, are informed by the logic of local origin narratives. In this connection, the Protestant Church, through its epistemological foundations and in terms of the cosmology and ontology it disseminates, represents a utopian construct which, ironically, thematically pivots upon and parallels many of the concepts relating to personhood and society expressed by the State. However, whereas the State offers salvation through citizenship and locates the promised land in the imaginary space of nationalism, the Protestant Church, on the other hand, articulates a somewhat different ontological and cosmological trajectory. Moreover, in terms of its historical origins and struggle for recognition, the originally Lutheran-inspired, Protestantism practiced in Amaya also represents an ideal symbolic domain for the expression of dissent (naungcha)<sup>1</sup>.

In this chapter, I focus primarily upon the structural organisation of Protestantism in Amaya and the significance of the Church for the various groups in the village. This discussion is informed by a consideration of the doctrinal and cultural logic which structures and informs the expression of Protestantism in Amaya as well as by an



examination of the historical and contemporary practice of Protestantism. The intersection of these elements, i.e. theology, culture, history and structure, is apparent in the sections of the chapter devoted to a discussion of the spatial, temporal and social organisation of Protestantism in Amaya. Of particular interest here is the participation and representation of the disenfranchised residents with respect to the numerous and various Church-sponsored groups. While the Protestant Church offers 'new spaces' within which alternative identities and relations of power can be constructed and expressed, attempts by the disenfranchised residents in Amaya to capitalize upon the structural and symbolic opportunities provided by the Church are largely emasculated by those individuals who, through the empowering logic of local narratives, exercise authority with respect to State and *adat* defined contexts and relationships. Thus, contrary to the argument put forward by Victor King (1985) to the effect that "the decline [my emphasis] in the superior position of aristocrats" (1985:199) is, among other things, the result of "...the spread of Christian beliefs and practices" (loc.cit.), I argue in this chapter that the conjunction of Christianity with local culture serves to further empower the so-called 'aristocrats'. In this connection, throughout the following discussion I point to the many parallels which can be drawn between the engagement of the Church by local people and the articulation of the

Nation-State with local culture. I conclude the chapter, by commenting upon the utopian function of the Church.

Our Ancestors Were 'Hindu': Objectifying and Distancing the Past

As far as people in Amaya are concerned, Protestantism has effectively supplanted the local religion. Most people's knowledge and understanding of traditional, indigenous religious beliefs and practices is at best fragmentary and is coloured by the teachings of the Church and the development propaganda of the Nation-State. The following incidents aptly illustrate this.

While sheltering from the rain one day, some distance from the village, I happened to notice two petroglyphs carved onto the side of a large boulder. Upon returning to the village, I asked the *Kepala Desa* about these figures. To my surprise, he and everyone else in the village said that they had never before seen these figures and thus knew nothing about them. Reports about these strange carvings soon spread around the village, and over the next few days, most of the people in the village visited the site. When I asked the *Kepala Desa* and the other elders in the village what the figures represented and who carved them, my inquiries were met with

speculation rather than informed comment. After lengthy debate, the elders decided that the smaller figure represented the moon while the larger carving symbolised the sun. They concluded that the carvings must have been executed by their 'Hindu' ancestors. Many people believed that such was the importance of this discovery that the stone, upon which the petroglyphs were carved, should be placed in the provincial museum in Ambon. The *Kepala Desa*, acting on the perceived impression of local people of the national and historical significance of this finding, submitted a detailed report on the petroglyphs to the 'Department of Culture and Education' (*Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*) in Wonreli, Kisar.

On another occasion, I expressed interest in locating the sites of the villages referred to in local origin narratives. The *Kepala Desa* indicated that, from his forays into the forest, he knew the site of one such village. Accompanied by his brother, we set out for the southern reaches of the island to look for this site. We eventually located the site of the former village of Awatpipi, which is mentioned in the narratives. The wall which originally enclosed the village was still standing in places, although covered by lianas and surrounded by thick undergrowth. Within the perimeter of this structure several stone house foundations were also clearly recognizable. Apart from the discovery of a number of

grindstones and pottery sherds, we also uncovered, situated in the middle of the walled compound, a raised stone platform, in the centre of which a 75cm. high stone obelisk had been erected. The *Kepala Desa* and his brother, speculating about the meaning and function of this feature, suggested that it could possibly be some form of "shrine" or "altar" and was probably used by the previous 'Hindu' inhabitants as a "place of worship", although neither of them knew for certain whether this was the case. As far as they were concerned, the stone platform and obelisk belonged to another cultural epoch.

The time before the re-introduction of Protestantism early this century is referred to by people in Amaya as "lawa Hindu" or the 'Hindu period'. As such, the religious beliefs and practices of their ancestors are collectively regarded as 'Hindu'. When I asked people to elaborate upon what kind of beliefs and practices characterised this so-called 'Hindu' religion, many people identified belief in ancestral and other spirits, the deification of the sun and the moon and the 'worship' of wooden statues carved in the form of ancestral figures as the main features.

Interestingly, J.G.F. Riedel, the Dutch Resident of Amboina in the late 1800's, also describes some of these aspects of local religion in the section of his book devoted to Damer

Island. In this connection, Riedel observes that "in every village can be found both a statue, as a temporary domicile for Upulero [ancestral spirits] when they come to fertilize the soil, and the watu mali, watu liari or holy sacrificial stone" (1886:463). "Besides the Upulero [ancestral figures]", Riedel notes that "sacrifices are made to the nitu or spirits of the deceased and also to the haita or bad spirits" (1886:464). The use of sorcery and the consultation of various oracles were, according to Riedel, an integral part of people's daily activities (Riedel 1886:464).

The beliefs and practices identified by local people and described by Riedel are today regarded by many people as curious, "primitive" customs. Many of these beliefs and practices, such as the previous indigenous practice of 'head-hunting', are regarded in Christian terms as sinful while some of the spirits which comprise the indigenous pantheon are referred to as "setan" or "iblis" (the 'Devil') (see also Bartels 1977:291).

For all but a handful of people, stories concerning their 'Hindu' ancestors and their beliefs relate to another time, another people and, indeed, another world. In this respect, people's experience of religion exclusively in terms of Protestantism serves to construct and objectify this 'Hindu' past as a temporal and social space which is discontinuous

with the present. They see very few connections between the previous practices which characterised indigenous 'Hindu' religion and the present form of Protestantism. Indeed, as Cooley observes, "as a system of rites and worship [Protestantism] has come to replace almost completely this dimension of the indigenous religion" (Cooley 1966:146). Thus, unlike the situation described in many other areas of Maluku Tenggara (see Barraud 1979; McKinnon 1983; Pauwels 1985:) where the practice of indigenous religious rites is still an important aspect of social life, in Amaya the rituals of the Church have largely replaced or sublimated local religious forms. This is not to say, however, that the beliefs and values constitutive of local 'Hindu' religion have been totally replaced as well. Many of these beliefs, I would argue, especially those relating to the ancestors, have been semantically transfigured and incorporated into the broad rubric of Mayawo beliefs called hnulcho or adat. During the period of Dutch colonialism, local beliefs and values which encoded and disseminated a system of religion were isolated, by missionaries and administrators alike, from those indigenous adat practices which were deemed to be 'non-religious'. In this process, the local religious pantheon was actively discredited, prohibited and, in many cases, its icons destroyed. In Amaya, the iconoclasm of Calvinist-inspired, Dutch Reformed Christianity (Parker 1977:75) resulted in the destruction of the various carved wooden

statues and effigies which symbolically represented indigenous deities and ancestral beings. In this connection, Webb, writing of the activities of the 'Indies Church' (*Indische Kerk*) in South-west Timor, notes that in order for people to become Christians it was first necessary to destroy such objects as "bracelets, beads, special stones and charms" (1986:78).

Acciaioli, writing of the situation in South Sulawesi, suggests that this separation of religion and *adat* meant that Christian converts could thus "reject *aluk* ['the way of the ancestors'] beliefs yet continue to engage in a ritual cast off from its moorings in cosmology" (1985:159). However, I would further argue that many of these beliefs were not 'rejected' per se but were renamed and re-positioned as secular concepts within the broad horizons of what constitutes local *adat*. This reordering of values ensured their reproduction, albeit in a transformed state, within the context of Dutch colonialism. For the agents of the Dutch colonial State, as Hooker (1978:18) observes, perceived *adat* largely in terms of 'civil matters'. Indeed, *adat* was commonly glossed as 'customary law' (Furnivall 1944:11). Objectified in this way, *adat*, as both concept and practice, was appropriated and, more importantly, legitimated by the colonial regime.

Other indigenous beliefs and practices were 'domesticated', so to speak, and incorporated within the cosmological and ideological space delineated by Christianity. The above reference to certain ancestral beings and spirits as the 'Devil' illustrates this point. Other indigenous practices and ritual observations, such as the *Tiga Malam* ('three nights') mourning period (see also Bartels 1977:295) and the burial of the dead in a dug-out canoe, are today regarded as integral features of Christianity.

Thus, in Amaya the indigenous religion does not exist as a coherent, unified system of beliefs. Rather, so-called 'Hindu' beliefs exist as sherds of knowledge, positioned within the system of practice delineated by Christianity or injected into the broad domain of experience called *adat*. However, in the imagination of many people, *adat* and Christianity do not exist as separate 'provinces of meaning'. Rather, belief in and adherence to the principles of the Protestant Church is regarded as an integral part of observing local *adat*. In this connection, I often heard people making statements to the effect that the teachings of the Bible (as well as the principles of *Pancasila*) and the logic of *adat* are mutually inclusive. To understand these statements it is first necessary to examine the logic and themes which inform the practice of Protestantism in Amaya.



'Behind the Stone Wall': The Protestant 'Ethic' In Amaya.

It is perhaps a truism to state that the interpretation and expression of Protestantism in Amaya today differs somewhat from the form of Protestantism introduced to Damer by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century. In the three and a half centuries since its introduction, the constituent values, relations and themes which inform Dutch Reformed Protestantism have been re-arranged and re-interpreted in terms of the logic of local culture. It is also the case, as I discussed in chapters two and three, that the symbols, values and meanings which configure Mayawo culture have been re-ordered in terms of the logic of Protestantism.

In the vernacular, the Protestant Church, as a system of religious and moral beliefs, as a baroque-style collection of rites and practices, as a byzantine, bureaucratic hierarchy and as a spatial structure, is generically referred to as lutrunaliro or [that thing] 'behind the stone wall'<sup>2</sup>. Literally speaking, the term refers to the church itself which, in Amaya, is enclosed by or set behind a one metre high stone wall. Metaphorically speaking, the appellation could be interpreted as referring to what was, upon its introduction, a strange, alien European institution. Hence, its metaphorical separation from the spatial and social contexts of the village. Indeed, judging from its location,

at the time when the church was built it must have been situated on the very margins of the village, some distance from the original walled village compound. However, since the commencement of its construction in 1918, the population of the village has expanded and the church is today surrounded by a number of residential houses. This spatial encompassment of the church reflects the on-going conjuncture of the logic of Protestantism with local cultural practices and forms.

The following account of Protestantism, therefore, focuses primarily, although not exclusively, upon the logic of Protestantism as expressed in Amaya. In order to give some feeling for the wider context, however, the following sections also examine, albeit in largely general terms, the historical and political trajectory of Protestantism and the Dutch Reformed Church in the Netherlands and the East Indies.

#### **A History of Origins: Protestantism and the Dutch Reformed Church**

Since its introduction in the mid-seventeenth century, Protestantism on Damer has been articulated through three different but related Churches; the Dutch 'Reformed Church' (*Hervormde Kerk*), the 'Protestant Church of the Netherlands Indies' (*Protestantsche Kerk in Nederlandsche-Indie*) or the

'Indies Church' (*Indische kerk*) as it was more popularly known, and the 'Protestant Church of Maluku' (*Gereja Protestan Maluku*).

The 'Protestant Church of Maluku', the operative Church in Amaya today, is a relatively recent phenomenon, having been established on September 6 1935. The historical and doctrinal origins of GPM can be traced to the Dutch 'Reformed'<sup>3</sup> (*Hervormde*) Church.

As the name suggests, the Dutch Reformed Church has its spatial and cultural roots in the Netherlands and its religious and temporal origins in the early years of the upheaval in western Christianity broadly referred to as The Reformation (Cross 1958:1145). Simply stated, The Reformation, driven by the ideas and actions of such figures as Martin Luther, Huldreich Zwingli, Theodore de Beza and John Calvin, spawned a number of Christian Churches or bodies which repudiated the authority of the papacy and, consequently, broke away from the Roman communion. Many of the ideas and doctrines expressed by the Reformers, especially Luther, pivoted upon the notion of reconstructing society on the basis of what Tawney terms "the forgotten purity of primitive Christianity" (1926:95). In this regard, the logic and expectations which inspired the early stages of The Reformation could be said to be inherently 'utopian'.

This nostalgia for early Christianity is also expressed in the writings of Saint-Simon on utopia (Ricoeur 1986:294). Both Saint-Simon and Luther imagined a world in which the ethical and spiritual elements of Christianity would prevail. Saint-Simon, however, emphasised the influential and authoritative role of "artists, scientists and industrialists" (Ricoeur 1986:295) in this utopian construction whereas Luther posited the "idea of a Church-civilization, in which all departments of life... were to be regulated in accordance with the law of God" (Tawney 1926:100). This view of the ultimate moral order, disciplined and devoted to glorifying the name of God, achieved recognition and partial realization through the doctrine of Calvinism.

In the Netherlands in the mid to late-1500's, it was the theocracy of Calvin, in particular, which spread rapidly and resulted in the establishment of the Dutch Reformed Church (Parker 1977:58).

According to Max Weber (1930), the fundamental and most characteristic tenet of Calvinism is the doctrine of predestination. Drawing from Luther's notion of the 'calling', with its emphasis upon the equality of all human vocations, Calvin's concept of predestination disseminated the idea that an individual's destiny was decreed by God and

that only a small proportion of humankind were divinely 'elected' for salvation. According to Calvin's doctrine, no external signs existed which signified for certain the destiny of an individual; either as one of the elected few or as one of the many who were destined to damnation. However, as Weber points out, in its practical application through the Reformed Church, the doctrine of predestination was re-interpreted so that "Christian conduct which served to increase the glory of God" (1930:114) was viewed as an "indispensable sign of election" (*ibid.*:115). Good works, therefore, were not seen as the means of attaining salvation but were regarded as 'proof' that salvation had been attained (Tawney 1926). The world then, according to this view, was provided by God as the domain in which humankind was to labour to glorify His name. However, as Weber notes, "the God of Calvinism demanded of His believers not single good works, but a life of good works combined into a unified system" (*ibid.*:117). Through the Reformed Church, Calvinism promoted the construction of a moral economy in which labour was elevated to an ascetic form and an individual's actions in the world were ordered and undertaken in a methodical and self-disciplined manner. In this scheme, as Comaroff points out, "time... was a unitised resource to be seized and 'put to work'" (1985:141). The so-called 'Protestant Ethic', thus, beat out a specific cosmology and ontology which emphasised the 'omnicompetent' (Tawney 1926:132) role of the Church and

religious doctrine in the constitution of social relations.

One of the significant features of Protestantism, inspired by Luther's notion of the calling and Calvin's concept of predestination, is the belief that an individual does not need to depend upon the sacramental system dispensed through professionally ordained clergy in order to commune with God (see Tawney 1926:106). Contrary to the doctrines of Catholicism, in which salvation is mediated through the Church, the clergy and the sacraments, in Protestant, Calvinist-inspired theology, salvation is the divine and predetermined decree of God. As such, there is no separate or special path to salvation set aside for those ordained into the priesthood. Indeed, Calvin went so far as to suggest that "there were no priests - all were laymen" (Marty 1972:144). As a result of this belief, the laity came to play an important role in the administration and dissemination of Protestantism. In this connection, Schama observes that within the context of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "the rule of the clergy was at all times moderated by, and in crucial points obliged to defer to, the government of the laity" (1987:60).

Following on from the above point, another significant aspect of Calvinist-inspired Protestantism is the emphasis placed upon scripture, in particular, the writings of the Old

Testament (Weber 1930:123). The rejection of Catholic-based ritual and the intervention of ordained priests and the emphasis upon more direct forms of Holy communion served to heighten the significance of scripture in worship. As Tawney observes, the Christian, according to the teachings of Luther, had "... a sufficient guide in the Bible..." (1926:107). Previously, the Roman Catholic Church had claimed that the interpretation of the Bible was the province of the authorities of the Church. The actions of Luther and his contemporaries not only liberated the Bible from the theocracy of the Catholic Church but also ensured its translation into the vernacular (Marty 1972:116-119). While Luther regarded the writings of the Bible more in terms of the 'spirit' expressed therein, Calvin belonged to the literal school of thought in which the Bible was an "infallible inspiration" (Marty 1972:123). Thus, in the Dutch Republic of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Old Testament came to be regarded as both "a fund of exemplary wisdom and historical truth" (Schama 1987:94). The epic content of the Old Testament, replete with the notions of original sin, hellfire and damnation, struck a concordant note in a world dichotomized in terms of sinners and saved. According to Schama, "the Bible became a source book of analogies for their own [the Dutch] contemporary history..." (1987:95). As both Schama (1987:34) and Comaroff point out, this inter-penetration of Calvinism and Old Testament

scripture with the historical consciousness of the Dutch people led to the belief that they collectively constituted the favoured 'elect' and were thus the "'lords of the world'... empowered by God to construct society according to their will" (Comaroff 1985:130).

Objectified through the Dutch Reformed Church, this moral imperialism was exported to the South African veldt, the American frontier and the 'Spice islands' of Maluku.

#### The Dutch Reformed Church in the Netherlands East Indies

While Calvinism never succeeded in becoming the State Church, it was, according to Schama, "certainly the official, and the privileged, denomination" (1987:59) within the Dutch Republic of the 16th and 17th century and, I should add, also within the Dutch East Indies during the period of the VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or [Dutch] 'East Indies Company') occupation.

The 'Company' had no specific charter to convert local populations to Christianity. However, the promotion of Christianity had obvious, favourable implications for the facilitation of its own operations. Thus, initially the Company hired and paid preachers to go to the East Indies and



proselytize the local population.

The first Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, however, was charged with the task of Christian proselytisation. His duties in this regard, as Klerck observes, were "not restricted to the spiritual welfare of the servants of the Company but should also promote the conversion of non-Christians and the education of their children, to the glory of God and the blessing of the Company" (1975:504).

In the Moluccas in the early 1600's, emphasis was placed upon educating the local people to act as 'auxiliary helpers' (Klerck 1975:504) in schools and Churches while in the Netherlands the Company established a seminary for overseas missionaries. However, notwithstanding these religious initiatives, the commercial interests of the Company were always given priority as indicated by the closure of the above mentioned seminary because of 'high costs'.

Up until 1743, the Dutch Reformed Church constituted a religious monopoly in the East Indies as the only Church permitted to operate in the area (Vandenbosch 1941:39). After this date, the 'Company' also paid for Lutheran ministers to be sent out from the Netherlands. The 'Company' not only hired clerics but in many cases often determined where in the archipelago the word of God would be spread. The

'Company' was, in this regard, the ultimate authority, empowered as it was to remove clerics from service if their actions contravened the dictates of the 'Company'.

The matter of who should be responsible for missionary work in the East Indies was a point of contention between the Church and the Company. As Klerck notes, the *classis*<sup>4</sup> of Delft in 1614 "proclaimed that missionaries for the East Indies ought to be sent out by the Church and the Government, and not by merchants..." (1975:506). While the Reformed Church, through the *classis* of Amsterdam, constituted the body which theoretically controlled the affairs of the Church in the Indies, its efforts to promote the work of the missionaries were nevertheless dependent upon the goodwill of the Company which, empowered by its charter, exercised exclusive control over the East Indies. As a result of this close link between the Church and the 'Company' in the East Indies, the work of missionaries declined in accordance with the financial decline of the 'Company' in the mid to late-1700's.

Towards the end of the 18th century, however, the idea that missionary work should be supported by the community and not funded and promoted by commercial concerns led to the establishment of the 'Netherlands Missionary Association' (*Nederlands Zendeling Genootschap*) (Cooley 1966:145; Klerck

1975:515; Chauvel 1984:27; Webb 1986:19). The missionaries of the N.Z.G. were only permitted into the East Indies in 1814 and even then their initial work was restricted to the Moluccas. The Moluccas were singled out because many of the inhabitants were already 'Christians' and also because, as a result of the previous relocation of the Company's commercial interests elsewhere in the archipelago due to the disintegration of its spice monopoly, they represented, in missionary terms, a 'neglected mission-field' (Furnivall 1944:219; Klerck 1975:518).

Undoubtedly, the work of the 'N.Z.G.' was made easier with the collapse of the East Indies Company in 1800. Control over the East Indies became the responsibility of the Netherlands government. With this change in administration, the close relationship between the administration of religion in the East Indies and the Reformed Church in the Netherlands was finally broken. In 1820, in an attempt to create a single, united Protestant Church, a royal decree proclaimed that all Protestant Churches in the East Indies would be amalgamated under a common administration which was deemed the responsibility of the Minister of Colonies. This union did not actually take place until 1854, when the Lutheran Church at Batavia united with the Reformed Church<sup>5</sup> (Vandenbosch 1941:40). This new, united Church was called the 'Protestant Church of the Netherlands Indies' (*Protestantsche Kerk in*

*Nederlandsche-Indie*), or, as it was more popularly known, the 'Indies Church' (*Indische Kerk*).

#### The 'Indies Church' and the Establishment of G.P.M.

The amalgamation of the Protestant Churches in the East Indies under the control and administration of the Minister of Colonies meant that the 'Indies Church' was a State Church. The *predikanten* ('pastors') and lay officials of the Church were employed and paid by the colonial government and, as such, were subject to the same controls and authorities as other public servants. The Governor-General, as the supreme authority in the East Indies, was thus empowered to "place, transfer and remove the ministers of the East Indian Church" (Vandenbosch 1941:41). The authority of The Central Church Board at Batavia which was charged with, to quote Vandenbosch (1941), "the care of the interests of Christianity in general and of the Protestant Church, in particular, and the general supervision over the Protestant Churches, their ministers and local consistories" (*ibid.*:41) was extremely limited and largely functioned as a 'co-ordinating committee' (Webb 1986:73). Indeed, the members of this board were not elected by the Church but were appointed by the Governor-General. Even the rules which governed the Board and the administration of Protestantism in the archipelago were

subject to government approval. The logic and legitimacy for this coupling of Church and State can be found, in part, in the theology of Protestantism, particularly Calvinist-inspired Protestantism. Early Calvinism specifically advocated that, in order to create a "Kingdom of Christ" (Tawney 1926:118), the ecclesiastical and secular spheres of life should be unified (Marty 1972:216).

While there existed a number of immediate financial advantages arising from this close relationship between the State and the Church (e.g. the State built and financed the erection of churches), there were a number of disadvantages. As Webb (1986:73) points out, on the island of Timor Church personnel were often equated with the Controlleur and other colonial officials and, as such, the Church was often viewed as "yet another government interference in their lives" (loc.cit.).

The establishment of a State Church meant that missionary work in the East Indies was regulated by the government. Article 123, passed in 1854, stipulated that all Christian missionaries, priests and teachers were required to obtain a government licence before undertaking any work in the East Indies. The government reserved the right to revoke or suspend these licences whenever they saw fit to do so. In effect, this regulation enabled the government to divide the

archipelago into different and distinct religious domains. However, according to Klerck (1975:525), this division into separate 'mission fields' was not formally marked out until 1912.

Changes in colonial policy and practice in the mid to late 1800's, notably the implementation of Van den Bosch's 'Culture System' (see Furnivall 1944:115) and the swing towards liberalism (see Furnivall 1944;148-174), resulted in a flood of newly established missionary bodies to the East Indies (Furnivall 1944:219).

The 'Indies Church', and thus indirectly the State itself, became an influential missionary body, incorporating in 1870 the missionary societies operating in Ambon and the 'Zuidwester' (southwestern) islands and later on, the missionary bodies working in northern Celebes (Klerck 1975: 518-519). However, while the State financially supported the operation of the 'Indies Church', it continued to make a clear distinction between its own schools and those established by the missions. It wasn't until 1890 that mission-run schools were subsidized by the government (Vandenbosch 1941:47). Within a couple of years, the number of mission schools had increased dramatically.

Up until the late 1920's<sup>6</sup>, the 'Indies Church' and the

Catholic Church remained the only officially recognised Churches in the Netherlands East Indies. After this date, however, all Church bodies recognised by the government in the Netherlands were automatically acknowledged by the administration in the East Indies. This move, on the part of the government, constituted a step towards the eventual separation of the Church and the State. As Vandebosch (1941:43) reports, there was widespread opposition to this nexus among the Muslim population in the East Indies. This opposition was formally expressed through a number of resolutions passed by the *Volksraad* or 'People's Council' in the early decades of this century<sup>7</sup>. The Church Board itself supported the principle of separation but, in a statement issued in 1920, indicated that this separation be coupled with some form of financial reparation (Vandebosch 1941:43).

In addition to the call for the separation of the Church and the State, a number of regional-based Churches were advocating autonomy and independence from the 'Indies Church'. In the Moluccas, as Chauvel (1985:137-138) observes, a number of groups, including the *Autonome Moluksche Kerk* ('Autonomous Moluccan Church') and the *Algemeen Verbond tot verkrijging van de Moluksche Kerk* ('General Union for the establishment of the Moluccan Church') were formed in response to local desires for religious independence. For some people, the creation of an independent Church was linked

to the formation of an independent nation. Not everyone, however, supported the establishment of an independent Moluccan Church. In this connection, Chauvel (1985:139) reports there was also a considerable degree of opposition, in form of petitions and letters of protest, to the proposed severance of local ties to the Dutch Church and State.

The 'separation' of Church and State eventually occurred in July 1935, however, it should be noted that this separation was only administrative in nature. As both Klerck (1975:518) and Vandenbosch (1941:43) point out, the financial relationship between the Church and the State continued. Thus, the Bill of 1935 only granted self-governing rights to the Church. This meant that the members of the Church Board were elected by the Church and that the Church itself was free to nominate and place ministers, curates and teachers. Strictly speaking, therefore, the legislation of 1935 did not affect a complete separation of Church and State but as Webb (1986) observes in this connection, "the nexus between Church and State had been loosened" (*ibid.*:74). This loosening of Church/State ties facilitated the granting of autonomy to a number of regional-based Protestant communities. In 1935, the Protestant Church in North Celebes was granted autonomy and became known as the *Gereja Masehi Injili Minahasa* or *G.M.I.M.* On the 6 September 1935, the Protestant Church in the Moluccas was declared an autonomous body and became known as



the *Gereja Protestan Maluku* or *G.P.M.*. Theoretically, autonomy meant that the ministers and officials of the Church were appointed by the people themselves (Webb 1986:74). However, in practice, *G.P.M.* was still financed by the State and the Dutch clergy still retained control. In the early years of so-called 'independence', as Chauvel concludes, the establishment of the Moluccan Church amounted to "a mere name change" (1984:140).

During the Japanese occupation of Ambon, *G.P.M.*, together with the other Christian Churches on the island, was incorporated into the Christian body established by the Japanese called *Ambon Syu Kiristokyo rengokai san Hoosidan* (Chauvel 1984:163). Japanese ministers controlled this organisation which, through proselytisation and propaganda, was used to win the 'hearts and minds' of the local population and further promote the military objectives of the occupying forces.

Thus, it wasn't until after the Second World War, that *G.P.M.*, and the other 'independent Churches' in the archipelago, achieved full autonomy and independence, either from the 'Indies Church' or the Christian organisations created by the Japanese (Chauvel 1984; Webb 1986).

## *Gereja Protestan Maluku: A Brief Introduction.*

Broadly speaking, the theology disseminated by *G.P.M.* is, as Cooley (1966) observes, based upon the Bible and "the historic creeds of the Church [Dutch Reformed Church]" (1966:145). The 'historic creeds' mentioned here refer to the Calvinist-inspired religious traditions of the Dutch Reformed Church, which are themselves informed, in part, by the ideas of Martin Luther. Within the broad doctrinal traditions embraced by *G.P.M.*, Cooley (*ibid.*:145-146) identifies the 'Apostles' Creed' and the 'Ten Commandments' as constituting a central place in the imagination of parishioners. This blending of Old and New Testament theology serves to codify and disseminate a moral order which, somewhat paradoxically, is based upon complete and unquestioning obedience to the will of God and yet emphasises freedom, justice, and equality (Marty 1972:184).

While it is possible to generally identify the dominant ecclesiastical *aliran* or 'currents' which constitute the orthodox position of *G.P.M.*, it is not possible to unequivocally state that, within the Protestant community of Maluku, there exists a uniform and set interpretation of Protestantism. The different historical experiences of each congregation and the traditional emphasis placed upon congregational autonomy by the Protestant Church (see

Pertierra 1988:138) in the past worked against the homogenization of religious expression. Until quite recently, therefore, village congregations enjoyed a certain flexibility and autonomy in the manner in which they interpreted Protestantism within their own local context. However, recent Synod-inspired, ecumenically-driven innovations have changed this situation dramatically. For example, in Amaya in early 1987, the co-ordinating body of the Church at the district level (*Klasis*) introduced a set, two-model format for the Sunday religious service (the implications of this move will be discussed in further detail in the following section). Notwithstanding attempts by the governing body of the Church to standardize religious experience at the local level, the expression of Protestantism within these village congregations still retains a distinct, culturally-marked identity. In Amaya, as the following section illustrates, Protestantism constitutes an interesting mixture of Lutheran and Calvinist elements, blended with both Old and New Testament theology, and filtered through the historical and cultural experiences of local people.

In many ways, the organisation of *G.P.M.* parallels the administrative structure of government within the province (see Chapter 6). At the provincial level, the 'Synod' (*Sinode*) is the body which coordinates and controls the

operation of the Church. The Synod appoints the ministers (*pendeta*) who will serve the numerous village congregations which comprise *G.P.M.*. The Synod is located in the provincial capital of Ambon. Through this body, the interests of the congregation at both the district and village level are represented within national and international contexts. Today, *G.P.M.* is part of the Indonesian Council of Churches and, through this body, is also a member of the World Council of Churches (Cooley 1966:148).

At the district level, the representative body is the 'Presbytery' known in Indonesian as *Klasis* (a term obviously derived from the Dutch word. See endnote 3). *Klasis* corresponds with the government administrative unit *Kecamatan*. Thus, *Klasis* incorporates all the Church parishes included in the district of *Pulau Pulau Terselatan* (see chapter one) and has its headquarters in the *Kecamatan* capital of Wonreli on the island of Kisar. It is to *Klasis* that each congregation within the Church district pays their annual 'donation' (which in the case of Amaya amounts to nearly Rp. 2 million) and it is from *Klasis* that they, in turn, receive instructions concerning the organisation of their Church as well as literature relating to the format of religious services.

The smallest unit within the religious hierarchy of *G.P.M.* is

the 'congregation' or *Jemaah Gereja*. Generally speaking, the congregation coalesces around and is identified by its own church. In the district of *P.P. Terselatan* in 1985, there were 58 *G.P.M.* churches. Unlike the other districts which collectively comprise the *Kabupaten Maluku Tenggara*, religions other than Protestantism are poorly represented in this *Kecamatan*. There is only one Catholic church while Islamic religion is not represented at all (*Kantor Dep. Agama* 1985).

On the island of Damer, all but two (Kuai and Bebar Barat) of the eight villages have their own church. The residents of Kuai and Bebar Barat respectively attend the churches in the nearby villages of Melu and Kumur and are thus incorporated into the congregations of these villages. The seven congregations on Damer are identified in terms of the name of their church. Thus, the congregation of Amaya is referred to as *Jemaah Ebenhaezer*.

**Gereja Ebenhaezer: The Organisation of Space, Time and Social Relations in Amaya**

Western Christianity, as a number of authors have pointed out (see Tawney 1926; Ricoeur 1967; Leach 1970; Taussig 1980; Comaroff 1985), encodes, disseminates and empowers a logic of

oppositions. In Protestantism, in particular, the legacies of Luther and Calvin have served to shape a cosmology which pivots on the oppositions of "good and evil, light and darkness, spirit and matter" (Tawney 1926:107) or, as Comaroff states, the distinctions between "body and mind, flesh and spirit, emotion and reason, and lifetime and eternity" (1985:131). These divisions are respectively symbolised by the polarized images of God and the Devil, spatially mapped out in terms of the distinction between heaven and hell and ontologically inscribed upon the respective bodies of children and adults, men and women.

These dichotomies not only encode a specific conceptualisation of difference but also structure that difference in terms of a hierarchical ordering of moral values. These differential values are arranged, reproduced and objectified in the architectural space of the church, the ordering and division of time and the arrangement of social relations.

In Amaya, the cosmological, ontological and theological oppositions which constitute an integral feature of Protestantism are articulated through and subsumed within the form of the Church itself. In this connection, the Church, like the various State-sponsored organisations discussed in the two previous chapters, is the source of contradiction and

difference and the locus of unity and consensus. It has the ability to sublimate the dichotomies of Protestantism within its own consistent and unified form to the point where it is this image of unity and consistency which prevails and provides the dominant logic for the ordering of social contexts. The Church, therefore, embodies many of the properties generally associated with 'symbolic types' as well as those features more specifically linked to 'transcendental symbols' (see Kapferer 1979).

In the following sections I emphasize both the binary logic of Protestantism and its ordering, through the Church in Amaya, as a consistent and coherent system of symbolic forms. Of particular interest here, is the way in which the hegemonic forms and relations empowered by local origin narratives and the rhetoric of the State are also reproduced through the articulation of Protestantism at the local level.

### **The Architectonics of Protestantism: Shaping the Religious Landscape**

In Amaya, the church, built along a north-south axis, dominates both the landscape and the skyscape. The appearance and architecture of the church, both internally and externally, with its simple and undistracting design

approaching that of a meeting hall, conforms to the general iconoclastic principles of Protestantism (Marty 1972:237-140). However, as the following account illustrates, these principles are not consistent with the actual expression of Protestantism. In this connection, the church represents and remains one of the most powerful contexts for the expression of Protestant symbols and images.

The church in Amaya has two entrances. The main entrance, which is externally located at the front of the building facing north but internally situated at the back of church, is used by the congregation. The second entrance is externally positioned at the back of the church facing south but internally opens into the vestry, located behind the pulpit. This entrance is used exclusively by the minister, the deacons and elders of the Church. Both entrances mark the passage from the secular to the sacred, from the outside to the inside. It could also be argued that the two entrances serve to dichotomize the congregation in terms of sinners and saved or, more appropriately, these two portals serve to mark the religious proximity of the individual to the divine.

Inside the building, the cosmology disseminated in scripture is faithfully reproduced along both vertical and horizontal spatial planes. The wooden ceiling of the church, a deep-blue expanse punctuated with the luminous forms of a multitude of



stars, represents both the experiential and the divine celestial space. It simultaneously symbolises of-this-world experiences in terms of it depicting the firmament and out-of-this-world aspirations in terms of its representation of heaven. In accordance with the cosmological coordinates of Christianity, heaven, as the divine province of God, is located above and beyond the reach of mortals.

The congregation (*jemaah*), of course, is situated at ground level. In the Bible and the teachings of Protestantism, the relationship of the congregation to God (in his heaven) is mediated by the figure of Jesus Christ. This relationship is symbolically depicted within the church by the numerous pictures of Jesus Christ hanging on the walls which are located mid-way between the ceiling and the floor. The minister, whose role it is to guide the congregation in their religious devotion and who also acts as an intermediary with respect to the rites of the Church, is spatially positioned above the congregation but below the icons of Jesus Christ. The pulpit, located in the southern section of the church, is raised a metre or so off the floor and is reached by a number of steps. It is spatially connected to the vault of the church by way of the golden coloured dome positioned above the preacher's head. This unusual structure, which is linked to the ceiling via a narrow stem of wood, gives the impression of a beam of light projecting downwards from the

firmament and terminating in a halo which encircles the minister's head. This structure symbolically marks the pulpit as an extension of the heavenly domain and those who inhabit it as enlightened beings.

The relationship between the congregation and God, between heaven and earth, is further mediated by the Church choral groups (*Ekselsior*, *Efata*, *Elim*, *Delfia*, *Biji Sesawi*, and *Nijinot*)<sup>8</sup> which, throughout a religious service, are positioned above the congregation on the mezzanine floor situated in the northern section of the building. In the case of the choir *Ekselsior*, the spatial and symbolic position of the choral groups within the church is also semantically encoded.

During the main religious service conducted in the church every Sunday morning (weather permitting), the congregation is spatially arranged in such a way so as to reproduce many of the social dichotomies which feature in the Protestant Church. The congregation in Amaya is thus organised in terms of gender, age, and the theocratic order of the Church. It is important to stress here that some of the values which organise these relational categories, i.e. gender and age, also resonate in contexts other than those delineated by the Church. Indeed, gender and age are key organisational themes in the construction and content of local origin narratives.

And, as I have discussed in previous chapters, in their various manifestations constitute primary symbols of identity, exclusion and disenfranchisement within the contexts delineated by the State and local *adat*. Many of the other oppositions associated with Protestantism, however, are not refracted in the logic of either the State or local culture. Rather, they are unique to the theology of Protestantism itself.

Along the north-south axis of the church, the congregation is broadly divided into laity and clergy and adults and children. The minister (when officiating) and the deacons and elders (*majelis*) of the Church are seated in the area surrounding the pulpit and the altar table. They are divided from the rest of the congregation by a narrow aisle running east-west across the breadth of the building. The children of Amaya are seated in front and to the side of the deacons and the minister, with the girls positioned on the eastern wall while the boys are arranged along the western wall of the church. A narrow aisle separates the children from the adults who are also seated in terms of gender and age. The women are located on the eastern side of the church while the men occupy the western section. Teen-age women and men are seated at the front of their respective sections while the older members of the congregation tend to sit at the very back of the church. The male and female sections of the congregation

are separated by the Church orchestra, *Orkes Nijinot*, which occupies the central area of the church.

The spatial arrangement of the congregation effectively reproduces the spectrum signaled by the related categories of sacred/secular and saved/sinners (which was previously discussed with respect to the vertical dimensions of the church) along the horizontal axis. The positioning of the children adjacent to the altar table and the area reserved for the clergy and officials of the Church symbolises their intermediate status, in religious terms, as the incarnation of spiritual purity and ignorance. Throughout the Bible, the term 'children' is used metaphorically to denote both the 'converted' and the population of potential Christians. Generally speaking, therefore, the horizontal, north-south plane of the church represents a movement from the sacred to the secular, from the select to the sinners.

The church, however, is not the only context in which the logic of Protestantism is configured in spatial and symbolic terms. Indeed, the entire village, as a network of topographic and social coordinates, is constituted as the space of Protestantism.

The village is spatially, and socially, demarcated into three inclusive ecclesiastical domains which are respectively

referred to as *Sektor 1*, *Sektor 2* and *Sektor 3*. Each *Sektor* is identified by a specific name which is also given to the choir group formed from the members of the *Sektor*. Thus, *Sektor 1* is called *Ekselsior*, *Sektor 2* *Efata* and *Sektor 3* is named *Elim*<sup>9</sup>.

In some respects, the boundaries of the Church 'sectors' approximate those of the different Ono groups in the village. Thus, *Sektor 1* largely incorporates the same households included in Ono Aulcheyeni. *Sektor 1* also includes most of the immigrant households in the village. 'Sectors' 2 and 3 respectively approximate the areas encompassed by Ono Herweli and Ono Suryali, with the exception, though, that the members of the fourth Ono, Atowcheyeni, are divided between the two 'sectors'. Thus, membership in one of the respective 'sectors' is largely, though not exclusively, determined on the basis of residence. Often when an individual moves to another part of the village to take up residence (as is the case with most newly married couples) there they retain their original 'sector' membership, although they may, at a later date, choose to change their 'sector' affiliation in line with their new residential location. Short-term visitors to Amaya are temporarily granted membership in the 'sector' to which their hosts are affiliated.

Each 'sector' is comprised of three units which, in each

sector, are referred to as *units 1, 2 or 3*. These units correspond with a particular spatial configuration within the boundaries of the 'sector'. For example, *Unit 3 of Sektor 3* includes all the households contained within one of the residential rectangles formed by the convergence of the pathways in the centre of the village.

The division of the Church community into 'sectors' and 'units' is a recent phenomena. In accordance with directives received from *Klasis*, *Sektors* were first introduced in 1979 while their sub-division into *Units* did not occur until 1983. However, the executive bodies (*Koordinator Units*) to govern these groups were not elected and installed until June 1986.

*Sektors* and *Units* are socially significant for a number of reasons, many of which I shall discuss in later sections of this chapter. Important here is that these groups, similar to the indigenous groups Uma and Ono, serve to ground the religious identity of the individual and the theocratic structures of the Church in a spatial matrix. Space is converted into meaningful religious place, replete with ontological connotations, and differentiated in terms of the hierarchical, cosmological order of the Church.

At its most inclusive level, Protestantism colonizes and transforms all space into meaningful religious place. The

Lutheran-inspired notion that all contexts serve as appropriate sites for communion with God provides the logic for the Saturday afternoon religious service in Amaya referred to as *Rumah Ibadah* or 'House Service'. Every Saturday afternoon (again weather permitting) at around 4.00 p.m. the villagers attend a religious service conducted in a house belonging to one of the members of their respective *Sektors*. Throughout the year, the members of a *Sektor* take it in turns to offer their houses for the Saturday afternoon religious service. These services are organised along the same lines as the Sunday morning service, although with a much smaller audience.

The idea that the 'house of God' is not exclusively confined to a church and that any space can be transformed into religious place is further reproduced in the open-air services which are conducted in the cleared areas on the outskirts of the village 2-3 times a year.

Thus, the spatial extent of Protestantism in this context is not solely confined, as Comaroff suggests with regard to the South African context, to "the distribution and design of [mission] buildings..." (1985:142). The power and force of Protestantism in Amaya lies in its ability to colonize all space and order it in terms of its own images and logical forms.

## The Temporal Ordering and Structural Organisation of Protestantism

One of the most indelible first impressions gained after spending just a couple of weeks in Amaya is the manner in which time is ordered and arranged in terms of the timetable and liturgical calendar of the Church. Certainly, the same can be said with regard to the schedules of the various State bodies in the village and even with respect to the observation of *adat*. However, the events scheduled by State-sponsored committees and *adat*-inspired groups are confined to, at a maximum, two days a week. All so-called *adat* meetings are always confined to and convened on a Monday night while community development work and *LKMD* meetings take place on Mondays and Tuesdays. Generally, the period Wednesday to Friday is set aside to enable villagers to work in their gardens.

With the exception of Wednesday and Thursday, religious events and Church-sponsored classes are scheduled on every other day of the week. On some days, such as Sunday, a number of services take place. The amount of time devoted to Church activities is an indication of the large number of organisations associated with the Church. Indeed, as Cooley (1966: 147) implicitly suggests, it is as a system of organisation that Protestantism in Maluku promises and



provides novel forms of influence and control.

Sunday is, without doubt, the busiest day of the Church week. It commences when the 'bell' (a bomb casing from the Second World War) sounds at around 7.30 in the morning to signal the start of the practice session for the Church orchestra *Orkes Nijinot*. This session usually lasts for an hour. The Church orchestra is an all male organisation which consists of 102 members divided into four broad 'tonal' groups, each with its own *Komisaris* or 'commissioner'. These four 'commissioners' form part of the 16 member executive of the orchestra, which consists of 2 chairmen, 2 secretaries, a treasurer, 5 assistants, 2 advisors and, of course, the 4 'commissioners'. Only one uhro individual occupies a position on the orchestra executive while 'immigrants' and ota individuals are not represented at all, even though they collectively comprise over a quarter of the general membership.

The bell sounds again at 9.30 a.m.. This time, however, it is the church bell which rings to call the villagers to Church for the main religious service of the week. Everyone is Amaya is required to attend Sunday morning service. The majority of the confirmed members of the congregation wear the all-black outfit which many researchers and visitors to Maluku have commented upon (e.g. Wallace 1872; Cooley 1966; Bartels 1977; Forbes 1989). Widely believed to have been inspired by the

religious garb adopted by Portuguese Catholics in the sixteenth century and subsequently worn by Ambonese Christians, this costume consists of a black satin *sarong* and loose-fitting top for women and black trousers and jacket worn over a white shirt for men. These 'uniforms' of the Church represent an interesting collage of the symbols of Portuguese colonial domination and the signs of Ambonese cultural hegemony, as well as incorporating the disciplinary ethics and iconoclastic principles associated with the Protestant Church. Interestingly, a number of Ambon-educated, young men and women choose to wear western-style clothes rather than conform with '*adat*'. In doing so, they signal their identification with alternative modes of practice and being, notably those of the Nation-State.

The Sunday service commences about 10.00 in the morning and usually lasts until noon. Up until mid-way through 1987, the service each week followed the same ordered format. This format consisted of a series of prayers and hymns, and a reading from the Bible (the majority of which were from the Old Testament). While the overall format each week remained the same, the content of the service varied. This variation was the result of the practice by which the deacons and elders of the Church took it in turns to act as the officiating preacher. This was the situation until 5 July 1987, when the *Sinode* of G.P.M., through *Klasis* in Kisar,

introduced a set, 2-model format for religious service on Sunday. Upon entering the church on Sunday morning, the congregation are now handed a sheet of paper containing either the 'Model I' or 'Model II' service. The service is thus reduced to following the step-by-step directions and responses set out on the sheet. With this format, the officiating members of the Church are entitled to determine some of the hymns performed, the reading from the Bible and the content of the sermon based upon that reading. After only a few months of this new format, many members of the congregation complained about how "boring" and "predictable" the Sunday service had become.

The task of administering the new service format falls upon the officials of the Church. The head of the Church in Amaya is the minister (*pendeta*). From January 1982 until December 1986, the congregation of Amaya had its own resident minister, the only one on the entire island. The minister, a man originally from the island of Kisar, was appointed by the Synod of the Church. It is this body which also paid the minister's annual salary of Rp.900,000. However, to afford the luxury of their own minister, the congregation in Amaya were required to send Rp.150,000 a month to *Klasis* in Kisar to cover, among other things, the minister's wages. The minister in Amaya retired from active duty in December 1986 and was supposed to have been replaced by a *Pendeta* from the

island of Wetar. However, the congregation of Amaya had heard rumours that this person was an alcoholic and a womanizer. Largely as a result of these stories, the Church officials in Amaya instructed *Klasis* that they would not accept the appointment. This decision caused much friction between *Klasis* and the congregation in Amaya, especially over the amount of money the village was required to send to *Klasis* each month. The end result, however, was that the elders and deacons of the Church in Amaya took over the responsibilities which had previously been assigned to the minister. This outcome is in keeping with the traditions of the Protestant Church, which emphasises the role of the laity in the administration of the religious rites of the Church.

With the absence of a minister, the *Kepala Desa*, acting in his capacity as an 'elder' (*penatua*) of the Church, is now the unofficial head of the Church in Amaya. The organisation of the Church is, on paper, divided between an administrative body and an ecclesiastical body. The administrative body which deals with the financial affairs of the Church consists of a chairman, deputy, secretary and treasurer. The people who occupy these positions are also members of the governing body which administers to the congregation.

The ruling body of the congregation is called the 'Session' or *Majelis* (see Cooley 1966). In Amaya, the term *majelis* is

also used to denote the individuals who comprise this body. The 8 members of the *majelis* are nominated from each of the three *Sektor* groups. The three 'elders' or *penatua* of each *Sektor* plus the fourth 'elder' who is assigned the role of assisting the minister sit on this body. In addition to these 4 men, are 4 'deacons' (*samas*), one of whom is a woman (*samaset*). The *majelis* is elected every 4 years by the congregation and its final composition ratified by the Church authorities in Kisar. During the period of research, the *majelis* consisted of 8 mahno individuals who, with the exception of one person, also occupied prominent positions within one or more State organisations and/or local Uma groups (the implications of this are pursued in more detail in the following sections).

As soon as the main service in the church is finished, the 'bell' sounds again to mark the start of 'Sunday School' (*Sekolah Minggu Tunas Pekabaran Injil*) for all the village children aged between 6 and 17 years of age. 'Sunday School' is held in the church and usually lasts for two hours. The children are divided into four classes, with classes 1-3 comprised of primary school children while class 4 includes those children who have left primary school. The classes are taught by a total of 12 'teachers' (*pengasuh*), nine of whom are men. Immigrants and non-mahno individuals comprise a third of the teaching staff.

At around 3.30 in the afternoon, the 'bell' again sounds, this time to signal the start of the *Pelwata* (actually an acronym for *Pelayan Wanita* or 'Women helpers' [of the Church]) service in the house of one its 89 female members. *Pelwata* was established in Amaya in May 1983 and is an exclusively female Church organisation with its own choir and 10 member executive committee. Most of the women who sit on this committee are the wives of prominent men in the village. Only two women of immigrant or non-mahno origins hold a position on this body even though immigrant, uhro and ota women comprise nearly 30% of the general membership.

*Pelwata* receives its liturgical and ecclesiastical directions from *Klasis* in Kisar. Until mid-1987, the format and content of *Pelwata* services was determined by the women themselves. In keeping with *G.P.M.*'s attempts to standardize religious experience throughout the province, a new service format was received from *Klasis* in August 1987. With this new format, the only choice the women have is with respect to the selection of hymns. Even then, *Klasis* determine from which book the hymns will be selected.

The male equivalent of *Pelwata* within *G.P.M.* is *Pelpria* (*Pelayan Pria* or 'male helpers'). On the island of Damer, *Pelpria* is only active in the village of Wulur. At the annual general meeting of the Church in Amaya in December 1986, the

congregation discussed the establishment of a *Pelpria* group in the village. Nine men, one from each of the nine *Units* which collectively comprise the three *Sektors*, were nominated to fill the executive positions of this organisation. However, these nominations were rejected by the minister on the grounds that none of the candidates were suitably qualified to hold a position. Although a number of people publicly objected to this decision at the time, nothing has been done since the minister's retirement to initiate a *Pelpria* group in the village.

On Monday morning, from 7-9.00 a.m., the 'Church youth group' *Angkatan Muda Gereja Protestan Maluku* meets in the building opposite the church built specifically for this group but also used by the Church orchestra. There are two 'branches' of *Angkatan Muda* on Damer. *Ranting Ebenhaezer* (named after the Church in Amaya) includes the villages of Amaya, Kuai, Melu, Kukur, and Bebar Barat while *Ranting Betlehem* (named after the Church in Wulur) is comprised of the villages of Bebar Timur, Ihli, Kehli and Wulur. Three or four times a year the members of A.M. in Amaya will attend a religious service convened by the *Betlehem* branch in one of its constituent villages.

The membership of A.M. is not, as the name suggests, confined to the youth of these villages. In Amaya, the 159 (73 men and

86 women) strong membership of A.M. consists of single and married men and women between the approximate ages of 17-45. For the most part, it is the married, older members who comprise the 11 member (8 men and three women) executive of this organisation. The executive is exclusively comprised of mahno individuals even though immigrant, uhro and ota individuals make up approximately 30% of the general membership.

Like *Pelwata* and *Gereja Ebenhaezer*, A.M. is now required to follow a set format for religious service. The new A.M. service format was first introduced by *Klasis* on 12 October 1987.

Catechism classes (*getsasi*) are held every Tuesday and Friday mornings (and sometimes afternoons) in the church. These classes are attended by males and females in Amaya over the age of 15 years who are not already *sidi* or 'confirmed' members of the congregation. Only those persons who are confirmed members of the Church can participate in Holy Communion and, perhaps more importantly, get married. In 1986, these classes were conducted by the resident minister (*pendeta*) in Amaya. With his retirement, the four *penatua* or 'elders' associated with the Church 'sectors' (three of these men are the heads of the different *Sektors* while the fourth *penatua* is appointed to specifically assist the *pendeta*),



took it in turn to take these classes. Interestingly, the *Kepala Desa*, as the *penatua* assigned to assist the minister, was one of the persons who regularly conducted catechism classes.

Practice sessions for six, *Ekselsior*, *Efata*, *Elim*, *Delfia*, *Biji Sesawi* and *Orkes Nijinot*, of the seven choral groups in Amaya are held on either Friday or Saturday nights. The *Pelwata* choir practice is held immediately following the end of the *Pelwata* service on Sunday afternoon. Each of the choirs has its own executive which, in the case of *Biji Sesawi* and *Delfia*, also includes two secretaries and two treasurers. Even though women constitute the majority of the members of the mixed choirs, it is men who dominate the executive committees of these groups. Of the mixed choral groups, i.e. *Biji Sesawi*, *Delfia*, *Efata*, *Elim* and *Ekselsior*, women hold five of the 18 executive positions associated with these groups. Immigrants and non-mahno individuals fare no better with 4 of the 18 positions occupied by uhro and ota individuals and two of them assigned to immigrants.

Saturday afternoons are set aside for the *Rumah Ibadah* services held in the respective 'sector' areas. Villagers are required to return to Amaya from their gardens dotted around the western coast of the island to attend these services. The *Kepala Desa* has been known to send men to the southern

reaches of the islands to collect villagers absent from either the Saturday or Sunday services. The irony of such actions becomes apparent when the punctuality of the *Kepala Desa* himself is examined. During my stay with the *Kepala Desa*, it was often the case that we would not return to the village in time to attend the Saturday afternoon service. On one occasion we arrived back in the village at around 10.00 o'clock at night. Many times we arrived at the village just as the services were beginning or mid-way through them. On these occasions, shame forced us to wait on the beach until the services had ended and we could then return to our house under the cover of darkness.

*Rumah Ibadah* usually commences around 4.30 in the afternoon and lasts for an hour. Like all events and activities associated with the Church, the start of *Rumah Ibadah* is marked by the sound of the 'bell'. Previously, the service which took place in each *Sektor* represented a condensed version of the format used during the Sunday morning service. Since October 1987, however, *Rumah Ibadah* services have been subject to the liturgical will of *Klasis* and now follow a 4-model service format which is repeated each month. *Rumah Ibadah* services are conducted by one of the members of the executive bodies associated with the administration of the various *Sektor* and *Unit* groups.

Each *Sektor* is governed by a 4 member committee which consists of an 'elder' (*Penatua* who is also the 'chairman'), deputy chairman, secretary and treasurer. Each *Unit* is also controlled by a 4 member council (*Koordinator Unit*) comprised of the same positions. This body, however, is governed by and accountable to the structurally superior 'sector' committees.

The overall number of *Sektor* and *Unit* executive members amounts to 48 people, only one of whom is a woman. Indeed, at the time when the members of the respective *Koordinator Units* were installed, I was told that only men could be nominated and elected for these positions. All of the members of the three *Sektor* committees are mahno individuals. It is only at the structurally subordinate level of the different *Unit* committees that non-mahno and immigrant individuals are represented. Of the 36 people who make up the 9 *Koordinator Units*, three are immigrants and six are from non-mahno 'houses'.

*Sektors*, together with most of the other organisations discussed above, keep and cultivate subsistence gardens and coconut groves (*dusun*). In addition to these organisations, the Church itself, using the 'voluntary' labour of its members, maintains several coconut plantations in the southern reaches of the island. Most of the money earned from the sale of garden produce at the weekly 'markets' (*pasar*)

held by each group is ultimately sent to *Klasis* as is the money earned from the sale of copra. In line with Protestant tradition, all of the Church groups keep meticulous and extremely detailed ledgers documenting income and expenditure and plotting the overall progress of the group. To assist with fund-raising, many of the Church organisations, such as *Pelwata*, the different choirs and 'sector' groups, also offer the labour of their members for hire to individuals in the village. More often than not, these groups are hired by the immigrants in the village to clear and establish new gardens. The amount paid for such work varies according to the financial means of the person who employs the group. Much to the amusement of some of the villagers and the shame of some of the members of his own family, the *Kepala Desa* is one of the few non-immigrant individuals to also hire these groups for this purpose.

While waged labour within the context of the village is frowned upon by the *adat* elders and many of the residents, believing as they do that it is antithetical to the ethic of generosity generated by *adat*, the commoditization of Church-organised social relations is condoned. In accordance with the logic of Protestantism, the alienation of the congregation's labour for a monetary return is viewed as working for the glorification of God and the Church. Work, in this sense, is depicted as the moral and social obligation of

each and every member of the Church congregation while time is, as Comaroff observes, conceptualised as "a unitized resource to be seized and 'put to work'..." (1985:141).

To the weekly religious schedule of 14 organised events, must also be added the liturgical and secular events which serve to structure and demarcate the temporal calendar of the Church. In Amaya, this includes quarterly communion, the numerous rituals and observations associated with Easter and Christmas, christenings, confirmations, the annual general meeting of *Gereja Ebenhaezar*, Church elections, the commemoration of the establishment of *G.P.M.* and, strange as it may sound given the Calvinist origins of the Church, Martin Luther's birthday.

The daily, weekly and annual routines and schedules the organisation of the Church in Amaya generates effectively serve to construct time (as well as space and social relations) in terms of the logic, values and images of the Protestant Church (see Tawney 1926; Weber 1930; Marty 1972; Comaroff 1985). Within this schemata, time, space and individuals are differentiated and classified in terms of the respective categories of the Church which are themselves informed by a largely binary system of values (see above). At one level, these values and the categories they create take on the appearance of fixed, immutable orders through their

objectification as religious texts (The Bible, hymn books, etc.) and codification in language.

In the Bible, for instance, the temporal framework for the organisation of Protestantism in the village is clearly set out in Genesis. The seven days referred to in Genesis not only represent a specific conceptualisation of time but also disseminate a particular cosmology. The arrangement of the timetables of the Church in terms of this temporal frame of reference and the reproduction of these schedules, week in week out, are acts which symbolically and constantly recreate the cosmology of the Protestant Church.

The notion of a distinct temporal category comprised of seven days, which is delineated in the first book of the Bible, is not specifically encoded in the local language. Rather, time is primarily organised and articulated in terms of the spatial transitions of the sun and the moon. As such, no actual indigenous word exists for the term or concept which is used in English to denote this bloc of time (i.e. a 'week'). The gloss that is used in vnyola Mayawo to refer to this period of time, chreyesso, conjoins the local derivation of the Ambonese-Malay term for Church (i.e. gereja), chreya, with the indigenous nominal classifier isso. This term succinctly identifies the origin and context of the temporal construct which figures so prominently in Protestant

cosmology.

Indeed, as I indicated earlier, many of the concepts associated with the Church and even the Church itself represent quite alien constructs in terms of the cosmology codified through the indigenous language. As such, vnyola Mayawo is not the language of the Church in Amaya. The Bible, the various hymn books, and the service liturgies for each of the Church organisations are all written in Indonesian. All services and meetings involving Church bodies are also conducted in Indonesian. The use of *Bahasa Indonesia* continues a tradition established by the Dutch who quickly saw the need to translate religious texts from Dutch into Malay - the lingua franca of the Netherlands East Indies.

The use of *Bahasa Indonesia*, the language of the Nation-State, has obvious political and social connotations. This is because language, as Taussig (1987b:156) points out, "is not merely an instrument but also a source of experience". In other words, language encodes a particular world view which incorporates specific modes of practice and being. This is the case with *Bahasa Indonesia*. However, unlike vnyola Mayawo, the referential index of *Bahasa Indonesia* is not Amaya or, for that matter, any other village in Indonesia. Language, in this situation, is detached from its generative source and launched into the hyperreality created by

nationalism, where it orbits at a "new level of abstraction " (Comaroff 1985:144). The use of *Bahasa Indonesia* in Amaya ultimately serves to construct and abstract the experiential world of the villagers in terms of the homogenous and corporate images and forms delineated by the conjuncture of *Bahasa Indonesia* with State and Church-inspired contexts.

The abstraction of *Bahasa Indonesia* from an immediate, referential cultural index, its circulation within other symbolic spaces (such as those created by nationalism or Christianity) and its presentation as an alternative source of experience all contribute to the appeal that the Church (and the State) has in the imagination of the disenfranchised residents of Amaya.

For those people in the village who do not speak the indigenous language, i.e. immigrants, the Church with its exclusive use of *Bahasa Indonesia* represents a meaningful, alternative site for the construction of social identity. For all structurally marginal people in the village, the Church provides alternative and socially legitimate units of identification in which they can actively participate as members of the 'Christian Community'. Like *Bahasa Indonesia*, the imaginative function of these groups is to transcend the oppositions and divisions generated at the local level through the construction of alternative contexts for the



expression of social relations.

### Social relatedness as a Protestant Construct

The institution of 'God-parents/God-children' represents one such alternative context in which the categories empowered by local origin narratives, i.e. uhro, ota and 'immigrants', are subsumed within the consistent images and forms of the Church.

In the vernacular, the terms used to express this relationship are derived from an amalgamation of Vnyola Mayawo words for 'mother', 'father' and 'child' and the *Ambonese-Malay* term for 'Christians'. For example, a person's 'God-father' is referred to as Tato serangcho. Tato is a local term used to refer to all males, including a person's genitor, in the first ascending generation while serangcho derives from the *Ambonese-Malay* term for 'Christians' *Serani*, which in itself is derived from the word 'Nazarenes' (see Wallace 1872:311; Forbes 1989:289).

Everyone in Amaya who has been baptized is related to a set of 'God-parents'. In fact, it is the 'God-parents' who sponsor the child's baptism and who will often determine the name of the child. During the baptism itself, the 'God-

mother' or *Mama serani*/Neno serangcho holds the child while it is being anointed. Afterwards, at the home of the 'God-parents', the *Bapak serani* or 'God-father' receives guests at the feast held to celebrate the event. During the life of the child, the 'God-parents' are expected to provide some form of financial assistance for the upkeep and education of their 'God-child' (*anak serani*/ono serangcho) as well as celebrate the child's birthday. In addition, the 'God-parents' are expected to provide moral guidance and instruction for their charge. In return, the 'God-child' responds with greater deference and respect than that shown his/her actual parents. Upon marriage, the 'God-parents' of both the 'bride' and the 'groom' act as the official witnesses to the solemnization of the union.

In order to be a 'God-parent' a person must first be a confirmed member of the Church. It is not necessary to be married although most of the people who act as 'God-parents' are. In the majority of cases, the 'God-parents' of a child are related to each other as husband and wife. When not related affinally in this way, a person's 'God-parents' are then consanguineally related to each other either as members of the same Uma/Marga or as members of different Uma/Marga. There are a small number of cases (18 of the 364 'God-parental' relationships I recorded) where the so-called *Bapak* and *Mama serani* are actually two men. Often when the

'God-father' is single and has no sisters or is widowed and has no female siblings, then another male, usually consanguineally related to the 'God-father' as well as to the child's parents, acts as the classificatory 'God-mother'. Women, I was told, could not act as classificatory 'God-fathers', however.

Given the practices of Uma exogamy and, until recently, village endogamy, coupled with the principle of rank endogamy, it is not surprising, therefore, to find that in nearly all cases the relationship between 'God-parents' and 'God-child' in Amaya can be mapped out genealogically. In all but a few cases, however, the genealogical connections between these individuals is regarded as quite distant. When asked about the logic which informed the selection of 'God-parents', a number of people indicated that the objective of this relationship was to extend the social horizons of an individual so as to include those people generally considered to be genealogically and spatially distant from either of the child's parents; for it is the parents of the child who actually nominate the prospective 'God-parents'. Thus, the 'God-parental' relationship has social significance beyond the immediate connections established between 'God-parents' and 'God-child'. It also serves to link both sets of 'parents' (actual and classificatory) as well as the members of their immediate family (cf. 'Compadrazgo' relations

discussed in Davila 1971; Keesing 1975).

Although an individual has only one set of 'God-parents', most people in the village act as 'God-parents' to a number of people. The *Kepala Desa*, for instance, is 'God-father' to nine individuals. His wife, however, is not 'God-mother' to the same individuals. The institution of 'God-parents'/'God-children', therefore, establishes a complex network of intersecting relations which are predicated upon a number of considerations and criteria. More importantly for immigrants, uhro and ota individuals, the relationships established through the 'God-parent'/'God-child' nexus cut across, in the same way that local expressions of social relatedness do, the categories and divisions informed by the logic of local origin narratives and *adat*. Thus, one finds immigrants and uhro/ota individuals with mahno 'God-parents' and mahno individuals with immigrant and uhro/ota 'God-parents'. In some cases, one of the 'God-parents' may be a mahno individual while the other person is affiliated to either an uhro, ota or immigrant 'house'/group.

While these relationships constitute alternative forms for the expression of social relations, they also articulate quite different ideas about the content and form of relatedness itself. In particular, the Christian institution of 'God-parents/God-children' emphasises, and indeed, pivots

upon the notion of the nuclear family as the basis of a system of social relatedness. In this system, as Comaroff points out, the nuclear unit is "sanctified as the 'holy family'" (1985:140) while marriage, depicted as a 'sacralized union', constitutes the locus for this arrangement. This construction of social relations in terms of the categories of the Protestant Church also reproduces those images of the 'family' which constituted key themes in both the organisation of Dutch society in the Netherlands (Schama 1987:386) and also the structuring of Dutch colonial policy in the 'East Indies (Furnivall 1944; Vandenbosch 1941; de Klerck 1975). The social configuration delimited by the concept of the 'nuclear family' is also promoted by the Indonesian government through family planning programmes (e.g. *Kelaurga Berencana*) and women's organisations such as *PKK* (see Robinson 1989; Sullivan 1983).

### The Church as a Utopian Concept

At the beginning of this chapter I suggested that the Protestant Church of Maluku incorporates and disseminates elements which may be identified as utopian in character. There are number of possible reasons as to why and how the Church approximates what I have termed a 'utopian construct' in the imagination of the people in Amaya.

At one level, the Church (and the State for that matter) provides the symbolic means for transcending not only the disjunctures and discontinuities resulting from its own articulation at the local level but also those categories and distinctions generated by the logic of *adat*. Congregational membership or affiliation with one or more of the Church-sponsored groups is predicated upon a series of criteria which generally cut across local categories of classification, such as 'immigrants', mahno, uhro and ota. As such, the Church in Amaya provides 'new [symbolic] spaces' for the construction of identity and the expression of social relations.

While the various Church groups are grounded in the social space of Amaya they also exist at a higher, more inclusive level of abstraction. Membership in one or more of the many Church-based organisations also invests the individual with fellowship in the more inclusive group called the 'Christian Community'. In the case of those people who are regarded as non-conformists, structural marginality, as Comaroff points out, is "redefined as membership in the society of the saved" (1985:150). In both instances, these terms, like the concept of the 'Nation', refer to imagined communities which have no singular geographic or social locus; their function is utopian rather than utilitarian, transcendental rather than transformative.

At another level, the Church represents an alternate site for the articulation of power and the expression of resistance. The historical origins of both the Protestant Church and *G.P.M.* are inextricably tied up with the notion of resistance, 'protest' and independence. As I indicated in earlier sections of the chapter, the Protestant Church was established as a 'protest' movement against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Likewise, *G.P.M.* was formed out of the desire for autonomy and independence from the State Church of the Netherlands East Indies. In the minds of many people in Amaya, whether correct or not, *G.P.M.* is also associated with the struggle for Indonesian independence and the eventual overthrow of Dutch colonialism. These respective origins of resistance and 'protest' are commemorated in Amaya each year with the recognition and celebration of Martin Luther's birthday and the establishment date of *G.P.M.*. Both occasions are marked by a formal Church service and festivities which involve the entire congregation.

The historical struggles of the Protestant Church and, more specifically, *G.P.M.* against the established order of things contributes to their status as 'utopian' constructs and to the perception among certain people in Amaya that religion in general represents "an imaginative variation on power" (Ricoeur 1986:299).

In this connection, Christian denominations constitute the symbolic battlefield for the struggle over the appropriation of symbols which marks relations between prominent mahno individuals and certain uhro and ota persons. In a blatant act of defiance, a number of uhro and ota individuals living in Ambon have become members of the Christian denominational Church *Sidang Jemaah Allah* or the 'Assemblies of God'. Uhro and ota individuals visiting the provincial capital from Amaya often attend religious service at this Church. Upon returning to Amaya, some of these people have attempted to incorporate a number of the religious practices associated with *Sidang Jemaah Allah* services into the religious repertoire of *Gereja Ebenhaezer*. Most of these proposed changes have been rejected outright by the *majelis*. In response to this act of resistance on the part of uhro and ota individuals, the lelechro lato, as head of the Church in Amaya, has prohibited residents in the village from becoming members of *Sidang Jemaah Allah*, from attending services at this Church while in Ambon and from associating with those individuals who are members of this Church. The result of this edict is that no-one in the village professes to be a member of 'Assemblies of God' although uhro and ota individuals continue to defy the authority of the lelechro lato by fraternizing with relatives in Ambon who are *Sidang Jemaah Allah* members and attending Church service with them.



Notwithstanding the symbolic significance of various Christian denominations for the expression of resistance, the utopian elements of the Protestant Church discussed above are, however, subverted by the contradictions and inconsistencies generated by its conjuncture with local categories and values.

### Generating Contradictions and Inconsistencies

At one level, the organisation of the Church and the numerous groups associated with it constitute novel forms for the construction of identity and the expression of social relations. This is, in part, one of the reasons why the Church has such widespread appeal among the structurally marginal individuals within the village. However, while membership in these groups initially appears to be based upon quite broad criteria, in practice full membership in many of these groups is predicated upon a narrow range of exclusive factors. For example, residence in Amaya is all that is required to attend and participate in the main religious service in the village on Sunday morning. However, in order to be a full participating member of the congregation eligible to attend all rites and events associated with the Church, it is necessary to have undergone confirmation, which requires at least 2-3 years attendance at catechism classes.

Membership in other groups is similarly based upon a limited and exclusive set of criteria, such as residence, age, gender, ability and knowledge. Notwithstanding these limitations, the significance of the various Church groups for the disenfranchised residents of Amaya, is the appearance they present of having replaced the indigenous categories of 'immigrants', mahno, uhro and ota with the organisational values and utopian principles of the Church. However, while the composition of many of the Church groups intersects, and indeed, transcends a number of locally-generated categories and distinctions, many of the values and classifications (such as, age, gender, residence and knowledge) which order local *adat* and State-defined social arrangements are, however, still retained. Moreover, if we examine where the locus of authority is positioned in the various organisations spawned by the Church we see that the indigenous system of classification, which is informed by the themes of local origin narratives, has not been replaced at all but continues to function as the primary index for the organisation of social relations.

The conjuncture of local categories and conceptualisations with the ideal forms sponsored by the Church (and, I should add, by the State) also produces a series of contradictions and inconsistencies.

This is certainly the case when we examine the resonance of the concept of the nuclear family, promoted by both the Church and the State, in the organisation of domestic relations in the village. Here we see, as I discussed in chapter three, that the composition of 'households' or uma lavcho varies enormously and that the organisation of relations of production is not solely confined to the members of one uma lavcho. However, notwithstanding the fact that few 'households' approximate the form of a nuclear family, in recent years there has been a discernible trend among newly married couples to immediately establish an independent 'household' rather than reside uxorilocally for a number of years. In some of these cases, the organisation of domestic relations approximates the social arrangement promulgated by the Church and the State. Overall, however, the majority of uma lavcho in Amaya bear little resemblance to the content and form of the nuclear unit.

Likewise, the structural organisation of the Church in Amaya produces its own configuration of inconsistencies and contradictions. Here we see that although women, youth, immigrants, uhro and ota individuals make up a considerable proportion of the general membership of the various Church organisations and are, for the most part, the most active members, they are poorly represented on the executive committees of these groups. For example, the congregation of

Amaya consists of all the residents in the village (a total of 585 people). As such, more than half of the congregation is female. Yet only one female is a member of the 'Session' which controls the Church in Amaya. No one under the age of 40 is a member of this board. Likewise, no immigrants, uhro or ota individuals sit on this committee, even though collectively these people comprise over 30% of the congregation.

Similar observations can be made with respect to the other Church groups in the village. *Angkatan Muda*, for instance, reproduces the same structures of exclusion as the Church. Not one person of immigrant, uhro or ota identity is represented on the executive committee of this organisation even though these people make up approximately 30% of the membership. Although women comprise over 55% of the general membership only three of the 11 positions on the executive are filled by women. All but one of the executive members is married with children even though *A.M.* purports to be a 'youth group'.

It is only at the level of the structurally inferior *Unit* groups that immigrants, uhro and ota individuals are represented, where they occupy 25% of the available positions. However, as I pointed out above, *Units* are a recent phenomena which, as yet, have only a minor input into

the overall decision making processes of the Church and are largely dependent upon structurally higher organisations for their operational integrity.

Overall, we see that the organisation of the Church in Amaya is dominated by the same people who occupy prominent positions on local, State-sponsored committees. In many cases, these people also occupy positions of considerable authority within *adat*-constituted groups. For example, the lelechro lato/*Bapak Rajah*, who is widely regarded as the final authority on matters concerning *adat*, is also, as I discussed at length in the previous two chapters, the representative of the Indonesian government within the context of the village. He is also, as I have indicated above, the head of the Church in Amaya in the absence of a minister. The authority and influence of this person thus stems from his ability to transcend the divisions and contradictions generated in any one context by selectively subsuming the values, logic and concepts associated with *adat*, the State and the Church into a single, unified and all-encompassing mega-symbolic space represented by, and inscribed upon, the corporeal form of this individual.

In his role as head of the Church in Amaya, the lelechro lato is widely believed to be in possession of many of the powers and abilities normally associated with an ordained minister

of the Church. As a result, the authority and influence enjoyed by this individual extends beyond the phenomenological horizons determined by *adat* and the State to penetrate the noumenal domains of experience. In this context, the categories and idioms of the Church are appropriated to order, control and subsume social action which is regarded as non-conformist, as witnessed in the following incident.

The Power of Belief: Controlling Resistance and Deviancy Through the Idioms of the Church

The lelechro lato and the other male members of the *majelis* are believed to have the power to transform water into 'Holy water'. In this transformed state, the liquid is believed to have healing properties when consumed or placed externally on the body. The lelechro lato, as head of the Church in Amaya, is also empowered, in a strange twist of Protestant theology, to hear confession and grant absolution.

It was for this reason that an immigrant man visited the lelechro lato's house one night in November 1987. Apparently, earlier in the year this person had stolen a number of breadfruit from another immigrant man. At the time of this incident, the lelechro lato had called the man to his house

and, in his dual capacity as *Bapak Rajah* and *Kepala Desa*, had asked him if had stolen the fruit. The man professed his innocence and even stated that he would swear on the Bible to this effect. Nothing more was said or done about the affair until the night in question. That night the man's child had suddenly become very ill. Believing that his previous lies had brought about this state of affairs, the man, accompanied by the *majelis* member for his 'sector', went to the lelechro lato to confess his sin and ask forgiveness. He also wanted the lelechro lato to 'bless' some water which he would later administer to his sick child.

The lelechro lato refused to bless the water and instead lectured the man on the error of his ways, told him to apologize to the victim of his crime and prophesied that if the man did not confess to God with "an open heart" he would return home and find his child dead. Unfortunately, this is exactly what happened.

At the funeral service conducted the next day, it was widely believed that the death of the child had been largely brought about by the "evil" actions of it's father, although the lelechro lato's actions were not discounted as influential in determining the final outcome.

In this incident, resistance to the dictates of *adat* or the

authority of the State is finally controlled by and subsumed within the system of categories and beliefs delineated by the Church. Positioned at the apex of this system, the lelechro lato demonstrates the omnipotence of his influence and authority through his perceived manipulation of the real and the imagined, of faith and fact. Non-conformity in this instance is constructed in terms of the binary logic of Church cosmology and, as a sinner, the individual is thus subject to the phenomenological and noumenal restraints of Protestantism. Although tragic in consequence, the incident certainly served to further consolidate the authority of the lelechro lato, not only with respect to Church-centered affairs but with regard to other contexts as well.

Protestantism also provides the semantic spaces for the labeling and control of other forms of deviancy. For example, an uhro man is known to regularly destroy private property (such as dug-out canoes, fruit trees, etc.), steal and destroy clothing, run naked through the village, rarely attend church or participate in community development programmes. This man, however, is not believed to be mentally disturbed or anti-social. Rather, the common belief is that he is possessed by the 'Devil' (*Iblis* or *Setan*) and that it is the 'Devil' which makes him act in such a way. As such, he is not subject to either *adat* law or the legal dictates of the State but falls under the general control of the Church



and the more specific control of the members of the *Majelis*. In their attempts to exorcise the "evil spirit" and 'normalize' his behaviour, the lelechro lato and the other male members of the 'Session' have anointed him with 'Holy water', forced him to sit in church (accompanied) for long periods, praying, have bound his hands behind his back for days on end and, as a last resort, have made his immediate family responsible for his actions. Others in the village are not so tolerant in their attitudes towards this person and believe that such behaviour is typical of someone of this rank, i.e. uhro.

It is interesting to note that in both incidents the persons concerned occupy marginal positions within the social fabric of the village. The Church, therefore, rather than representing an alternative space for the expression of resistance, dissent and non-conformity, provides the means for the further encompassment and emasculation of the structurally disenfranchised individuals in the village by those already empowered by the logic of local origin narratives. At this level, the practices of the Church are revealed as fundamentally inconsistent and contradictory.

### Conclusion: The Conjunction of Church and State

There are many parallels which can be drawn between the practices of the Church and the operation of the State in Amaya. The structural organisation of both consists of a hierarchical arrangement of relations and values which, when compared, appear to resonate a similar system of logical consistency. In both cases, the categories generated from this ordering represent novel sources of control and influence as well as providing 'new spaces' within which alternative identities can be created and expressed. Historically speaking, the origin [hi]stories of both the Church and the State intersect in terms of their anti-establishment, anti-colonial, pro-independence, pro-resistance themes and narrative plots. Constructed as the referential space of the ideal and the possible, therefore, both the Church and the State represent fundamentally utopian concepts.

The relationship between the Church and the State, however, is not one which can be mapped out exclusively in terms of a series of parallel structures and themes. The status of the Protestant Church is also enhanced through its conjunction with, and indeed, encompassment by the Indonesian Nation-State. As one of the five 'world' religions officially recognised and codified by the State in the *sila* concerning

pluralistic monotheism, Protestantism simultaneously offers both a religious experience and an opportunity to participate, as a conscientious citizen, in the development of the Indonesian Nation-State. In Amaya, the Church and the State are effectively folded together through the practice of assigning ecclesiastical positions of authority and influence to the same individuals who occupy prominent positions within the administrative hierarchy of the State. In the majority of cases, these individuals also act as the ryesro for a number of indigenous Uma or are the head of the one of the four Ono units. This conflation of adat/hnulcho with the symbolic and practical domains demarcated by the State and the Church is incarnated in the person of the lelechro lato, who stands as the corporeal embodiment, the 'exemplary centre' (Geertz 1980: 13-15) of this nexus. As this concept suggests, this person does not merely represent 'the pivot' or 'nucleus' for local adat, the State or the Church. Rather, he *is* the State, he *is* the Church, he *is* adat. His status as such is legitimated by the historical narratives constitutive of all three domains.

For the disenfranchised residents in the village, notably 'immigrants', uhro and ota individuals, when ideology moves beyond integration to dissimulation, as it has done in Amaya, utopia moves into its pathological phase. In this context, the no place of utopia, as Ricoeur concludes, becomes "a

pretext for escape, a way of fleeing the contradictions and ambiguity both of the use of power and of the assumption of authority in a given situation" (1986:17).

The notion of 'escape' discussed here constitutes one of the primary themes in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

## NOTES

1. Martin Luther's protest against and repudiation of papal authority is considered by some as the symbolic corner-stone of Protestantism (see Marty 1972:xi).
2. The other term used in the vernacular to denote the Church is chreya, which is obviously derived from the Ambonese-Malay term for 'Church' *gereja* (which in itself is a term borrowed from the Portuguese language).
3. 'Reformed' generally refers to those Churches which emerged as a result of the efforts of such reformers and theologians as John Calvin, Theodore de Beza and Huldreich Zwingli (Marty 1972:24; Cross 1958:1146).
4. 'Classis' is an ecclesiastical assembly made up of a number of Protestant parishes in the Netherlands.
5. Those Churches which refused to amalgamate with the 'Indies Church', namely the British Protestant Church, the Christian Reformed Church, the American parish in Batavia and the Reformed Church at Surabaya, were not acknowledged by the government as Churches per se but were regarded as "Church bodies or societies with corporate capacities" (Klerck 1975:517).
6. The date given for the government's recognition of other religious orders appears to be contentious. Klerck (1975:518) states that this event took place in 1925, while Furnivall (1944:379) and Vandenbosch (1941:40) give the year as 1927.
7. The *Volksraad* or 'People's Council' was established in 1916, as part of a system of decentralization and administrative reforms, with the express purpose of "giving the inhabitants of the whole archipelago the opportunity of publicly airing their views upon the proceedings of the Government and to give expression to the desires and grievances entertained" (Klerck 1975:478).
8. The names of the choral groups in Amaya are derived from Biblical figures and places or from objects and images with Biblical associations. For example, the group *Elim* is named after the desert oasis where Moses and the children of Israel camped (Exodus 15:27) while the name *Nijinot* is derived from a Biblical term (actually spelt Neginoth) which refers to stringed instruments mentioned in connection with Psalms (Scofield 1917:600)

9. In a visit to Amaya in mid-1989, I learnt that the numerical appellation attached to each *Sektor* had been dropped so that *Sektors* were known only by their respective names, i.e. *Ekselsior*, *Efata* and *Elim*. The reason given for this change in the system of naming *Sektor* was related to the differential values attached to the numbers 1, 2 and 3. It was thought amongst the Church *Majelis* and many of the villagers that this system of naming functioned to inherently rank the three *Sektors* in descending order from 1 to 3. The new system of naming was believed to be more equitable and less value-laden. The units within each *Sektor*, however, still retained their numerical tags.

## CONCLUSION

### NARRATIVE BOUNDARIES, NATIONAL HORIZONS.

The horizon does not show the existence of many panoramas but of their endless succession ... No one succeeds in making this endless voyage. Every human voyage is situated in the finite distances of the world.

Cornelius A. van Peursen (1977:198).

### Introduction

It would appear from the previous discussion that the discursive boundaries of local origin narratives extend beyond the symbolic parameters of local hnulcho/adat to encompass the social and political domains within Amaya structured in terms of the State and the Church. This dissimulation of the logic and themes of local narratives within the 'utopian' spaces and relations of 'alternity' (Lewis 1989:79) offered by the State and the Church produces new contradictions and reveals old inconsistencies. Through the actions of certain mahno individuals, notably the lelechro lato, these discontinuities and disjunctures are gathered up and flattened out so as to create a mega-narrative of unity and continuity; a narrative which not only resonates with the symbols and values of *adat*, the State and the Church but also arranges them into a single, mutually

inclusive discursive form. It is precisely because this discourse incorporates and conflates all three domains that it has ontological and cosmological significance for all of the residents in the village.

Within the context of Amaya, therefore, local origin narratives, harnessed to the discourses generated by the State and the Church, constitute the primary frame of reference for the expression of social relations and the primary logic which informs social action. Given this situation then, what is the status of these narratives in contexts external to the village?

This final chapter, therefore, is concerned with the relevance of local origin narratives outside of the context of Amaya. In this connection, I briefly examine the reactions of residents from other villages on Damer and the responses of people from other islands in the archipelago to the logic disseminated in local origin narratives. The discussion concludes with an examination of the efforts of some uhro and ota individuals to 'escape' the influence of their own histories.

Rather than merely summarize, once more, the main arguments and findings presented in each chapter, I have chosen instead to conclude this thesis through the presentation of a number



of interesting and insightful vignettes. These ethnographic 'postcards' (Clifford 1988:182), I believe, succinctly gather up in a logical and coherent form many of the primary themes and issues discussed in the body of this work.

### Fighting With Words

Given the mutually-referential logic which informs and characterises relations between the State, the Church and *adat* in Amaya, it is perhaps fitting that I end this thesis with a story which relates to my experiences and certain events around the time I first commenced research in Amaya.

As the *Niaga VIII* (the government ship which services *Maluku Tenggara*) wound its way south from Ambon towards my final destination, the island of Damer, the crew of the ship, which consisted of Christians and Muslims from Java, Sumatra and north Sulawesi, regaled me with the vivid stories that they had heard about the "*perang*" ('fight') on the island. While these stories, at one level, reflected the ethno-centrism of the crew members and the development ethos of Indonesian nationalism, replete as they were with images of the savagery and barbarism of the 'natives', they also happened to refract, albeit in a somewhat distorted fashion, certain events and relations.

The villages of Amaya and Wulur had been feuding for a number of years over the extent of their adjoining territories. Indeed, Riedel reports back in 1886 that "there is always a lot of quarreling [on the island] since the foreigners from Romang want to annex the Wulur territory" (Riedel 1886:464). The 'foreigners' Riedel refers to here are the inhabitants of the related villages of Amaya, Kuai and Melu who, according to Riedel, originate from the island of Romang (see chapter four for more details on origins). It is not only the villages of Amaya and Wulur, however, which are in dispute. Wulur and the nearby village of Kehli are also fighting over territorial claims.

According to people in Amaya, the boundaries between all of the villages on the island are fixed by historical narratives and, as such, are not subject to re-definition. The historical narrative which fixes in space and time the position of the boundary between the domains of Wulur and Amaya is not the exclusive property of Amaya but is shared by both villages. According to this narrative, the original inhabitants of the southern area of the island consisted of two sisters and their brother. For reasons outlined in chapter four, the siblings parted. The brother established the village of Wulur while the sisters were eventually incorporated into Amaya. On their parting, they decided that the boundary between their respective territories would be

marked on the coast at the point where a river forked to form the beaches of Odaro and Parano. The brother claimed all the territory east of Odaro while the sisters claimed the land west of Parano. The extension of this boundary under the sea meant that the sisters owned the island of *Terbang Utara* while the brother claimed the larger island *Terbang Selatan*.

For a number of years now the people in Wulur have claimed that the boundary of their domain extends further west than that suggested in the narrative. The extension of this new boundary into the sea means that the island of *Terbang Utara* also falls within the area of land claimed by the people of Wulur. Their reasons for changing the boundary are largely economic. Both of the small islands off the southern coast of Damer are rich in *Trochus* shell which, during the research period, sold for around Rp.6,000 per kilogram<sup>1</sup>. Because of the distance of *Terbang Utara* from Amaya, people in the village rarely go there to collect *Trochus* shell, preferring instead to visit the island of Nus Leur for this purpose. The people in Wulur have largely exhausted the supply of *Trochus* shell found in the immediate vicinity of *Terbang Selatan* and have been taking *Trochus* shells from the abundant reefs surrounding *Terbang Utara*. Driven by the Chinese interests in the village, Wulur residents have also been logging trees from the area of land claimed by Amaya on the main island.

The people of Kehli, on the other hand, claim ownership of *Terbang Selatan* on the basis of their own historical narratives. They claim that the founders of Kehli originated from the island of Luang. These people were forced to leave Luang as a result of disputes over land. Before settling at Kehli, these ancestors stopped at the island of *Terbang Selatan* and spent many years living there. As a result of these historical connections, the people in Kehli argue that they also have a claim to the island owned by Wulur. Interestingly in this situation, the residents of Wulur resort to the legitimating power of origin narratives to shore up their claims.

In 1986 the dispute between Amaya and Wulur again reached one of the many climaxes in its long history. The people in Amaya had decided to resolve the dispute according to the dictates of 'tradition'. Armed with bows and arrows, spears and a bottle of palm spirit (arko or *sopi*) they went to Wulur and demanded of the people there that they sit down and drink palm spirit together. According to local beliefs, the party which is in the wrong, upon drinking the arko, would be struck down dead while those in the right would not be affected at all. Of course, the people in Wulur refused to partake of this ceremony. Offended by this refusal, the men of Amaya declared war on Wulur. The situation became so inflamed that the police from Kisar were called in to resolve

the matter.

Arriving by motor launch, the police (two men) were reluctant to take sides. Rather, they ordered the concerned parties to desist from hostilities and threatened them with more severe action if this order was not adhered to. Nothing, of course, was resolved.

Although the *Kepala Desa* of Amaya regularly sends members of the 'civil police' squad (*HANSIP*) in the village to patrol the territorial domain of the village, the poaching of marine products and timber from Mayawo land by people from Wulur still continues. Even on those occasions when the *HANSIP* actually come across a party of poachers nothing is done. The *Kepala Desa* is not empowered to discipline residents from other villages and the *HANSIP* members, most of whom are young men, are often too scared to confront men in possession of machetes and chain-saws.

In this context, the power of Mayawo origin narratives to order and inform social action is rendered impotent due to their dismissal, as a valid source for the legitimation of claims, by both the police and the indigenous and Chinese population of Wulur. For the police and the Chinese shopkeepers in Wulur, such narratives represent curious and somewhat fantastic stories. They are not regarded as

historical truths nor do they hold ontological or cosmological significance for these people. Rather, the police and the Chinese traders are operating according to their own systems of practice which combine the narrative themes and categories of Indonesian nationalism with the logic and values of modern capitalism.

For the indigenous residents of Wulur, the appropriateness and appropriation of local origin narratives is both contextual and relational. Thus, in their dispute with Kehli they ground their claims in the historical and immutable truths disseminated by local narratives. In their fight with Amaya, however, it is in their interests to dismiss local narratives as irrelevant and harness other, more powerful discourses to their cause.

For the people in Amaya, local origin narratives constitute their only frame of reference for the legitimation of territorial claims. It is interesting to note that the narrative which forms the basis of their claims is actually the origin narrative for Uma Newnuny - one of the 'houses' which, in the distant past, was incorporated into Amaya. The appropriation of this narrative to serve the interests of all the residents of Amaya reflects the encompassed/encompassing relationship which respectively characterizes relations between the various 'houses' in the village and the founding

'house' of Surlialy which, in itself, synecdochically symbolises the entire entity called Amaya.

While it is possible to shift the locus of meaning of local narratives in this way within the context of Amaya, outside of the village, however, other conditions and considerations come into play. Removed from their immediate referential context, local origin narratives represent just one of the many available discursive forms. Launched into this orbit of abstraction and competition, they circulate as empty forms subject to revision and rejection.

### Competing Narratives

For the people of Amaya, defending the territorial integrity of their domain has become a major struggle over the appropriation of local and national symbols. When not defending the territorial limits of their domain in the southern reaches of the island, the residents have to contend with poachers on the island of Nus Leur. The poachers in this case are largely from the numerous small islands south of Sulawesi, with the Butungese comprising the main offenders. From time to time there are boats from as far a field as Bali and from as nearby as the islands of Luang and Sermata. All three groups come to Nus Leur for different reasons; the

Butungese to poach Trocus shells and beche der mer, the Balinese boats to hunt the numerous turtles found on and around the island while the people from Luang and Sermata come to fish the reef waters.

Some of these boats come to the village first to ask permission from the village elders (i.e. the members of LMD) as to whether they can hunt turtles, fish, etc.. In these cases, the elders invariably agree although a payment of some sort is usually levied on the fishermen. To ensure payment, the village elders often request that the visitors leave behind the *surat jalan* ('travel pass') for their boat. Without this pass, the fishermen are unable to travel around freely.

The majority of Butungese boats, however, do not call into the village first. The products they poach are highly valued, relatively scarce and form the major source of cash income for people in the village. Thus, their requests for permission to take these products are usually denied. This doesn't deter these men, who have been known to go to the island anyway after they were refused permission. Many of the Butungese boats supplement their fishing expeditions by selling household wares to the villages they stop at. As they sail east from Butung they stop first at Nus Leur, where they fill up the hold of their ships with Trocus shells and



*tre pang*. They then sail on to the island of Damer, even stopping at Amaya to sell various household goods while marine products poached from Mayawo waters sit safely in their boats. News of these raids filter back to Amaya via the Chinese traders in Wulur who usually buy the *Trochus* shells from the Butungese.

During the dry season months, the village *HANSIP* members are regularly sent to patrol the waters surrounding Nus Leur. On a number of occasions they have come across parties of poachers but have been unable to do anything but scare them off. They certainly are not equipped to apprehend the offenders let alone convey all of them back to the village in the Johnson powered dug-out canoe which serves as their pursuit vessel. The *Kepala Desa* is not empowered to arrest the offenders nor mete out appropriate fines or punishments. Reporting incidents such as these to the police in Kisar is a futile business especially given the time it would take to communicate this news to Kisar and the uncertainty of an immediate response.

It is obvious that the maritime domains and rights defined by local *adat* are not recognised by the Butungese and other poachers. Based on interviews I conducted with Butungese fishermen who visited the village, it would appear that these men are operating according to a different logic than that

inscribed in local narratives. Instead, they invoke the discursive themes of Indonesian nationalism to legitimate their claims and actions. While to some extent they recognise the terrestrial claims of various groups and villages, they fully believe that the waters and seas of Indonesia are the property of the Indonesian Nation-State. As citizens of this 'community', they believe that they are, thus, entitled to fish and extract marine products anywhere within its boundaries. In this connection, a number of the men I spoke to cited the nationalistic slogan *satu nusa, satu bangsa, satu bahasa* ('one country, one people, one language') as qualification of their position.

The people in Amaya, on the other hand, base their territorial claims primarily upon the content of local origin narratives and traditional rights of usufruct defined by *adat*. In citing *adat* and local accounts of 'history' as the foundation for their claims, the people of Amaya enter into the same field of symbols and meaning as the Butungese fishermen.

This is because *adat* has been harnessed to the legislative vehicle of the Indonesian Nation-State. Under Indonesian legislation (in particular, The Agrarian Law of 1960), *adat*-defined rights of ownership in land, water and air are formally recognised. However, as Hooker (1978:114-117) points

out, *adat* law is subject to the jurisdiction, principles and national interests of the State. In effect, to quote Hooker, "adat is but part of the State system and exists by its fiat" (1978:115). Moreover, the legislation is sufficiently vague enough in its definition of what constitutes local *adat* law and how it is to be implemented and upheld to allow space for competing interpretations and conflicting practices.

Thus, in the conjuncture of Mayawo and Butungese beliefs, the symbols and rhetoric of Indonesian nationalism collide, imploding into a series of contradictions and oppositions. Caught in this maelstrom, *adat* and the 'histories' which inform it are forced to compete with the more seductive discourses generated by the Nation-State. Consequently, the Butungese and other fishermen continue to poach marine products from Nus Leur while local people are left to contemplate the efficacy of narrative and the inconsistencies of the legal system of the Indonesian Nation-State.

### The Bright Lights of Utopia

As the previous discussion indicates, the referential boundaries of local origin narratives and the spheres of influence of individuals empowered by these 'histories' are largely confined to the village itself. Outside of this

context, local 'histories' are forced to compete with other discursive forms. The seduction of these discourses is their perceived capacity to transcend context and contradiction through the images of unity and continuity. They circulate as utopian constructs, cast free of their generative moorings, within the imagined spaces represented by the possible and the ideal.

It is precisely because the logic disseminated in local origin narratives has no referential index in contexts external to the village that 'immigrants', uhro and ota individuals leave Amaya and take up residence in the provincial capital of Ambon and elsewhere in the archipelago.

As I indicated at the beginning of this thesis, a significant number of people who were born in Amaya now live elsewhere. Of these 81 adults, more than 20% of them are either uhro or ota individuals. As a proportion of the total population, the percentage of uhro and ota individuals living away from Amaya exceeds those who reside in the village by approximately 33%. Most of these people are employed by the government either as teachers, public servants or as crew on the government-run shipping lines. The three individuals who do not work within the public sector are respectively employed as a minister, factory worker and driver.

When I interviewed expatriate villagers in Ambon, including both mahno and non-mahno individuals, one of the primary explanations offered as to why they left Amaya was the lack of opportunities available to *SMA* ('senior high school') graduates in the village. Many of these people were sent to Ambon to complete their secondary education and never returned to the village. Through their limited contacts in Ambon, they were able to secure relatively minor government positions.

For the non-mahno expatriates, however, other reasons existed as to why they had left Amaya. A number of the uhro and ota individuals I spoke to indicated that they had come to Ambon to escape the stigmatization and disenfranchisement they had experienced in Amaya. They suggested that education, in particular, provided the means for them to leave the village and begin new lives elsewhere. To illustrate this point, they gave the example of an uhro man in Bandung who had been awarded a Master of Arts and was teaching at a large university.

Very few of the people I spoke to had ever returned to Amaya, even to visit relatives, since leaving the village a number of years ago. Many, however, stated that they planned to retire in the village and would use the knowledge they had gained while residing in Ambon to improve living conditions

as well as change the balance of power in the village. They believed that many *adat* practices in the village were "outdated" and belonged to a "previous time". Based on their recollections of village life and their experiences of city living, Amaya, in their thinking, "had not yet entered the twentieth century".

Certainly, living in Ambon or elsewhere in Indonesia meant that uhro and ota individuals could 'escape' the hierarchical ordering of social relations and social categories experienced in Amaya. These people are attracted to places like Ambon because these locations represent an alternative context for the construction of identity and the expression of social relations. In Ambon, new units of identification abound in which affiliation is predicated on quite different values and criteria than that experienced in Amaya. For the uhro and ota individuals who are employed by the government, the symbols of nationalism and the values of the State take on new meaning, new significance. In this respect, Ambon or, for that matter, any other place outside of Amaya exists in the imagination of these people as a utopian space; as a "field ... for alternative ways of living" (Ricoeur 1986:16).

It is at this point, however, that the imaginative function of utopia intersects with the integrative function of ideology to produce what is pathological in both. The

pathology of utopia, according to Ricoeur, is 'escape' while the pathology of ideology is 'dissimulation' (Ricoeur 1986:17). Indeed, one could argue that escape itself is a form of dissimulation; a dissimulation within the pretexts of utopia. As Ricoeur points out, the escapism of utopia "...avoids any obligation to come to grips with the real difficulties of a given society" (1986:17). Leaving Amaya for the 'bright lights' of Ambon does not resolve the ambiguities or contradictions experienced within the context of the village. Rather, it creates new disjunctures, new inconsistencies. In the context of Ambon or any other town or city in Indonesia, the trajectories of national ideology and individually imagined utopias collide in an explosion of simulation and dissimulation, conflict and contradiction.

Dislocated from the referential locus of their identity, uhro and ota individuals in Ambon and elsewhere are cast free of their cosmological and ontological moorings only to find new categories of exclusion, new orders of difference, new hierarchies of authority. While, in these urbanized settings, the classifications mahno, uhro and ota are rendered redundant, other systems of classification, based upon values valorised by the Nation-State and modern capitalism, operate. In this context, alternative narratives prevail which give precedence to nationalistic principles, State aspirations and certain ethnic origins. Largely regarded as *petani*

(i.e. 'farmers') from the underdeveloped 'back-blocks' of the province, expatriate residents of Amaya, whether they be mahno, uhro or ota, experience new forms of discrimination and differentiation within this imagined 'alternative' social order.

Ironically, in this context, the spectral light of utopia is cast back upon Amaya. Fully aware of the limitations of their new surroundings, uhro and ota expatriates in Ambon, in what constitutes a nostalgic (sic) de-construction of the future, now re-imagine the village as the preferred site for the exploration of the possible. The possible in this case, however, exists as that which is defined and circumscribed by the Nation-State.

### Narrative Boundaries, National Horizons

Unlike local 'histories', the symbols and discursive forms of the Nation-State are not confined to any one context or social group. Rather, the horizons of nationalism transcend local boundaries, whether they be spatial, symbolic or social. While, at the local level, the Nation-State may manifest itself in a plurality of forms and divergent practices, this diversity, however, is incorporated within a broader political and symbolic configuration. Regarded as the



ultimate 'transcendental symbol' (see Kapferer 1979:12), the Nation-State, at one level, subsumes the oppositions and conflicts generated in a particular context within its own consistent and unified form and, at another level, structures other contexts and relations in terms of its own thematic images. In some instances, these images may also resonate with indigenous forms and symbols.

This is certainly the case in Amaya, where the principles and policies of the Nation-State are construed as resounding with the logic disseminated in local origin narratives. Indeed, as I have stated elsewhere in the thesis, the Nation-State, the Church and local culture are, in Amaya, constructed and expressed as a mutually inclusive, self-referential configuration of values, relations and meanings. In this context, as Baudrillard (1983) suggests, the ontological and cosmological referentials no longer exist as fixed social coordinates but rebound and collide, like Brownian molecules, in the imaginary and hyper-real spaces created by this nexus. For those people disenfranchised by this conjuncture of symbolic and practical forms, there is no escape; only a voyage from the imaginative boundaries of Mayawo culture to the hyper-real horizons of a national culture.

## Conclusion

The three ethnographic vignettes presented above articulate many of the themes and issues which form the core of this thesis. In particular, they highlight the concepts of change and continuity, history and myth discussed in the opening parts of this work. They also point to the fact that, notwithstanding the physical remoteness of Amaya, the people of this village are connected in a plurality of ways to other spheres of influence, other modes of being and other constructions of the past. This point is forcefully introduced in the opening, 'setting' chapter of the thesis, where I delineate the general, contemporary configuration of connections and inter-connections obtaining between the people of Amaya, the government and its agencies, other cultural groups in the region, the Church, and various regional and national economic concerns.

However, as I argue in chapters two and four, Mayawo invent their culture not only within and against the contexts outlined above but also with respect to their historical experiences, perceptions and reminiscences, informed, on the one hand, by contact with other cultures, European colonialism, Christianity and, on the other hand, by their own conceptualisations and constructions of the past. It is only through an examination of the different but related

historical narratives engaged by people in Amaya that local perceptions and concepts of change and continuity can be understood in terms of their ascribed meanings and social articulation. In this regard, I argue that all constructions of the past need to be contextualized in order for them to be rendered both intelligible and meaningful.

The contextualisation of the various historical discourses circulating in Amaya forms the focus for the other chapters in this thesis. The transformations, values, and cultural juxtapositions identified and discussed in chapters two and four delineate the thematic and theoretical horizons for an examination of the constitution of social groups, the conceptualization of relatedness, and the categorization of difference within Amaya. The historical narratives analyzed in these two chapters are further contextualised through an examination of their articulation with the logic disseminated in the rhetorical structures and utopian discourses of the Nation-State and the Church. The conjunction of these primarily symbolic configurations creates, I argue, 'new spaces' within which the politics of identity are given form and expression. From this nexus emerge new symbols of opposition, new relations of asymmetry and new orders of hierarchy. Ideology, expressed as the utopian function of the imagination, serves to integrate and transcend the inconsistencies and contradictions generated by this

arrangement at the local level.

However, the articulation of local culture with the Nation-State and the Church is ultimately characterised by what is the pathological index of both ideology and the utopian imagination - dissimulation. Identity, in this self-reciprocal confluence of symbols, is constructed as a viscous component of the "dialectics of [the] imagination" (Ricoeur 1986:310), located, as it is, within the integrative boundaries of ideology and the fictional horizons of utopia.

#### NOTES

1. By mid-1989, the price of 'lola' had jumped to approximately Rp.10,000 per kilogram.

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