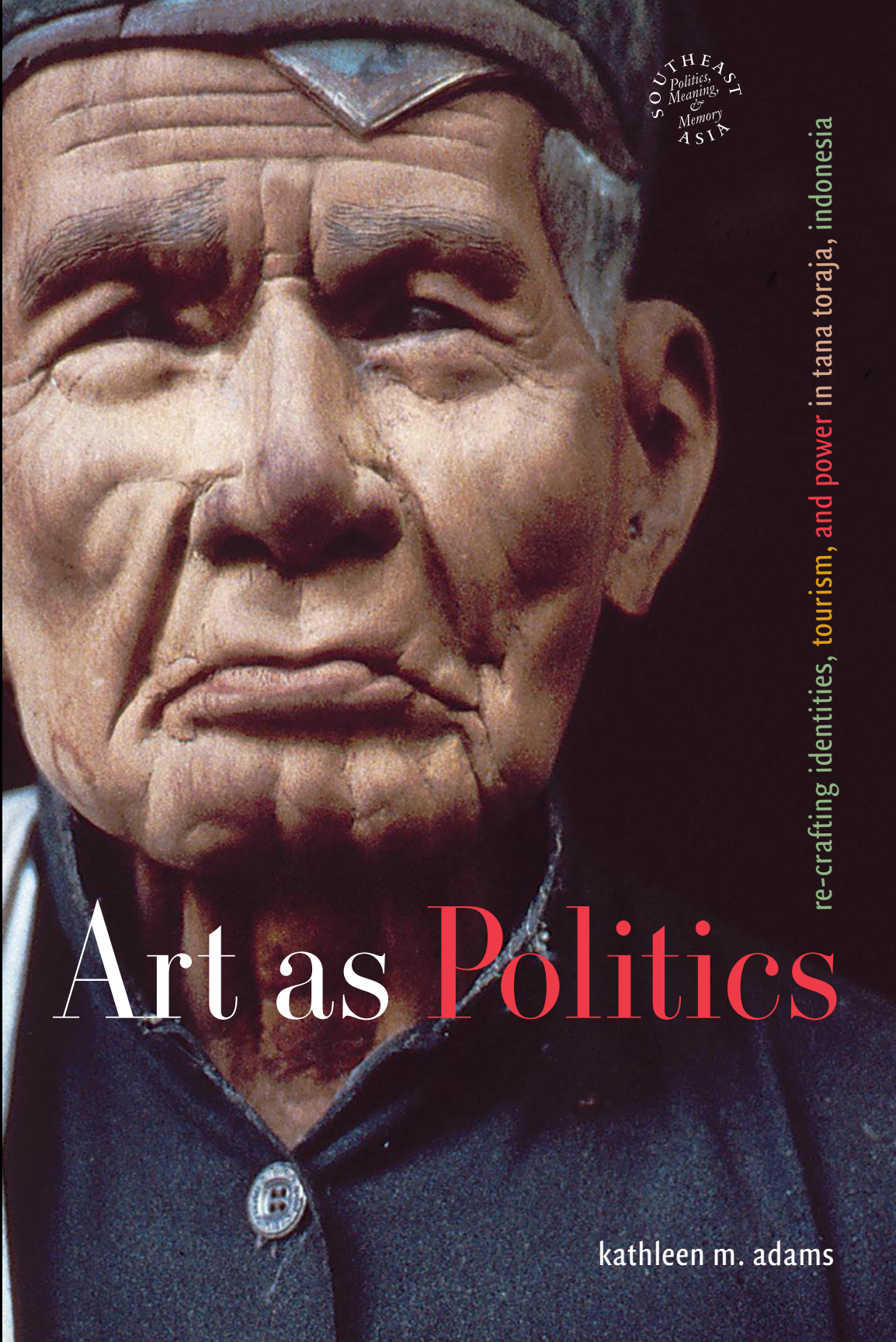

SOUTHEAST ASIA Politics, Meaning, & Memory

Art as Politics

re-crafting identities, tourism, and power in tana toraja, indonesia

kathleen m. adams

Art as Politics

Southeast Asia

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Re-Crafting Identities, Tourism, and Power in Tana Toraja, Indonesia

KATHLEEN M. ADAMS

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To the memory of

"Ne' Duma"

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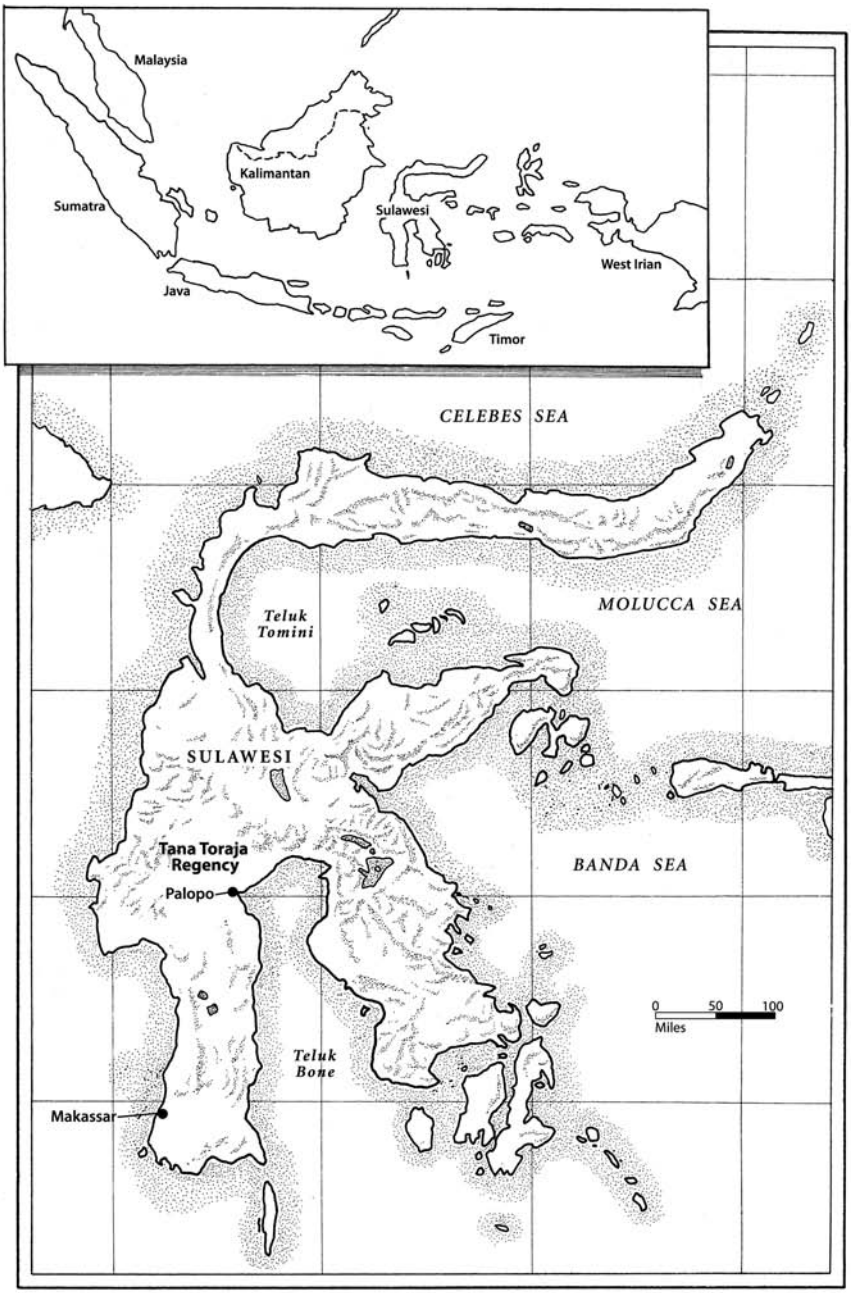


MAP 1. *Indonesia and Sulawesi. Map drawn by J. Akerman.*

1

Carvings, Christianity, and *CHiPs*

Some researchers are lured by distant, palm-fringed island beach communities; others are enticed by bustling urban centers; but in my case it was the high tropical mountains of South Sulawesi, Indonesia, homeland of an ethnic group known as the Sa'dan Toraja.[1] (See Map 1.) Ever since my first undergraduate literary encounters with Sa'dan Toraja "death cults" and ornately carved Toraja houses, I had been captivated by this Christian enclave ensconced in a predominantly Muslim nation. I soon discovered that I was not the only one intrigued by the Sa'dan Toraja, for after only a cursory review of the anthropological literature I learned that a dozen anthropologists and thousands of European tourists had preceded me to this once-remote region. Wondering how this outsider attention had affected Sa'dan Toraja self-conceptions, I set off for Tana Toraja Regency in April of 1984 as a young graduate student on a Fulbright Fellowship. My intention was to spend twenty months studying ethnic and artistic change among the Sa'dan Toraja, especially in the context of Christian conversion, modernization, and tourism. I did not realize at the time that those twenty months would extend into two decades of visits and research on topics ranging from Toraja carving and "touristification," to local engagements with nationalism, to current-day Toraja responses to the ongoing threat of religious and ethnic violence.

Prior to my first voyage to Indonesia, I had spent my early years of graduate school immersed in the anthropological literature on the Toraja and their Indonesian neighbors. From several months of anticipatory map-gazing, I knew that the Sa'dan Toraja were an Indonesian hinterland group, based in the rugged mountains near the center of the orchid-shaped island of Sulawesi, about 900 miles from Indonesia's Java-based capital of Jakarta. Of the hundreds of ethnic groups comprising the world's fourth largest nation,[2] the Sa'dan Toraja were a relatively small minority group, number-

ing just over 338,000. Their neighboring ethnic groups, the Bugis and Makassarese, were much larger and had long ago developed powerful Muslim kingdoms in the lowlands of southern Sulawesi. The Bugis were celebrated seafarers, with satellite settlements along the shores of many eastern Indonesian islands. In contrast, the landlocked Toraja resided in isolated mountaintop hamlets and were only fully unified in the twentieth century, following the arrival of Dutch colonial administration. In the months prior to my departure for Indonesia, I voraciously consumed anthropological, historical, and popular accounts of the Sa'dan Toraja and was anxious to begin my own study of Toraja transformations in the age of tourism and artistic commodification.

I had also devoted several years to learning Indonesian. In the summer of 1983, I made my first trip to Indonesia to study advanced Indonesian at a university on the island of Java. That experience offered me initial glimpses of how other Indonesians imagined the Sa'dan Toraja. My Javanese hosts and acquaintances frequently questioned me about my intentions to conduct research in Tana Toraja—as an anthropologist, didn't I know that there wasn't any culture (*kebudayaan,* BI) there? If I was truly interested in culture, these Javanese acquaintances advised me, I should stay on Java or go to Bali. Toraja was a backwards land of black magic and headhunters. Rather than rerouting me, however, their comments made me all the more curious about this denigrated "hinterland" people.

When I finally arrived in the South Sulawesi capital of Makassar[3] the following year, I was equipped with a thick bundle of research clearance letters, a portable typewriter (laptops were still virtually unknown), and a suitcase weighted with a few classic ethnographies and the token escapist novel recommended by one of my graduate advisors. Informally billed as the "Gateway to Torajaland" by English-language guidebooks, Makassar was, in 1984, a bustling, predominantly Muslim port city with an ever-growing core of modern government buildings and luxury hotels. Even in the narrow, dusty seaside streets of the old town, where one could momentarily imagine being transported back a hundred years to the days of Dutch colonialism, the contrast between the old and the new, between impoverishment and affluence, was palpable. As rickety bicycle bells chimed and car horns wailed, sweaty, bare-chested pedicab drivers threaded their way between polished black BMWs and exhaust-spewing Kijang[4] minivans stuffed with passengers. Eighteenth-century buildings, crumbling and shuttered, abutted the marble facades of boutiques selling knock-off

Gucci shoes and handbags. Glittering gold necklaces and enormous gem-encrusted rings beckoned from the windows of the largely Chinese-run jewelry shops. In the quieter late afternoons and evenings, beneath these barricaded windows a few lepers and tattered homeless families could be found dozing on cardboard boxes.

During the midday bustle, however, the uneven edges of the dusty streets and alleyways hosted a cross section of humanity: uniformed schoolgirls strolling arm in arm, harried-looking businessmen in starched batik shirts,[5] young boys zipping between doorways, wizened Malay men in frayed black-velvet *pici* (skull caps), and bespectacled Chinese grandmothers perched on wooden stools in front of family-run shops. Occasionally, the smell of frying fish and the beat of Indonesian pop music drifted from the residential second-story windows, while laundry fluttered on bamboo poles extended from balconies overhead. At certain street corners, pedestrians wove around clusters of vibrantly painted pedicabs that cradled slumbering drivers. At other intersections, makeshift vending stands displayed cigarettes, Indomie-brand instant noodles, small bundles of tea, sugar, MSG packets, and other daily necessities. Periodically, shouted greetings of "Hello, Mister!" would punctuate the hum of motorcycle engines and cassette music, announcing the emergence of foreign tourists from one of the dusty artifact shops or wandering through the tangle of cars, coconut vendors, bicycles, and motorcycles. In these earlier days, however, tourists exploring old-town Makassar were still somewhat of a rarity: most foreign travelers arrived in town on late afternoon flights, stayed the night at an outlying hotel, and boarded the bus to the Toraja highlands early the next morning, never venturing down to the bustling port and the older section of town.

Although dominated by Makassarese and Bugis, by 1984 Makassar already hosted a sizable and growing population of Toraja immigrants. Toraja adolescents and younger adults had come to pursue higher education or seek employment as domestic help, carpenters, drivers, and hotel workers. A variety of business and bureaucratic posts in Makassar were also held by more established Torajas.[6] While waiting for local research clearance, I spent my first week in Makassar interviewing urban Toraja scholars, chatting with teenaged Toraja maids in my hotel, and savoring every haphazard contact I made with these uplanders. After years of graduate school in drizzly Seattle, I also struggled to adjust to the exhausting and exhaust-filled equatorial heat and dust of Makassar. I quickly came to relish the Indone-

sian tradition of afternoon naps and took daily refuge under the creaking fan in my darkened budget hotel room. While fending off the persistent fleets of mosquitoes hovering overhead, I indulged in the luxury of escaping to the relatively familiar eighteenth-century English world of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park.* For that hour each afternoon, I reveled in not having to think and speak in Indonesian, ultimately emerging from my cinder-block room replenished and ready to face my late afternoon and early evening errands.

After siesta time, as the sinking sun began to cast scarlet streaks, and as the dusk air grew heavy with the smell of smoldering household trash, Makassar gradually awoke. While the chanting of the evening call to prayer echoed from mosque loudspeakers, seaside food vendors set up their tented carts, complete with wooden benches and tables. Slowly, the hum of traffic and urban life began to pick up again. Motorcycles (some bearing entire families) roared down the dusty main boulevards; pedicab drivers hauling passengers, packages, and crying infants navigated the side alleys; and groups of teenaged boys ambled arm in arm by the city's seaside esplanade, or gathered around the food vendors' benches, where they savored steaming bowls of *coto Makassar* (a soup made of cow stomach innards, considered a local specialty), chicken soup, and desserts of hand-ground ice drenched in magenta syrup and jade green tapioca balls.

At first I ventured out to enjoy the refreshing nightly sea breezes and local delicacies in the lantern-lit food stalls by the bay, but soon found myself overwhelmed by the attention I was attracting as a Western female by herself. Thereafter, I whiled away my remaining nights in Makassar at my economy hotel, installed at one of the rattan tables in the palm-filled central courtyard, catching up in my journal or scribbling postcards depicting weathered Bugis sailing vessels to my anxious family in California. In a region where many people consider solitude a misfortune, it soon became apparent that the hotel staff pitied me. When other Toraja-bound tourists stopped at the hotel, they herded them towards my wobbly table, suggesting that they join me for some syrupy tea. Conveniently, these impromptu teas resulted in my first set of tourist interviews. On slower evenings, some of the younger Toraja staff would loiter at my table in between their rounds of depositing acrid mosquito coils in front of each of the occupied guest rooms. We bantered about boyfriends, exchanged English and Toraja vocabulary words, and they indulgently fielded my endless questions about Toraja carving villages.

After procuring the necessary permits and introductory letters from provincial government, museum, and university officials, I was finally able to depart for upland South Sulawesi. Having spent almost two weeks in Makassar, I was impatient to begin my research in earnest. Early one morning I boarded a Toraja bus and began the eight-and-a-half-hour journey to the highlands. As the bus bounced northward along the coast, I surveyed my surroundings. In front of me, dangling from the driver's rearview mirror was a miniature carving of a traditional Toraja ancestral house *(tongkonan).*[7] About two inches tall, the three-dimensional wooden carving of a house on stilts was sloppily painted in black, red, yellow, and white and appeared to be a mass-produced tourist trinket. Even so, the trinket immediately brought to mind the photographs I had seen of Toraja houses embellished with elaborate geometric motifs and arched, sweeping roofs of layered bamboo. My eyes then wandered to the stickers that adorned the windshield. Most prominent was a palm-sized one of a fair-skinned Jesus Christ, arms extended around a cutaway rectangle displaying a faded black-and-white photograph of the driver. The image of Christ cradling the driver's portrait floated on a sky-blue background and the Indonesian

FIGURE 1. *A Toraja bus with a miniature carved* tongkonan *in the windshield.*

inscription at the bottom of the sticker read "My life is in your hands, Jesus" (*Hidupku di tanganmu Yesus,* BI). Next to it a sticker displayed the bold letters *"CHiPs"* over a grinning photograph of Hollywood actor Eric Estrada.[8]

As I was to learn, these three embellishments mirrored three enduring themes in contemporary Toraja identity—themes that form the core of this book. The miniature carving of the *tongkonan* embodies the first aspect of Toraja identity: Toraja traditions, ritual, descent, and rank generally center on the ancestral home. Moreover, the term *tongkonan* alludes not only to a physical structure, but to the entire kinship group tied to the building's founding ancestor. In recent years images of the *tongkonan* have been replicated in guidebooks, postcards, and trinkets, and the structure has been heralded as the quintessential symbol of Toraja ethnicity. Given the current-day propagation of *tongkonan* imagery, I tend, for the sake of simplicity, to use the term *tongkonan* to refer to this sort of architectural structure, rather than as an exclusive term for a traditional edifice inseparable from a kin group. However, as we shall see, even in its newer forms, the *tongkonan* is fundamentally linked to Toraja identity and, in the context of the dramatic changes that have transpired over the past two decades, the *tongkonan* has become a focal point for new statements about their place in the region and the world at large.

The Jesus sticker evokes the second key aspect of contemporary Toraja identity: Christianity. The Dutch Gereformeerde Zendingsbond, an independent missionary society within the Protestant Church,[9] began proselytizing activities in the Sa'dan Toraja region in 1913. As Hetty Nooy-Palm observed, "[a]lthough in 1950 less than 10% of the population had become Christians, the influence of the mission, because of its leading role in education and health services, was far in excess of what this statistic might suggest" (1979:9). Despite a slow conversion rate initially, the number of Torajas embracing Christianity jumped in the 1940s and again in the 1960s.[10] By 1983, when I was planning my first trip to Tana Toraja, roughly 80 percent of the Toraja residing in Tana Toraja Regency identified themselves as Christians.[11] For many, Christian ideology and idiom form an integral dimension of Toraja identity. Moreover, Torajas' reputation as a Christian enclave in a predominantly Muslim country is firmly engraved in the minds of most Indonesians.[12] With almost 90 percent of Indonesia's population identifying with the Islamic faith, and in the wake of recent Muslim-Christian violence in the nearby Poso region as well as church bombings

in Makassar, most Torajas are conscious of their vulnerability as a Christian minority.

Finally, the *CHiPs* sticker suggests the third major theme in Toraja identity: a growing orientation towards the national and international world. Since the 1960s, as the Sa'dan Toraja population grew and the land available for farming dwindled,[13] the lack of economic opportunities in the highlands began to drive some Torajas to seek wage labor away from the homeland, a process known in Indonesia as *merantau* (BI). Widespread in Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, *merantau* involves temporarily leaving one's homeland to seek fortune and prestige in new locales.[14] *Merantau* is perhaps the most vital fact of contemporary life in Toraja villages.[15] Today, many Torajas work for multinational mining, lumber, and oil companies in Kalimantan, West Papua, and Malaysia. Especially for poorer, lower-status Toraja migrants, the possibility of transforming cash wages earned in these distant locales into new status in the homeland has been particularly alluring. Returning periodically to the homeland for funerals and prolonged visits, these migrant Torajas often invest their wages in ritual displays, consumer goods, and refurbished homes that will bolster their local prestige. Moreover, they also bring home tastes, values, and experiences from the wider world.

Rural electrification programs, begun in the 1980s, in tandem with money from out-migration, cash cropping, and tourism, have made television sets commonplace in Toraja villages. Most nights, in 1984 and 1985, as dusk settled on the rural rice-farming and carving hamlet in which I lived, villagers crowded my Toraja host family's living room floor in front of the only TV in the hamlet, to watch national Indonesian programming and American shows, such as the then-popular *CHiPs, Little House on the Prairie,* and *The Brady Bunch.* By the mid-1990s, most village households had their own television sets and my occasional evening walks along country roads in Tana Toraja were illuminated by the distinctive blue glow flickering through the slatted windows of rural homes. While much government programming was designed to reinforce nationalist sensibilities, television shows prompted a variety of reflections and conversations among the audience. Unlike most U.S. citizens, who watch American-made programming almost exclusively, Toraja families were offered ample visions of foreign cultures via the imported dramas and situation comedies. American and Australian shows depicting "modern" urban family life, Indonesian cultural programs showcasing the dances and traditions of different ethnic

groups, MTV, and nightly news reports of religious and ethnic tensions in and beyond Indonesia further nourished Torajas' ongoing reflections on their ethnic, national, religious, rank, and class identities, as we shall see in future chapters.

Growing numbers of young Torajas also became increasingly exposed to national Indonesian values as a result of Indonesia's growing emphasis on compulsory education in the 1980s and 1990s.[16] Required curriculum in citizenship and Indonesian history actively reinforced the already sturdy allegiance of Toraja youth to the nation.[17] Younger school-aged village children I knew also looked forward to periodic scouting events. These events featured weekend athletic activities, community development service projects, and various educational and character-building events. Although part of the international scouting movement, the mission of the Indonesian scouting organization is explicitly oriented towards nation-building: scouting education is "directed towards a new, just, peaceful and prosperous Indonesian community based on the National ideology."[18]

Torajas' ongoing reassessments of their relations to the nation and the world were fueled not only by television, classroom lessons, and scouting exercises, but also through direct encounters with foreign tourists. In the 1980s and 1990s, mounting numbers of foreign tourists arrived in Tana Toraja Regency, toting not only tour books and cameras, but images of who the Toraja were supposed to be. Those Toraja who worked in the tourist sector or resided in the more frequently visited areas of the Sa'dan River valley were increasingly obliged to grapple with these tourism-based images of their identity, images which did not always mesh with their own self-conceptions.

INVESTIGATING IDENTITY

This book is broadly concerned with the ways in which the Toraja have been negotiating three dimensions of identity (drawn from indigenous traditions, derived from Christianity, and culled from increasing engagement with the national and international worlds) over the past two decades, both for themselves and for outsiders. The book will explore the dynamics of Toraja identity and the place of artistic imagery in conveying different conceptions of that identity. I am interested in examining the ways in which Toraja individuals and groups draw on their artistic objects in order to proj-

ect particular dimensions of their identity. I am further interested in how various Toraja individuals draw on these artistic objects, and narratives about them, to navigate their relationships with others. Such relationships, as I will illustrate, are often enmeshed in social inequalities. Central to Toraja discussions and articulations of meanings of their artistic symbols are ideas about interpersonal relationships, be they between humans and the divine, humans and the environment, elite Torajas and descendants of slaves, Christian Torajas and their Muslim neighbors, or relationships between hinterland Toraja and their nation. In short, this book explores how art is entwined with what some have termed "identity politics," and with how art objects can constitute sites for the articulation and negotiation of various hierarchical identities and relations.[19] My emphasis here is not so much on art objects and the marketplace as it is on the exercise of meaning. Specifically, I am interested in exploring how different groups attempt to exercise control over the shifting significance of key objects in Toraja culture.

My perspective on the intersections between art, identity, and the rise and decline of tourism in Tana Toraja is grounded in many years of field research in the highlands. During my initial twenty-month research period (1984–1985) and on subsequent visits (in 1987, 1989, 1991, 1995, 1996, and 1998) I resided with a Toraja family and drew on the traditional anthropological technique of participant observation. I apprenticed myself to a respected carver, attended and documented Toraja rituals, local government and tourism planning meetings, Toraja Church functions, tourist presentations, and local guide training sessions. I also conducted open-ended interviews with carvers, souvenir sellers, local community leaders, church officials, tourism industry figures, hoteliers, guides, and tourists.[20]

During the earlier phases of my research, my primary language of inquiry was Indonesian. In Tana Toraja, I studied the Sa'dan Toraja language[21] with a patient Rantepao high school teacher who had previously tutored various foreign missionaries. My Toraja host father also offered me tips and translations of *basa to minaa,* the high Toraja form of speech used by *aluk to dolo* (Toraja traditional religion) priests in their rites. Despite these language lessons, my fluency was greater in Indonesian. Although my later interviews were peppered with Sa'dan Toraja phrases and expressions, I still favored the national language. Fortunately, with the exception of the very elderly, by the 1980s most Torajas were bilingual. Moreover, Torajas tended to use the Indonesian language in more formal settings, such as

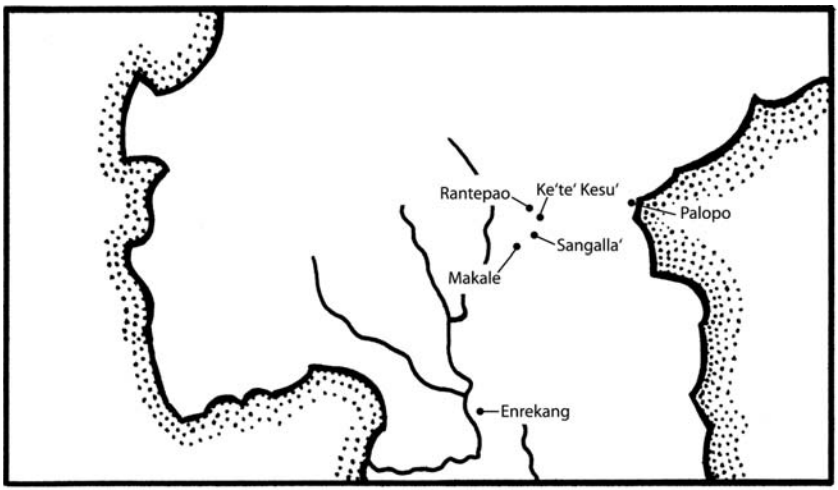
government meetings, church planning gatherings, and when members of other ethnic groups were present. Since the realms I was researching (tourism, church and government planning, interethnic encounters, etc.) involved spending time in these kinds of settings, interactions were generally in Indonesian. All italicized terms in the book are Sa'dan Toraja, unless they are followed by the abbreviation "BI," designating Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language).

Between participant observation and the tireless efforts of my Toraja friends and teachers (who for twenty years have attempted to school me in what it means to be Sa'dan Toraja in contemporary Indonesia), the images I originally had of Toraja identity gradually eroded. These preconceptions were replaced by an appreciation of the complexity and diversity of the "Sa'dan Toraja." A Toraja saying underscores this theme of local cultural diversity: "Each village has its own ritual, each has its way of tearing the banana leaf" *(Pantan tondok pantan aluk, pantan senga' serekan bane).* As this adage conveys, Toraja ritual and behavioral practices are far from uniform. Taking this diversity of Toraja experiences and lifeways into account, I chose to focus on the heavily touristed valley regions of subdistricts Sanggalangi' and Rantepao in the 1980s and 1990s (see Map 2), an area that had been studied prior to the advent of tourism by the Dutch anthropologist Hetty Nooy-Palm. This area was a logical choice, as I was particularly interested in those Toraja who constitute what Andrew Causey (2003) has termed "tourates," local peoples whose lives are touched by or entwined with tourism.[22] With the exception of a few articles exploring tourism and its ramifications in the Toraja highlands (cf. K. M. Adams 1993, 1995; Crystal 1977; Volkman 1990; Yamashita 1994), Toraja tourates have not yet received focused attention. As these people are frequently involved in projecting to outsiders the imagery of what constitutes the broader category of "the Toraja," they merit closer attention.

Moreover, despite an array of scholarly publications on various dimensions of Sa'dan Toraja life and beliefs, the interrelations between Toraja material culture and identity politics remain underexplored.[23] This book addresses how, with the rise and fall of tourism and in the current shadow of interreligious violence, Toraja art has operated as a vehicle for articulating and navigating both internal and external relationships. My point of departure in this book is Robert Plant Armstrong's (1971) conception of art as an "affecting presence." As Armstrong observed, through the stories they embody, by way of their repeated appearances at significant events, or via

their associations with particular cultural codes, certain material objects become imbued with emotive force. I suggest here that precisely because they are "affecting presences," these objects (and I would broaden this to cultural displays) become important to people's identities. Not only do people from different ethnic, rank, class, or national backgrounds imbue the same object or cultural display with different meanings, but members of the same group can also "appreciate" the same object in varied ways. Art objects, therefore, can be ambiguous and multivalent: they are capable of carrying different meanings for different people. Furthermore, as peoples' material circumstances and aspirations shift, or as new political and cultural scenarios emerge, the meanings of and peoples' sensibilities to these objects shift as well. Often, as this book illustrates, these emotionally charged art objects and cultural displays become sites of struggle, with different groups attempting to exercise control over their changing meanings. I argue that by their very ability to maintain ambiguity and carry multiple meanings, the arts are central to intergroup sensibilities and struggles, and may surreptitiously effect changes in intergroup perceptions.

I will revisit these themes, but let me first return to that bus journey to the Sulawesi highlands, when I first got a glimpse of Toraja sensibilities concerning their relationships to others, and of how the presence of those "others" sparked new reflections on what constitutes Toraja identity.



MAP 2. *Tana Toraja and Upland South Sulawesi. Map drawn by C. Thresher.*

IMAGES OF OUTSIDERS' IDENTITIES

The lurching Toraja bus continued its journey north, crossing fertile lowland rice fields dotted with wooden Bugis houses raised on stilts. At Pare Pare, a tin-roofed Bugis harbor town, the bus left the coast and began its winding climb inland towards the highlands. We roared through scorched grassy foothills, past picturesque villages and scattered rice fields, palm groves, and plots planted with corn and tapioca. All along the road, bananas, papaya, and jackfruit grew in luxuriant profusion. At various points, wooden stalls piled with fruit and vegetables lined the thoroughfare, where travelers stopped to buy treats for the families they were visiting. We were soon traversing an inland plain, where I caught glimpses of women sitting in the shade under Bugis platform houses, weaving silken sarongs on backstrap looms. Our bus passed through two larger Bugis towns, Rappang and Enrekang, where small shops, mosques, and *pesantren*s (BI; Islamic religious schools) fringed tidy tree-lined streets.

As we left Enrekang, the road narrowed and the bus began to slowly wind its way upward into the mountains. Following the twists and turns of the Salu Mataallo River, we bounced through potholes and inched past muddy stretches of the road where the wet-season rains had swept away much of the pavement. We climbed higher into the limestone cliffs, still following the river, now racing with whitewater in the canyon far beneath us. Periodically, the bus stopped to deposit passengers near clusters of weathered wooden houses that seemed to cling to the cliff sides, just inches from the sheer ravine. In some of these villages, sturdy, sarong-clad women bearing bananas or baskets of palm-sugar sweets and sticky rice treats flocked to the bus, making speedy transactions through the open windows. At other villages, primary school children smartly turned out in starched blue-and-white uniforms waved to our bus from narrow cliffside footpaths above us. As we wound our way ever upward, alongside wind-whipped precipices that seemed inhospitable to anything but mountain goats, I felt as though I were turning the pages of a book of Chinese paintings—around each bend was a view even more spectacular than the last.[24]

As the terrain grew more rugged and the air cooled, the Toraja passengers became livelier. Ever since our departure from Makassar, I could decode murmurings about "that young white *turis* who, poor thing, is traveling alone." Behind me, a dignified-looking Toraja man was explaining to his elderly, betel-nut chewing companion why it was that tourists came to

Tana Toraja: "They come to see our traditions. Tana Toraja is not the same as their area—we have *aluk* (Toraja traditional religion), something they don't have." To this someone added, "Yes, we're known abroad because of our traditions (*adat,* BI[25]), graves, and houses. They say our countryside is pretty, too, eh?" A gregarious middle-aged Toraja woman offered her opinion: "Also because we're good-hearted people. Toraja is safe—if tourists walk around, we don't pester them. But if they go to Bugis lands, they're sure to be bothered." I couldn't help smiling at this last comment, reflecting on my evenings of self-imposed confinement in my Makassar hotel.

Eavesdropping on these speculations about the touristic appeal of their homeland, I was struck by how the Toraja had hit upon many of the reasons that Tana Toraja had appealed to me as a research site.[26] Although I had many scholarly motives for selecting the Tana Toraja highlands, I, too, was drawn by the spectacular tour book imagery of artfully constructed traditional houses embellished with intricate geometric motifs. The photographs I had seen of limestone cliffs studded with tombs and balconies bearing haunting carved effigies of the dead had intrigued me, as had ethnographic reports describing elaborate, pageantry-filled funeral rituals which entailed months and even years of planning. Coming from a culture that avoided the topic of death, I was enchanted by the prospect of living in a place where people apparently recognized and accepted death as yet another phase of life, to be embraced and even celebrated. The postcard images of the Toraja highland's spectacular scenery, rugged and majestic mountains with lushly terraced wet rice fields and bamboo groves, and the image of Tana Toraja as a relatively safe destination for a female anthropologist working alone, were the icing on the cake for me. Like the tourists who were drawn to Tana Toraja, I, too, had been at least partially mobilized by a set of place images already well on their way to being commodified. Unlike the tourists, however, I was interested not only in understanding the Sa'dan Toraja, but also in studying tourists (just as the Torajas on my bus appeared to be doing).

Even in 1984, tourists were hardly foreign to the Toraja. Both international and domestic tourism to Tana Toraja had begun in earnest a few decades prior to my arrival. Tourism in South Sulawesi cannot be disentangled from the history of ethnic and religious relations on the island. During the 1950s and 1960s, tourists were rare in the Sulawesi highlands: Bugis-Makassarese Muslim rebellions in South Sulawesi, coupled with poor roads, made travel to the Christianized Sa'dan Toraja region challeng-

ing and sometimes dangerous.[27] It was not until the late 1960s, after the South Sulawesi Muslim insurrections were quashed, that the first adventurer-tourists began to travel to Tana Toraja (Crystal 1977). Hiring cars and drivers in Makassar, these intrepid travelers embarked on twelve- to fourteen-hour journeys to the highlands in search of people who had been described by Bugis and Makassarese hired drivers as "pagans" who "celebrate death" with "funeral parties."[28]

The trickle of visitors swelled in the early 1970s when Toraja entrepreneurs, exposed to Bali's touristic success,[29] began to recognize the potential of their homeland. Several of these local entrepreneurs were soon producing articles and guidebooks about Sa'dan Toraja culture (for example, Marampa' 1974 [1970], Salombe' 1972). Highlighting the Toraja traditional houses, rice barns, funeral rituals, and carved wooden effigies of the dead, as well as the area's spectacular natural beauty, these modest booklets quickly found an audience. By 1972 the Indonesian Directorate General of Tourism issued a master plan for developing the Indonesian tourist industry, citing Tana Toraja as one of the major target areas.[30] The following year a European TV broadcast of a documentary produced by Ringo Starr featured a Toraja aristocrat's funeral ritual and drew the attention of still more off-the-beaten-track tourists.[31]

By 1974 the Indonesian government issued its Second Five Year Plan, which actively advocated the promotion of outer island destinations, and its implementation ultimately prompted still more travel to the Toraja highlands. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, a growing body of touristic and anthropological literature about the Sa'dan Toraja further increased the flow of tourists. Tana Toraja fully blossomed in the national (and international) touristic consciousness in 1984, while I was conducting my fieldwork. At this time, Joop Ave, then Indonesia's director general of tourism, declared Tana Toraja as the "touristic *primadona* of South Sulawesi" and Makassar the "Gateway to Tana Toraja."[32] These declarations came just a few years after an image of traditional Toraja architecture appeared on Indonesia's commonly used 5,000-rupiah banknote.[33] For many Torajas I encountered, these events were sources of tremendous ethnic pride, signaling a long-awaited boost in their cultural currency.

In the mid-1980s, when mass tourism was thriving, many Torajas had begun to construct elaborate and often quite insightful explanations for the tourist pilgrimages to their land. Intrinsic to these explanations were reassessments of their own culture's merits vis-à-vis the cultures of out-

siders.[34] A number of the local elders I spoke with surmised that foreigners came to Toraja seeking traditions (*adat,* BI) that were somehow lacking in their own cultures. For some rural Torajas I encountered in the 1980s, the fact that European voyagers traveled thousands of miles to see their culture suggested that they might have something Europeans envy, something worthy of pride. As one well-traveled Rantepao intellectual told me:

> I can see now that Tana Toraja is a Shangri-la, although I didn't know this when I was younger. I just wanted to get out, to go to Europe and become a man of the world. But now the Europeans are coming here. They have heard that our culture and land are like no others.

Another Toraja elder proudly observed, "Tourists are discovering the truth of the Toraja saying 'Once you have drunk the waters of the Sa'dan River, no other water satisfies you.'"[35]

In these comments we glimpse how camera-clicking European audiences at Toraja rituals not only provided Toraja individuals with a new framework for viewing and evaluating their own way of life, but also stimulated them to rediscover their own cultural riches.[36] After years of being denigrated by other Indonesian ethnic groups as primitive and lacking in culture, politically savvy Toraja began embracing tourist interest in them, using touristic celebrations of their culture to validate their ethnicity and to combat negative Indonesian representations. They hoped their efforts would ultimately reposition their group in the national hierarchy of ethnic groups. As Javanese, Sumatrans, and other Indonesians also began flocking to Tana Toraja in the 1980s and 1990s, Toraja ethnic pride flourished.

By the 1990s Tana Toraja's status as Sulawesi's touristic *primadona* was undeniable. Whereas in 1972 only 650 foreigners journeyed to Tana Toraja Regency, by the mid-1990s over 230,000 tourists were traveling to Tana Toraja annually.[37] (See Table 1.) However, in 1998, when Indonesia plunged into a period of political and economic unrest, only 24,626 foreign tourists and 38,187 domestic tourists visited the region. In the post–September 11th world, ongoing Muslim-Christian violence in certain areas of Indonesia and the infamous October 2002 Bali discotheque bombing took a further toll on Toraja tourism.[38]

The plummet in tourist visits has been potentially ruinous for the many Torajas tethered to tourism. In the 1980s and 1990s, livelihoods as tourist trinket carvers, tour bus drivers, waiters, and chambermaids seemed secure and enabled growing numbers of younger Torajas to remain in their

TABLE 1 Tourist Arrivals in Tana Toraja

Year	Foreign Tourists	Domestic Tourists	Total
1970	16	NA	NA
1971	59	NA	NA
1972	650	NA	NA
1973	1,048	NA	NA
1974	1,707	5,891	7,598
1975	3,229	2,159	5,388
1976	3,660	5,273	8,933
1977	5,293	11,693	16,986
1978	5,479	31,001	36,480
1979	5,290	15,986	21,276
1980	6,835	17,363	24,198
1981	15,746	33,629	49,375
1982	7,761	40,062	47,823
1983	9,007	57,957	66,964
1984	12,547	84,338	96,885
1985	15,325	70,987	82,312
1986	19,726	113,590	133,316
1987	22,108	168,985	191,903
1988	25,308	154,865	180,173
1989	32,566	152,927	185,493
1990	39,700	171,689	211,389
1991	40,695	174,542	215,237
1992	46,799	171,172	217,971
1993	51,259	195,544	246,803
1994	56,565	204,987	261,552
1995	59,388	176,849	236,237
1996	42,123	32,930	75,053
1997	41,586	42,578	84,164
1998	22,624	30,597	53,221
1999	30,397	31,415	61,812
2000	37,805	32,207	70,012
2001	37,142	34,218	71,360
2002	30,058	32,638	62,696
2003	15,385	27,520	42,905
2004	5,762	21,802	27,564

Sources: Office of Tourism (1970–1989) and Office of Statistics (1990–2004), Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Compiled with the assistance of Gerard Bergman.

Note: The data varied between offices. Domestic figures may be inflated due to inclusion of Torajas returning for ritual events.

homeland, but today this is no longer the case. Some Torajas are now beginning a new outward wave of migration, seeking employment in the mining and transport industries on distant islands, while others are turning their energies to local markets, attempting to revitalize domestic tourism, carving functional items for Indonesian consumers, and re-embarking on subsistence farming.[39] For those tourism entrepreneurs remaining in the once tourist-dominated main Toraja town of Rantepao in the early 2000s, where shuttered hotels, abandoned Internet cafes, and dusty tourist shops recall more prosperous days, the return of tourist swarms remains a vibrant fantasy that continues to animate local actors and fuel relationships with outsiders. The remaining hoteliers in Rantepao routinely urge their guests to publicize Tana Toraja when back in their homelands, and some of the once-active local guides relay periodic messages to me and others with ties to Tana Toraja, notifying us that Toraja is "safe" and gently entreating us to send them customers.[40]

Much of the early literature on tourism tended to make global generalizations about tourism's impact, hailing it as a positive force or deriding it as a destructive industry prone to producing sociocultural and environmental devastation (Greenwood 1978; Nash 1978).[41] Indeed, a visitor might point to the Toraja dance performers and shoddily crafted *tongkonan* trinkets at the Makassar Golden Hotel and bemoan the touristic commercialization of traditional culture. But another visitor might cite Tana Toraja's paved roads and enhanced telecommunications as evidence of tourism's benefits. However, as researchers have more recently emphasized, tourism is neither uniformly a blessing nor blight.[42] Rather, it is a complex and capricious industry, part and parcel of globalization, with multiple ramifications and widely variable implications for different members of the same community. Moreover, in approaching tourism as an outside force striking a culture, earlier researchers tended to overlook the ways in which tourism had become a part of the local culture.[43] In keeping with these concerns, rather than spotlighting the "good," the "bad," or the "ugly" impacts of tourism, this book explores the ways in which tourism and tourist arts are entwined with cultural identity and with the crafting of new sensibilities about a local community's place in the world.

In addition to tourists, the Bugis and Makassarese comprise categories of outsiders with whom Torajas frequently contrast themselves. For centuries Toraja identity has been juxtaposed with that of their lowland Muslim Bugis and Makassarese neighbors. Toraja mythology and history embody

a great deal of ambivalence towards these peoples. While occasional cooperation, intermarriage, and trade occurred between highland and lowland elites, there were also terrifying periods of Bugis-Makassarese slave raiding and invasion. Bigalke (1981, 1983, 2005) is careful to underscore that the relationship between these groups was much more subtle than one of lowlander exploitation of highlanders, demonstrating that the coffee and slave trades were often based on a collaboration between lowland and highland elites. Many contemporary Torajas, however, view Muslim lowlander groups as the historic raiders and themselves as the prey. Such conceptualizations were probably cemented in the early years of Indonesian independence when a Muslim rebellion was waged in South Sulawesi between 1952 and 1965.[44] The resulting violence and unrest in the province, as well as rumors of forced conversions to Islam in nearby areas, greatly intensified Christian Torajas' fear and suspicion of all lowlander Muslims.

As my Toraja bus companions' comments indicated, tourism in the 1980s and 1990s constituted a new arena for this age-old ethnic rivalry. Whereas in the past the sought-after resources were Toraja coffee and slaves, today they are tourists. For centuries the Bugis dominated the coastal areas, controlling Toraja access to the outside world. Tourism, however, brought with it the potential to shift this balance of power. Torajas' newfound touristic celebrity appeared to be earning them an esteemed position in the Indonesian hierarchy of ethnic groups. As my Toraja friends noted gleefully in 1984 and 1985, the word Toraja (not Bugis or Makassarese) was now emblazoned on tourist maps of the region. Moreover, their designation as South Sulawesi's touristic *primadona* symbolically demoted the Bugis-Makassarese city of Makassar to the status of a doorway. Most important of all, the outside world was snubbing their Muslim rivals, preferring to visit the Toraja highlands. Likewise, my bus companions proudly declared that foreign tourists appreciate that Torajas, in contrast to Bugis and Makassarese, are not "harassers," which suggests emergent sensibilities about ethnicity. Implicit in this claim is the novel idea that an apt new yardstick for measuring ethnic superiority is the host groups' behavior vis-à-vis tourists.

Themes of rivalry between Torajas and their Bugis and Makassarese neighbors emerge not only in the context of tourism but also in various Toraja interpretations and manipulations of the recent anthropological fascination with their culture. As I soon discovered, anthropologists (like tourists, missionaries, and Buginese) have their own place in the Toraja typology of outsiders. That anthropologists constitute another category of

outsiders became clear to me on that first jostling bus, when I finally began to engage in conversation with my fellow passengers. I had been eavesdropping for some time as several older men mercilessly teased the quiet Toraja student sitting next to me about his "tourist girlfriend" and the "long-nosed" children we would produce. As he squirmed and the old men chortled, I realized it was time to reveal that I was neither a *"turis"* nor a girlfriend, but a graduate student coming to conduct research on Toraja culture. Nervously clearing my throat, I caught the attention of the men across the aisle and chirped in an awkward mixture of Indonesian and Torajan, "I'm *not* here for romance or relaxation. I'm here to study Toraja traditions."

After an awkward moment of recovery, one older Toraja man buoyantly declared, "Oh, she's an anthropologist!" Another woman called out to those sitting nearby, "She can understand us. . . ." The aisle next to me suddenly filled with people offering clove cigarettes and commentary. "You anthropologists are wise to come here instead of staying with the Bugis. Their culture is not so interesting, and besides, they're not to be trusted. . . . There is a lot of culture in Tana Toraja—it is good you came here."

This flood of comments soon had me musing about anthropologists as a prestige commodity in Tana Toraja. These passing thoughts were interrupted by a woman who began to tell me about the anthropologist who had once lived in her village. Was I going to study Toraja language, generously distribute gifts, take pages of notes at funeral rituals, and ask lots of questions about whether she could marry her mother's brother's son, as he had done? Was I going to go home afterwards and write a book? Would they be able to read it? This triggered additional tales of anthropologists who had lived in the ancestral villages of other passengers on the bus. It was evident that many had had either direct or indirect encounters with anthropologists. For these Toraja, "anthropologists" (*anthropolog* or *ahli anthropologi,* BI) constituted a well-elaborated category of outsiders with a specific set of interests. Just as anthropologists had been studying Torajas, it seemed that Torajas had been studying anthropologists.

That Torajas also study the anthropological images of themselves was underscored by the query of the serious-faced college student sitting next to me. Ignoring the banter about the misadventures, escapades, and accomplishments of various anthropologists in Tana Toraja, he asked me intently, "Why are there so many anthropologists coming here? Anthropologists study primitive people, don't they? Are we Toraja *primitive*?" I shifted awk-

wardly in my seat as it dawned on me that the various images sculpted and perpetuated by anthropologists helped to construct some of the most potent and enduring portraits of Toraja ethnic identity. Anthropologists' audiences (and critics) are not only colleagues and students in distant universities, but also the people whose communities we study. Our images and the stereotypes surrounding our professional concerns are invariably consumed, digested, reworked, and at times rejected by those whose lives we strive to understand.[45]

Years later the image of that student still reverberates in my mind, especially in those moments when I find myself staring blankly at my keyboard, worrying over how to portray my Toraja friends and teachers in a fashion that they will find accurate. As chroniclers, translators, and interpreters of culture, anthropologists strive to offer nuanced, sensitive portrayals of the people with whom we have worked. Yet our experiences are invariably limited: our personal identities, as well as relationships, rivalries, and politics, can all color the portraits we paint.[46] Ultimately, as my bus companion's comment suggests, the images anthropologists craft have the potential to communicate and reverberate in perplexing and unanticipated ways.

In the late afternoon our dusty bus careened through the gateway arch that marked the entrance to Tana Toraja Regency. Atop the archway I was astonished to spy a replica of a carved *tongkonan* house, with the Indonesian inscription "Selamat Datang di Daerah Tana Toraja" (BI; Welcome to Tana Toraja Area). It seemed the iconization of the *tongkonan* was well under way. I was elated to be arriving in the land I had so long imagined and craned my neck to try to catch my first glimpse of a "real" *tongkonan.* I had somehow expected that once over the regency border, *tongkonan*s would be popping up like mushrooms. But we bounced along a hilly plateau for another forty minutes, passing clove plantations, pine forests, and lush rice fields, without sighting a single *tongkonan.* I began to wonder—was the elaborately carved *tongkonan* replicated in anthropology books and tourist brochures an exaggeration? Instead of hundreds of *tongkonan*s, did only a few carved *tongkonan*s exist in the region? Both tourism and anthropology, after all, thrive on exotic imagery. Finally, I spotted my first *tongkonan,* an unassuming structure nestled at the edge of a verdant mountain valley. Following the now lazily flowing Sa'dan River, we passed boys bathing their water buffalos and men washing their trucks in the pebbly shallows of the river.

As the bus charged along, past corrugated tin-roofed villages, bamboo glens, and limestone outcroppings, I caught glimpses of still more *tongkonan*s, and settled back into my seat feeling reassured.

Nearing dusk, our bus roared into its destination, the main Toraja town of Rantepao. Rantepao at that time was a dusty, hinterland town that initially conjured up images of the American Wild West, with its long wide main street and drifting tumbleweed plastic bags. Prominently situated in the center of Rantepao's primary intersection, I spotted yet another tribute to the *tongkonan:* an aging, weed-choked, wooden statue of a carved *tongkonan* house poised atop a gigantic, elevated ceremonial feeding dish.[47] The statue's disrepair suggested that it predated tourism, and I made a mental note to find out about the impetus for its construction. Finally, just past the statue, we lurched to a stop, kitty-corner from the central market. Through my window I could see a cluster of younger men wearing denim jeans and T-shirts. They were loitering at the entrance to the marketplace, hoisting their plaid *sarong*s (BI; long rectangles of cloth sewn in a tube and worn by many rural Indonesians) up over their shoulders to keep off the early evening chill. Mountain villagers, balancing bamboo tubes of unsold palm wine, were beginning the trudge homeward towards the rugged hills that frame the Rantepao valley. A hand-painted banner advertising an Indian movie fluttered from the market's second-story balcony. Beneath it, a man toting a bamboo six-pack of squealing piglets was pausing to chat with a friend.

On the bus the remaining Toraja passengers pulled on their sweaters, straightened their clothes, and began gathering up their belongings. As my neighboring seatmates unloaded their gift bundles of rice sweets and snake-skinned *salak* fruit, I remained anchored to my seat. Now that I was finally in Tana Toraja, I was unsure where to head for the night and anxiously scanned my notebook, searching for the addresses of the two inexpensive *losmen* (BI; small inns) that had been recommended to me. My frenzied page-flipping was interrupted by a fellow passenger, who offered to lead me to the "*losmen* where all the anthropologists have stayed." Relieved and intrigued, I dutifully followed him down Rantepao's main thoroughfare, past the marketplace where the evening peanut vendors were laying out tidy stacks of peanuts on their rattan mats and where pancake vendors were setting up their lantern-lit carts. We passed clusters of young men sharing conversation and clove-scented cigarettes, eventually arriving at Losmen

Lina, a modest storefront inn. After several rings of the buzzer, the hotelier, a buoyant, balding man in his fifties, flung open the door and greeted my companion warmly. When he learned of my research plans, he raced to his bookshelf. Scooping up a copy of Terry Bigalke's (1981) dissertation on Toraja history, he waved it in the air, proudly declaring that Bigalke always stayed at his inn. In fact, his son had accompanied Bigalke on his interviews and learned all about Toraja history, "a history he would never have learned, had it not been for Bigalke." Smiling broadly, my host noted that he, too, had contributed to this "fine book" and showed me where his name appeared in the dissertation.

A few days later Losmen Lina's location in the heart of Rantepao began to wear on me. Tiring of the ever-present engine roars and street noises, I moved to a quieter home-stay overlooking the rice fields at the edge of town. Relishing the relative tranquility of this out-of-the-way inn, I was taken aback when a local guide who had stopped by to visit me declared that "the great American anthropologist Eric Crystal once stayed at this very place." From my preparatory readings, I knew that Crystal had been one of the first American anthropologists to conduct extensive research in

FIGURE 2. *A* tongkonan-*styled statue in the middle of the main intersection in Rantepao.*

Tana Toraja—in fact, I had devoured his writings but had not expected to be following so literally in his footsteps. As I spent the next few weeks registering at local governmental offices, Crystal's name was routinely invoked. Upon discovering that I was an anthropology graduate student, one Toraja government bureaucrat's response stood out: asking if I had ever met Dr. Crystal, he proceeded to tell me that Crystal's writings about the Toraja had changed his life. He did not realize until he had read Crystal's "book"[48] how proud he should be of his Toraja ethnicity. With a broad grin, he declared, "Eric Crystal writes that 'probably no other area mirrors the fundamentals of Southeast Asia as well as Tana Toraja.'" Later, I frequently encountered this gentleman at Regency planning meetings. When he perceived Toraja traditions to be under assault by externally introduced development proposals, he would often rise and offer the same Crystal quote as evidence for why things should be left as they were. Sometimes he invoked other Western anthropologists, occasionally supplementing Crystal's words with a second quote drawn from Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934) concerning the ways in which elements of culture "intermix and intermingle." As he would underscore, according to "anthropological wisdom," disrupting one area of culture would invariably have repercussions for others. His persuasive argumentation often met with success. In short, my acquaintance actively drew on his knowledge of anthropological literature, astutely manipulating and displaying anthropological images, to throw up roadblocks to controversial new development policies.

A subtheme of this book thus concerns the ways in which Toraja individuals ingeniously draw on outsiders (be they anthropologists or tourists) in efforts to enhance their own local authority, prestige, or power. As this book illustrates, no longer can anthropologists and tourists imagine themselves as peripheral to local constructions of identity and power. My research findings challenge the all-too-common presumptions that tourism is imposed on passive and powerless peoples or that it invariably ushers in a loss of agency.[49] As Amanda Stronza (2001:274) lamented in a recent review article on tourism scholarship, far too few studies of tourism have explored the idea that locals can play a role in what happens in their encounters with tourists and tourism. The artistic examples presented in this book illustrate that, in the face of tourism and anthropological celebrity, many Torajas continue to be active strategists and ingenious cultural politicians.[50] For contemporary Toraja, not only their culture, but the

anthropologists and tourists they attract all serve as political symbols that can be drawn upon to enhance their position vis-à-vis their local adversaries. As I came to appreciate in Tana Toraja, anthropologists would do well to remember that our own positions in fieldwork situations are invariably entrenched in local discourses of tradition and power politics. Attempting to understand ethnicity in touristed locales, then, necessitates recognizing our own roles in the creation and articulation of such invariably politicized images of identity.

IDENTITY AND IDENTITY NEGOTIATION

Clarification of the notions of "identity" and "identity negotiation" is important here. This book is concerned not only with individual identities, but also with rank, class, ethnic, and national identities.[51] In the chapters that follow, I explore the ways in which these multiple dimensions of identity interact and come into play in artistic and touristic arenas. Over the past few decades anthropologists have engaged in numerous debates concerning the nature of identity. Older "primordialist" theories of ethnicity argued that ethnic identity emerges from basic and irreducible primordial inheritances and attachments. From this perspective, ethnicity is constructed in isolation and does not require contrasts with other groups.[52] "Situationalists," on the other hand, contended that ethnicity was not an irreducible given; rather, ethnic identity is socially created, coming into being in situations involving competition over scarce resources.[53] More recent theorists have moved beyond the situationalist versus primordialist debate and share a concept of identity as a dynamic, ongoing process that is "politically contested and historically unfinished" (Clifford 1988:9). That is, identity is always in the process of being formulated, challenged, affirmed, rethought, and remade. Recent theories stress the dynamism of identity and the role that contrast sets—ideas about "them" versus "us"—play in shaping identities (for example, Kipp 1993; Norton 1988:9).

Recent writers such as Arjun Appadurai (1996) recognize that we/they sensibilities materialize not only when individuals and groups are pursuing economic, political, or emotional capital, but also when groups activate the symbols or "markers" of their differences to display values they attribute to themselves (as opposed to others they deem as somehow lacking in these areas). That is, the construction of group identities does not always

arise as a consequence of competition for wealth, power, or security (Appadurai 1996:14).

Much of this book highlights the ways in which various Torajas draw on their arts to articulate and navigate dimensions of ethnic, religious, rank, and national identities. In Tana Toraja in the 1980s and 1990s, people tended to frame and express their identities most often in these terms. Perhaps surprisingly for social scientists, "class" rarely emerged as an explicit theme. By class, I mean a social identity based on wealth, education, and job type, rather than on descent, an identity that links together segments of different ethnic groups across the nation. As in other parts of rural Indonesia, Torajas tend to recognize rank, ethnic, and religious differences far more easily than they do class differences.[54] Rita Kipp has argued persuasively that Indonesian "class blindness" has been fostered by government policies that actively promote ethnic and religious identities, with the end result of obscuring the realities of class interests and biases in Indonesia (1993:121–122). Indonesia's extensive government ministries devoted to religion, as well as the nation's emphasis on ethnic arts and pageantry are, she argues, "about keeping class out of sight" (ibid.: 261).[55]

While class differences between Torajas certainly exist, consciousness of class identities remains rare. (There are, of course, some exceptions—urban Toraja intellectuals, a few politically oriented carvers, and certain university students schooled in the social sciences.) Moreover, broad sensibilities about shared class identities and class solidarity have yet to emerge. During the period of my fieldwork, I rarely heard the term "class" invoked in Tana Toraja. Rather, Torajas friends and acquaintances tended to frame their thoughts about differences in wealth and privilege in terms of either rank (a descent-based identity most frequently articulated by nobles) or in terms of "big people" *(to kapua')* versus "ordinary people" *(to biasa).*[56] Whereas class and rank tended to have somewhat overlapping constituencies in Tana Toraja, in recent decades opportunities for new sources of income and prestige (such as work in the tourism sector or church leadership roles) have challenged this overlay and created new tensions, as we shall see. In short, although not generally articulated as such, class issues are implicit in some of the struggles chronicled in this book. I have tried to remain faithful to Toraja terms and categories, but the theme of (obscured) class identities is important to keep in mind.

Finally, central to this book is the idea of "identity *negotiation.*" I use the expression "identity negotiation" to refer to the social processes whereby

various identities are articulated, asserted, challenged, suppressed, realigned, and co-opted.[57] Clearly, identity can be negotiated and reframed via verbal means: through political oratory, pulpit sermons, and even everyday conversational exchanges. But, more subtly, identity can also be articulated, challenged, and co-opted nonverbally. Given these understandings of the concepts of identity and identity negotiation, I am arguing here that art is an underexplored yet important site for identity negotiation.

ART AS A VEHICLE FOR REFRAMING SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The bus ride vignettes illustrate the salience of outsider images in the dialectical process of Toraja identity construction. This book is concerned with images. In particular, it is concerned with images of identity in both the figurative and material sense. In the chapters that follow, I explore the ways in which artistically embellished objects are entwined with identity politics, highlighting, in particular, the role of art in negotiating unequal relations between individuals and groups, between insiders and outsiders. Traditionally, researchers concerned with material culture and identity have tended to approach art as a mirror of the social relationships in the creator culture, rather than recognizing that people actively use art to articulate or reframe such relationships. Historically, the dominant trend was to delineate art's passive function as an ethnic marker or to trace its evolution from a set of sacred icons to ethnic or national symbols.[58] It is only recently that some cultural anthropologists have begun to suggest that art may play a more active role in intergroup sensibilities, telegraphing shifting cultural attitudes, embodying biographical memories, and constituting rather than simply mirroring social relations (Appadurai 1986; Graburn 1976; Hoskins 1998; Marcus and Myers 1995; MacClancy 1997; Phillips and Steiner 1999; Thomas 1991). Recent work by archaeologists has also stressed the "social life of things." Archaeologist Timothy Earle (2004) has chronicled how Neolithic changes in social organization and the emergence of social hierarchy are materialized through "new media" such as housing, graves or other built landscapes, and lavish prestige objects. Although speech may effectively communicate ideologies in small-scale societies, Earle argues that other cultural genres are needed to create organizing social principles in larger, more hierarchical societies (Earle 2004:112, also see DeMarrais,

Gosden, and Renfrew 2005). Here, material culture becomes especially important because by virtue of its very physicality "it transparently represent[s] characteristics of scarcity or commonness, of foreignness or locality, of larger or smaller labor requirements, and of highly skilled or everyday abilities" (Earle 2004:112). In short, material culture is intimately tied to the expression of identity and social hierarchy. This book expands on this family of ideas. Through ethnographic examples I make the argument that art, as an "affecting presence" imbued with emotional force, provides a particularly apt arena for negotiating, reaffirming, and at times challenging asymmetrical social identities. As I suggest, precisely because of the polysemic quality of artistic objects, their ability to carry multiple meanings and maintain ambiguity, the arts may surreptitiously effect changes in intergroup perceptions.

In stating that art is an active ingredient in identity politics, it is not my intention to suggest that power resides in art as an immanent force.[59] Rather, I advocate an understanding of material objects as vehicles for articulating ideas concerning contrasting sets of identities—what are often termed we/they relationships.[60] Ward Keeler (1987:17), in references to shadow puppet shows in Java, has suggested that such cultural performances constitute a series of relationships (among performers, spectators, sponsors, and other categorical groups) that permit an integration of the art form with other types of relationships among members of that culture. I believe that such an approach can be productively applied to the analysis of material culture, particularly when the relationships under consideration are expanded beyond the local arena to encompass interethnic, national, and even international relations. The last instance includes those relations that are constructed through tourist encounters with Toraja art. Through emphasizing and unpacking the relationships constituted in artistic displays, I believe we can gain a richer understanding of art's role in negotiating, challenging, and reaffirming the often unequal dynamics of inter- and intragroup relations.

HUMAN AGENCY AND THE "ROMANCE OF RESISTANCE"

In suggesting that art is actively used by individuals and groups to negotiate asymmetrical social identities, a brief discussion of the concept of

human agency is warranted.[61] Beginning in the 1960s scholars struggled to understand the extent to which social, cultural, and political processes might be shaped by individuals, as opposed to being determined by larger economic and institutional structures. As researchers now turn their attention to the dynamics of globalization (examining global "forces" such as international tourism), it is all the more important to consider the extent to which individuals have possibilities for altering their worlds. Laura Ahearn (2001:112) suggests a provisional definition of agency as "the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act," and cautions that human agency is not simply equivalent to free will, as it does not require intention. Nor is agency a synonym for "resistance," as there are generally compound motivations behind human actions, motivations that cannot simplistically be reduced to resistance (cf.: Abu-Lughod 1990; Ortner 1995). In short, we can conceive of agency as human social action that involves multiple, at times contradictory, motivations.

As I mentioned, one of my objectives is to highlight the complicated and often ironic relations between material culture and human agency. Kris Hardin and Mary Jo Arnoldi have recently observed in their discussion of African material culture that surprisingly little attention has been devoted to the process whereby "objects, when coupled with human agency, become powerful allies in the construction of identity, meaning, and culture itself" (1996:16). Using the case of Toraja carvings to reflect on the interrelations between material culture, identity negotiation, and human agency, I both embrace and amend James Scott's now classic ideas concerning the arts of resistance (Scott 1985, 1990). In some ways, a number of Toraja carvings and art objects can be conceptualized as "hidden transcripts," surreptitiously critiquing established ethnic, colonial, or political hierarchies and operating as "weapons of the weak" (Scott 1985, 1990). In other ways, these carvings also embody what Sherry Ortner has termed the "ambivalences and ambiguities of resistance itself" (1995:191).

Finally, a nuanced analysis of the complex and at times contradictory messages embodied in Toraja art objects requires being wary of what Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) has termed the "romance of resistance," that is, over-zealous celebration and projections of heroic resistance. There is an almost constant struggle over the meaning of Toraja carvings, as different actors and groups with different projects, apprehensions, memories, and yearnings create, replicate, and engage with these material images. In short, in this book I suggest a conception of Toraja carving (and sculptural form) as a

complex arena embodying contending discourses concerning identity and hierarchies of authority and power.

SPACES AND PLACES OF RESEARCH

During my first month in Tana Toraja Regency, while searching for an appropriate field base, I resided in the little home-stay overlooking the emerald-hued rice paddies at the edge of Rantepao. This initial period in Tana Toraja's main tourist base gave me the opportunity to familiarize myself with the world of Toraja tourates. My late afternoons and evenings were spent idling in the town's handful of souvenir shops and tourist restaurants, chatting with local tourism entrepreneurs and foreign tourists. I also quickly became acquainted with the aspiring local guides who haunted Rantepao's inns and tourist cafes. These so-called wild guides (*guide liar,* BI) were primarily young, unemployed Toraja males who had great ambition and were well versed in local lore, but who lacked the funds for formal guide schooling in Makassar and licensing fees.[62] For many of them, guiding represented not only an income, but also the alluring possibility of forging longer-term bonds with visitors or enjoying short-term romantic intrigues with foreigners.[63] Several of the wild guides I knew delighted in displaying piles of business cards of various directors and company presidents who had been past clients, and others carried small bundles of snapshots of their European tourist "girlfriends." A few lucky Toraja guides had even received all-expenses-paid trips to visit their past clients in Europe or Australia. In addition to sharing tales of their adventures and life aspirations with me, these wild guides also occasionally invited me to tag along on their tours of Tana Toraja Regency. In essence, my initial sojourn in Rantepao allowed me to see Toraja as a tourist.

When it became known that I was a researcher hunting for a suitable field base, my new Toraja acquaintances quickly indoctrinated me in the local stereotypes of different regions of Tana Toraja Regency. Sa'dan villagers, in the north, were said to be especially well educated: "There are a lot of Doctorandus (BI; Master's degree) in Sa'dan!" declared a lively Rantepao restauranteuse. Her husband added that they were also notably ostentatious in their rituals, something that might be of interest to an anthropologist. Others told me that people in the Sesean hills[64] were down-to-earth and relatively egalitarian when compared to valley folk. Torajas in

the southern Sangalla' and Makale regions[65] were reputed to be the most status-conscious or "feudal," with Kesu'-area Torajas running a close second. My Rantepao acquaintances also stressed, with what seemed to be a mixture of admiration and suspicion, that Kesu' people were avid *"orang politikus"* (BI; politicians).

The more I learned of the Kesu' area, the more it captured my attention. Several carving groups and villages, as well as Tana Toraja's first "carving school," were all located in the Kesu' area (in the administrative subdistrict of Sanggalangi'). Recent road-paving projects, the presence of several of the region's oldest tourist sites, and a jointly owned Japanese-Indonesian coffee plantation, all signaled an area with accelerated outsider contact. Moreover, much of the early classic work on "traditional" Toraja culture (van der Veen 1965, 1966; Koubi 1982; Nooy-Palm 1979, 1986) was done in this region, providing a useful springboard for what I initially conceptualized as a study of change, art, and identity.

After exploratory forays into the Kesu' area, I fixed my eye on Ke'te' Kesu', one of the region's oldest and most-visited "traditional villages." Home to some of Tana Toraja's most adept carvers and astute elders, Ke'te' Kesu' is idyllically situated at the base of craggy limestone burial cliffs, overlooking a sea of wet rice paddies. At that time the hamlet was composed of a row of four stately *tongkonan*s, a ritual plaza, numerous carved rice granaries, and a half-dozen souvenir and handicraft stands. Scattered around the fringes of the plaza were a handful of newer tin-roofed homes, some Bugis-styled houses on stilts, others of wood or bamboo, and some of concrete. A footpath behind the hamlet's central ritual plaza wound down through a shady bamboo grove to weathered cliffside graves. At the mouths of two musty caves, cracked ancestral skulls and decaying, carved wooden sarcophagi lay scattered haphazardly. Behind them stood a regal cluster of hauntingly beautiful, carved wooden effigies of the dead. Clad in faded sarongs and cotton shirts (some equipped with old-fashioned eyeglasses and woven betel nut bags), these stylized ancestral effigies gazed out over the bamboo grove and the more recent chiseled cement tombs below them, fixing their ebony eyes on the usually tranquil hamlet of Ke'te' Kesu'. During holiday seasons, however, Ke'te' Kesu''s tranquility would vanish, as busloads of tourists made pilgrimages to stroll the plaza of this celebrated carving village and to photograph the cliffside burial grounds.

When I approached the Sanggalangi' district head (*camat,* BI) seeking permission to rent lodging in Ke'te' Kesu', he advised that if I wanted to

study Toraja culture, it was essential that I reside with the family of Ne' Duma, a widely respected aristocratic Kesu' "cultural expert." Hoping to politely convey my ambivalence about being stationed in an elite household, I gingerly responded that I wanted to find a more ordinary household, one that would be more "typical" of rural Toraja experience. Adopting a fatherly demeanor, the district head explained that Ne' Duma's home was the one place in which a young female researcher such as myself would not be bothered, and the one household that he, my would-be government guardian, could sanction. He broke off suddenly, declaring that luck was with me, as Ne' Duma himself was strolling up the path to the government office in which we sat sipping syrupy mid-morning coffee.

Ne' Duma defied my preconceived image of an aristocratic elder. For inexplicable reasons I had expected to see a reserved and solemn personage. A spry, spirited, bespectacled man in his mid-seventies, Ne' Duma sported a faded grey cowboy hat, a starched shirt, khaki shorts, and mud-splashed rubber boots. Strapped to his hip was a large, wooden-sheathed knife—not a fancy golden kris, but a weathered, peasant-styled knife. The district head quickly conveyed my interest in living in Ke'te' Kesu', and Ne' Duma carefully inspected my papers while puffing thoughtfully on his cigarette. Finally, Ne' Duma solemnly nodded to us and replied that he had a child exactly my age, and I could sleep with his child. The district head questioned, "Which child is that, Ne' Duma?" "My son, of course!" Ne' Duma replied, winking mischievously as everyone in the office chortled. I feigned shock, and he chuckled all the more, correcting himself, "Oh, did I say son? I meant to say my daughter." He added that he'd need permission from his wife and, with a twinkle in his eye and a lift of the eyebrows, he boasted, "I've got a really beautiful wife!" prompting still more chuckles from everyone in the office. This was my introduction to the man who was to become my adoptive Toraja father.

Over the next nineteen months I lived in Ne' Duma's "elite" household, making modest monthly contributions for room and board. Much of this time, I shared a room with Ne' Duma's daughter (who worked for the government in Tana Toraja's capital town) and with the family's sixteen-year-old female household helper, as well as various visiting female kin. For many months I spent my days rooted in the vicinity of Ke'te' Kesu' and Rantepao, attending local rituals with my new adoptive Toraja family, studying with carvers, interviewing domestic and foreign tourists, and studiously trying to master the local language. In graduate school, I had

been schooled in a traditional, constrained, and bounded notion of what constitutes a "field site." And yet as I lived in Ne' Duma's home, I gradually came to see "the field" as much more complicated and intricate. The "Toraja" mythologies and ancestral epics I had been recording meandered all over South Sulawesi. Likewise my Toraja friends and teachers were hardly anchored to my field site: Ne' Duma and his adult children routinely left Tana Toraja Regency to visit kin and conduct business in Makassar and Jakarta. Several carvers in the village had participated in carving workshops on the island of Bali. And Ke'te' Kesu' vendors sold not only Toraja trinkets but Balinese tourist carvings and Sumbanese ikat textiles in their tourist stalls—souvenirs they had purchased from traders or ordered from traveling kinsfolk. In short, the boundaries of my field site were not as clear as my graduate training had suggested.

My graduate school classroom training had also not prepared me for the mental and emotional exhaustion of fieldwork. From dawn until late at night I participated in local events and gathered data. Consequently I was perennially behind in typing my field notes. Fearful of disturbing my Toraja sister and the female household helper[66] with whom I shared a room, I took to writing my field notes in longhand by my dim and often-flickering flashlight. As the household slept, and rice paddy crickets chimed, I huddled under my warm bedcovers, scrawling in my notebooks. At 5:00 a.m. each morning, when the household awoke to the choruses of roosters and the braying of pigs, I groggily ached for just a few more hours of sleep and tranquility. More significantly, I was exhausted by the complexities of managing relationships where I was never sure of what could and could not be said, and where I constantly fretted that I might be inadvertently stepping on the toes of those who had befriended me. Although I was enjoying becoming a part of this Toraja household, fieldwork anxieties were taking their toll on me: My hair was falling out, and I was grinding my teeth in my sleep.

The short trips I took to Makassar to renew permits and supplies were not enough to relieve me of the exhaustion of fieldwork. Finally, six months after my arrival in Tana Toraja, my mother came to Indonesia for a much anticipated visit. Before bringing her to Tana Toraja, we traveled together as tourists, visiting the temples, beaches, and art shops of Bali, then traveling on to Makassar, where we explored the Provincial Museum and strolled by the seaside. Initially, this and other short-term departures from "the field" prompted great ambivalence—I constantly worried about what I

might be missing by being away from the highlands and berated myself for taking these breaks. However, these travels "away" gradually reshaped my notions of the boundaries of "the field." As I attended Toraja dance performances in Makassar's old Fort Rotterdam,[67] stumbled on stolen and forged Toraja effigies of the dead in Balinese art galleries, and spied Bugis-crafted silver filigree *tongkonan* necklaces in Makassar jewelry shops, my narrow conceptions of "in" versus "out" of the field were challenged. Gradually, I came to re-envision "the field" as translocal, and to develop an interest in the outcroppings of Toraja imagery not only at the local, but also at the regional, national, and transnational levels.

In subsequent years my fieldwork has led me from rural Toraja carving villages to the Jakarta mini-mansions of elite Toraja (mansions prominently decorated with enormous model *tongkonan*s), to Seattle tribal art galleries, and into the apartments of Toraja students and fictive kin in Chicago. Tracking Toraja-inspired architecture in Makassar, discussing televised images of Toraja singers with Bugis friends, feasting on *pa'pion*[68] with Toraja migrants on the remote eastern Indonesian island of Alor, and admiring a Toraja float in the Pasadena Rose Bowl parade, have all furthered my appreciation of the complex interplay between Toraja images and identity.

Although I was unaware of it at the time, my shift in perception of the spaces and places of fieldwork paralleled shifts in the discipline of anthropology. Theoretical paradigms emerging in the late 1980s and 1990s began to chip away at the classic conceptions of "the field" as a discrete and neatly defined space. The realization that "cultural action, the making and remaking of identities, takes place in the contact zones, along the policed and transgressive intercultural frontiers of nations, peoples, locales" (Clifford 1997:7) shifted anthropological attention to cultural flows and border zones, fragmenting traditional perceptions of margin and center. Arjun Appadurai's (1986, 1990, 1996) treatises on material and cultural flows across time and space, and the ways in which images circulate internationally, have irrevocably transformed the terrain of ethnography, as have James Clifford's (1997) observations concerning culture-as-travel relations. Such emergent notions of the centrality of displacement and the salience of margins animate various recent Indonesian studies, such as Jill Forshee's (2001) roving ethnography of Sumbanese textiles and Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's (1993) portrait of a Kalimantan people living in an "out-of-the-way-place."

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

In the chapters that follow, I explore the interplay between Toraja art and identity, focusing on a variety of expressive arenas. The opening ethnographic chapter offers a collage of Toraja identities and a sampling of some of the recurrent themes that preoccupy many of today's Torajas (Chapter Two). Next, I examine two of the most famed material icons of Toraja identity, the carved *tongkonan* house (Chapter Three) and *tau tau* effigies of the dead (Chapter Four). Chapter Five explores a variety of newer arenas in which Toraja cultural identities and memories are creatively invoked and enshrined, including public ceremonials, nationalist landmarks of remembrance, and locally run Toraja museums. I then examine the outcroppings of Toraja icons on the national and global stages, highlighting the role of Toraja design in regional interethnic relations and in national politics (Chapter Six). Chapter Seven continues to examine Toraja responses to current-day political and economic uncertainties, as Indonesia plunges into a period of economic, interethnic, and interreligious turmoil and the tourists who once helped to lend Torajas both economic and symbolic capital dwindle. Finally, in the concluding chapter, I turn to broader questions concerning the politics of material culture, in the context of nation-building and in the ebb and flow of tourism.

2 Competing Toraja Images of Identity

My introduction to the politically charged nature of identity imagery in Tana Toraja began on my third day in Rantepao. I was hunting for a map of the area, and several young aspiring Toraja guides steered me in the direction of a small general store near the market. I wandered into the dimly lit shop, past the dusty glass cases crammed with Toraja pop music cassette tapes, knock-off designer watches, pocket knives, lipstick, and hair barrettes, to a counter at the back of the shop, where the portly Chinese shop owner sat conversing with a friend. The shop owner turned to me with a grin, pulled out a wooden stool and invited me to join him and his friend for a conversation about Toraja anthropology. Baffled by his seeming clairvoyance, I took up his offer and settled into the wobbly stool, depositing my bag on the cement floor. The shop owner's companion, a broad-faced man in his fifties, confessed that he had been a fellow passenger on my bus from Makassar and had tipped off the shop owner that I was "not just another tourist." Smiling proudly, he introduced himself as the "grandson of Tammu," the coauthor of the Toraja-Indonesian dictionary that I carried in my bag. "I couldn't talk to you on the bus," he said, "and I thought I'd missed the opportunity to share my ideas about Toraja anthropology, since I live down in Luwu and am only in Rantepao for a funeral. It's fortunate that we've had this chance encounter. God was looking out for us."

While the shop owner disappeared into the back room to ask his wife to prepare some coffee, Tammu's grandson leaned forward on his stool and began to give me advice about what should be the focus of my research. In a serious tone, he counseled:

> As an anthropologist, you should write a book about the *real* Toraja identity and history, both the good and the bad. I mean Toraja identity that is authentic [*asli,* BI][1] and true. I don't like to see Toraja identity presented with make-up to conceal its

> flaws. These days some people here, local cultural experts, use their writings to cover up the negative, embarrassing things—like slaves—and magnify the positive things. We Toraja read some of these books and don't recognize ourselves. We need a new book to correct all of these portraits of Torajas with make-up . . .

When the shop owner's wife reappeared, balancing three amber glasses of sugared coffee on a carved Toraja tray, Tammu's grandson paused, and I had a moment to consider his remarks. Over the previous half dozen years the Toraja had been abruptly thrust into the anthropological and touristic spotlight. Clearly the growing mounds of literature on the Toraja, especially those works by Toraja writers, had captured Tammu's grandson's attention. I was reflecting on his depiction of Toraja with make-up when he resumed his commentary,

> My grandfather wrote a book that represents the *authentic* Toraja history I'm talking about. Only four copies of this book still exist. He worked with the Dutch missionary, Dr. van der Veen.[2] He even had access to his notes. My grandfather's book describes all sorts of local customs—it tells about the different kinds of slaves and even documents the rituals allowing slaves to marry nobles and not have their children considered slaves—how many water buffalo they have to sacrifice and all that. But nowadays slaves are simply marrying nobles and declaring their children nobles. That's not right. The more time passes, the more nobles we get!

As he shook his head disapprovingly, I found myself momentarily at a loss for words. I was startled by his use of the term "slave" (*hamba,* BI). From the ethnographies I had read in preparation for my fieldwork, I knew social stratification was heavily emphasized in the southern and valley areas of the Toraja highlands (particularly in the Rantepao, Kesu', Sangalla', and Makale regions).[3] Toraja society, I understood, had long been hierarchically oriented on the basis of descent, wealth, age, and occupation. According to the two volumes on the Toraja that I had carried with me to Indonesia, the precolonial Toraja recognized several basic social strata: the aristocracy *(puang* or *to parengngne'),* commoners *(to buda, to sama)* and slaves *(to kaunan).*[4] Status was reportedly determined by birth, although financial success or failure allowed some individuals to penetrate the barriers of rank. However, I also knew that the Dutch had abolished slavery and that it

remained illegal in postcolonial Indonesia. Moreover, I had heard from others that the topics of rank and low ancestry were sensitive in Tana Toraja. Yet here was a new acquaintance opening his discussion of Toraja identity with this very issue, suggesting that it needed to be highlighted rather than erased. Sipping his coffee, Tammu's grandson continued:

> Your research on Toraja identity must look to the Bugis area of Luwu and the royal courts there. Toraja was much affected by these courts. Even the name "Toraja" probably comes from Luwu. You see, there are three different explanations for the origins of the word "Toraja" and two of these come from the Bugis language. Many researchers, including my grandfather and van der Veen, thought our name came from the Bugis *"to riaja"*—*"to"* meaning "people" and "*riaja* meaning "upstream" or "above." So before we knew ourselves as one group, the "Toraja," the Bugis were calling all the people in the mountains *"to riaja,"* "the people from up above, upstream."[5]

Tammu's grandson paused to wipe a smudge from his glasses, while I scribbled hurriedly in my notebook. Setting down his glasses, he gently tapped the counter with two fingers and resumed,

> Then there is a second theory that Toraja means "tired people." *"Raja"* is how you say "tired" in Palawa, one of the original Toraja villages. Do you know Palawa, on the way to Luwu, Katlin?

I nodded, recalling that he lived in Luwu and wondering about the nature of his ties to this neighboring kingdom. He proceeded, elaborating,

> You see, the name "Toraja" may have developed because people originally came from the Luwu coast and walked and walked until they became tired and settled here. But this is *not* a popular etymology. I don't think even Tangdilintin, the Toraja anthropologist, knows this etymology. People don't like this etymology because it is not flattering.

His theories paralleled those of certain scholars. Several writers (cf. Bigalke 1981, Nooy-Palm 1975a) contended that a hundred years ago the "Toraja" did not think of themselves as such. Up until the twentieth century, upland Sulawesi was an area where people identified themselves in terms of their kin groups, the *tongkonan*s with which they were affiliated, and their villages.[6] The label "Toraja" was externally applied to these various Sulawesi highlanders by Bugis and Makassarese, and subsequently

embraced by European explorers and Dutch colonialists. It was not until the 1930s, following the intensification of Dutch missionization and school construction in upland Sulawesi, that some of these highlanders began to call themselves "Toraja."

As Bigalke observed (1981, 1984), Dutch missionizing efforts in the early 1900s highlighted contrasts between Muslim lowlanders and pagan or Christianizing uplanders. Since the 1906 inception of Dutch rule in the Toraja highlands, religion was scarcely a neutral theme. The Dutch government allegedly penetrated the highlands as part of their new "Ethical Policy" to promote the health, welfare, and education of local peoples. However, there were additional reasons behind their decision to extend their administration to upland Sulawesi. The Dutch had just concluded a long and costly war in North Sumatra with the Islamic Acehnese and were apprehensive about the rising tide of Islam elsewhere in Indonesia, which they feared would bring rebellions and a loss of colonial control. In the eyes of Dutch government officials, converting pagan highlanders to Christianity would provide an inland breakwater against the threatening wave of Islam (Bigalke 1981:138–143). As missionary zeal was strong in the Netherlands at this time, the Dutch East Indies government assigned mission fields to various religious groups (to avoid competition between churches) and discouraged mission activity in Muslim-dominated areas. Inevitably, some Dutch missionaries routinely juxtaposed "heathen" or Christianized Torajas against coastal Muslims such as the Bugis, fueling emergent local perceptions of ethnic difference in subsequent years (Bigalke 1981:138–143).

Soon after they arrived in the Toraja highlands in 1913, Dutch missionaries from the Gereformeerde Zendingsbond began emphasizing education. The new educational institutions they introduced were significant for the coalescence of "Toraja" ethnic identity, as well as for introducing alternative avenues for lower class/rank Torajas to achieve status (Bigalke 1981: 308, Plaisier 1993:659).[7] In their first decade in the highlands, the Dutch missionaries relied largely on Christian gurus (teachers)[8] from elsewhere in Indonesia, particularly Ambon and northern Sulawesi. As local educational opportunities expanded in the 1920s and 1930s, Toraja gurus began to replace these outsiders. Plaisier points out that many of these first gurus were from Toraja's "lower-middle class" and could find liberation in this office, becoming the initial "Christian elites" (although some Toraja gurus of the lowest class of slaves were not tolerated in certain locales) (1993:

656–657).[9] As the new ranks of Toraja gurus were dispatched to village schools, they began to introduce a standardized form of the Toraja language to their pupils (Bigalke 1981:308–309). Ambitious youths who graduated from these basic rural schools relocated to larger towns such as Rantepao and Makale to continue their education. In these trading towns (which also served as colonial headquarters), Toraja students "mixed in an environment belonging to no individual kin group, no particular village . . . they began to coalesce; to intermarry, teach and work in villages other than their own, experiment with new, broad-based forms of association" (Bigalke 1981: 309). As Bigalke chronicles, by the 1930s, when a "critical mass of these persons emerged . . . the expression of Toraja ethnic identity took on a new intensity" (ibid.).

This emergent ethnic identity was further reinforced in the era following Indonesian independence (1950s and 1960s), when Islamic secession attempts in South Sulawesi prompted violent attacks on highlanders. A particularly notorious name in Tana Toraja Regency is that of Andi Sose, an Islamic warlord from Duri who commanded Muslim troops in Makale in the 1950s. Many older Torajas still invoke those terrifying days of Muslim occupation, when they fled their homes and fearfully concealed their families in the serpentine networks of local caves. In 1953, and again in 1958, some of these older Toraja men became guerrilla fighters, rising up to drive Ande Sose and his Muslim troops from their homeland. For most Christian Torajas, that turbulent era cemented a profound sense of shared ethnoreligious identity and vulnerability. In many ways the post-independence period laid the foundation for the renewed anxieties and fear most Torajas are experiencing today, as Islamic movements mount in Indonesia and terrorist bombs destroy churches in Makassar, beachside restaurants, a nightclub in Bali, and a major hotel in Jakarta. With violence erupting episodically between Christians and Muslims in nearby Central Sulawesi, Torajas are apprehensive about how their Christianity sets them apart from most other groups in predominantly Muslim Indonesia.

Finally, growing touristic celebrity in the 1980s and 1990s lent further vigor to Toraja identity,[10] as the *tongkonan*-embellished postcards and travel posters displayed in airports throughout Indonesia testify. In this period, images of tourists crowding pageantry-filled Toraja funeral rituals were regularly broadcast on the Indonesian nightly news and ever-increasing numbers of Indonesian tourists and school groups traveled to the Toraja highlands to see this "unique" culture. Tana Toraja's reign as a touristic

"primadona" in the 1980s and 1990s not only firmly cemented the highlanders' already strong sense of shared ethnic identity, but also enhanced many Torajas' pride in their identity and heritage.

Tammu's grandson interrupted my reflections on the genesis of Toraja identity with an animated declaration:

> And now the most flattering idea about our name's origin suddenly appears: the idea that "Toraja" comes from the Indonesian word *"raja,"* so we are the "kingly people." Many people here like to claim our name means "kingly people" because it makes them seem more majestic. But this invented meaning is like a balloon; you start out with a small piece of rubber and, if you keep inflating it, it will finally burst and have no value at all. The same with all these cleaned up accounts of Toraja identity that I was talking about earlier. These days Toraja identity is being inflated and soon it will burst. That is why we must pursue the authentic Toraja, the Toraja without make-up.

Indeed, much of the touristic literature promoted this false etymology of Tana Toraja as "Land of the Heavenly Kings." I remembered a brochure I had picked up in Seattle, when I first became interested in Toraja culture. Next to a glossy photograph of a hillside *tongkonan* was the bold-faced claim, "So strongly do the local people believe that their land was 'discovered by God from Heaven' that Tana Toraja translates 'Land of the Heavenly Kings'" (Hemphill-Harris 1981). Likewise, a number of the aspiring guides I had met during my first days in Rantepao had proudly recited this derivation to me, declaring that they were the original "kingly people." Even the tourist shops adjacent to the market displayed brightly colored cotton T-shirts emblazoned with the slogan "Tana Toraja: Land of the Heavenly Kings."

Following my discussion with Tammu's grandson, I passed a fluttering rack of T-shirts on my way back to the *losmen* (inn) and paused to take a closer look. Decorated with drawings of intricately carved *tongkonan* houses, sumptuous funeral ritual processions, or burial cliffs studded with effigies of the dead, these T-shirts seemed to embody the "Toraja with make-up" that so perturbed Tammu's grandson. Most of the touristic imagery of the Toraja, it seemed, derived from uprooted emblems of the aristocracy. Spotlighting the glorious images of elite Toraja culture, these T-shirts proclaimed a universally majestic Toraja identity, one that Tammu's grandson

deemed inflated and problematic. Were other Toraja elites similarly troubled by the appropriation of their artistic symbols, I wondered? And what were the sentiments of nonelites? How did they perceive the touristic broadening of these once-authoritative symbols?

Over the next few months, as I came to know more Torajas from different backgrounds, I periodically reflected on the urging of Tammu's grandson to write a book combating the "inflated Toraja identity." I yearned to ask people I met what they thought of this directive, but being young and shy about broaching potentially controversial topics, I refrained. Instead, I tried to listen as attentively as possible to how my new Toraja friends and acquaintances conveyed to me senses of their identities. This chapter provides a general introduction to some of the key themes in contemporary Sa'dan Toraja life. In introducing an array of individuals, from members of my aristocratic host family to domestic helpers of modest means, this chapter also explores some of the complexities of "representing" Toraja identity, which is far from monolithic. Through recounting the stories these mentors and friends shared with me, and tracing some of the themes of their narratives, I present a collage of Toraja identities, and highlight some of the ways in which ideas about heritage, religion, *tongkonan*s and "place" are fraught with politics.

INTRODUCTIONS

A month after my conversation with Tammu's grandson, I moved from the little inn at the outskirts of Rantepao to Ne' Duma's home in the hamlet of Ke'te' Kesu', several kilometers southeast of Rantepao. In early 1984 the road to this well-known "carving village" was only partially paved. Mud-splashed pick-up trucks ferried villagers to and from the Kesu' area, crossing bamboo groves and verdant rice paddies framed by craggy limestone cliffs. A few sputtering motorcycles, uniformed elementary school children strolling arm in arm, and small bands of backpacking tourists also made their way along the soggy dirt road. Occasionally, trucks lumbered down from the Japanese coffee plantation farther up in the hills—noisy reminders of the region's ties to distant markets. During the high tourist season, white minivans brimming with European visitors bounced along the road in the morning and late afternoon. Occasionally they would pause,

and tourists would spill out to take snapshots of sarong-clad men walking water buffaloes to the market or fieldworkers harvesting rice in the morning mist.

I traveled on this road the day I relocated to Ne' Duma's home, driven by the *camat* (district head) in his orange, government-issued, all-terrain vehicle. Ne' Duma's Western-styled home looked as though it dated from colonial days. Solidly built, with stone walls and a corrugated iron roof, the house stood in a serene spot overlooking the rice fields, a few hundred yards from the cluster of *tongkonan*s and rice barns that comprised the traditional village. The house's shady front verandah, edged with fire-leafed *tabang* (cordyline) plants and cement benches, also overlooked the path leading to the village and was a favorite spot for Ne' Duma's younger sons to relax, play cards, or simply lounge, reflectively smoking aromatic clove cigarettes, as neighbors, tourists, or local school children ambled past. In the late afternoons, after the midday nap, family members often gathered on the verandah for informal chats with friends and kin. Such was the case when we arrived: some half-dozen family members were seated on the cement benches, sipping coffee, smoking cigarettes, and watching the antics of a couple of young kittens. As the *camat* unloaded my hefty backpack in front of Ne' Duma's verandah, a pack of barefoot village children came racing down the path, shouting *"Turis, turis! Kasi bon bon!"* (Tourist, tourist! Give us some *bon-bons!*). I jumped in surprise as one six-year-old girl snatched my hand and began to sing *"Alouette, gentille alouette"* (telegraphing the popularity of this village site with French tourists). Laughter erupted from the verandah and a regal voice called out for the children to leave me alone. This commanding voice, I soon discovered, was that of Indo' Rampo, Ne' Duma's strikingly beautiful wife. Indo' Rampo was in her mid-fifties and wore her long thick hair in a bun. She was simply clad in a blue plaid rayon sarong, a *baju pokko* (a traditional tightly fitted Toraja shirt), and a baggy grey sweater. Her poised demeanor and the gold-beaded necklace she wore around her neck, rather than her attire, conveyed her elite status.[11] Indo' Rampo ushered us inside the house, gesturing for us to seat ourselves on the plush velveteen chairs in the living room. While she instructed a young servant to fetch coffee, I surveyed my new surroundings. This was clearly a family of ample means. The main room of the house was large and airy—a pleasantly decorated combination living room/dining room with cement floors and curtained windows. Alongside the whitewashed walls in the living room area were an assortment of places to sit, testimony to the large size

of the family and the frequency with which they received guests. The furnishings included a yellow naugahyde loveseat with two matching metal-framed chairs, several green velveteen seats, a half-dozen molded white plastic chairs, and several coffee tables (one chiseled with traditional Toraja motifs). Vases holding a few silk flowers and carved ebony ashtrays adorned the coffee tables, and a doily-covered, black-and-white television stood on a stand in a corner opposite the front door. The far end of the room was dominated by an ancient wooden armoire, its upper case brimming with faded manuscripts, school books, and a few pieces of antique Chinese pottery. Under the armoire stood a plastic-covered dining table, several additional wooden chairs, and a cabinet filled with amber glass dishware. The walls of the room displayed an intriguing assortment of art and mementoes that I yearned to study more closely: a stately oil painting of a Toraja nobleman on horseback, a framed black-and-white photograph of young, wistful-looking Ne' Duma, a large embossed metal portrait of Christ's head on a crucifix, a framed Balinese-styled painting of a traditional Toraja village, and a Toraja Church calendar featuring a photograph of a carved rice barn.

As I absorbed my surroundings, the *camat* introduced me to the dozen or so family members who had followed us into the room, revealing that these were also his kin. Of Ne' Duma's ten children, who ranged in age from nine to forty, five were living in this house or in one of the traditional *tongkonan*s on the village plaza. Beaming, the *camat* declared that this would be an ideal base for my research. Not only was Ne' Duma a revered aristocratic community leader, but he was also a respected cultural expert. He made his living through rice farming, and, as a large landholder, he spent many of his days surveying his fields. However, Ne' Duma was also active in both Christian and *aluk to dolo* ("The Way of the Ancestors": Toraja traditional religion) rituals. He was the ritual leader *(to parengne')* of a titled Kesu' *tongkonan,* a position that entails varied responsibilities and commands respect.[12] Moreover, he had once served as a parliamentary representative in Indonesia's House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, BI) for the Christian Party (the now-defunct Parkindo), was an active member of the local Rural Development Board (BAPPEDA) and a secretary of the Toraja Church. Finally, the *camat* pointed out that many of Ne' Duma's children were involved in the activities I planned to research. Several of Ne' Duma's sons occasionally worked as local guides or part-time carvers. His wife, Indo' Rampo, ran a small souvenir kiosk on the porch of one of

the village *tongkonan*s and managed the local rice mill, and another son was employed by the local government as a "cultural explainer" of the Ke'te' Kesu' tourist site. Yet another son was a leader in the local Christian Youth Group and was known for his artistic skills at decorating ritual offerings. Finally, Ne' Duma's daughter, Emi, was roughly my age and had completed a government degree in Makassar the year before. She was now home again and working in the regional government office. Until now, the *camat* elaborated, Emi's only female companions had been the two servants employed by the household, one elderly and one in her mid-teens. Grinning broadly and winking, he concluded that Emi and I, both "degree-holders" and "still single," would be good companions for each other until we found ourselves husbands.

Despite my misgivings about anchoring my research in an elite household, I came to appreciate over the next two years that the *camat* had steered me well. Not only did Ne' Duma's family lend me a warm and welcoming home base, but the family's activities involved many of the themes that drew me to Tana Toraja. Through this family and their extensive kinship networks I eventually became integrated into the local community. The status, preoccupations, and orientations of Ne' Duma's family inevitably left an indelible mark on my perceptions of elite Toraja identity, which at times called to mind Tammu's grandson's advice shortly after my arrival in Rantepao. It was through my host family's eyes that I came to appreciate some of the themes in Kesu' area elite identity.

SKETCHES OF KESU' ELITE IDENTITY

In the 1980s Ke'te' Kesu' evenings had a special pace. As the clouds slowly descend into the valley from Mount Sesean in the north, the last of the tourists return to their hotels in town. Souvenir sellers gather up their carvings, moving them into the *tongkonan*s to protect them from the night mist. Men squat in clusters, with their sarongs hiked over their shoulders, stroking their prized fighting roosters. A few teens lounge on a rice barn platform, strumming guitars and softly singing Indonesian pop songs, while young children scamper on the ground tossing marbles and playing "fighting water buffaloes."[13] As fireflies begin flitting in the shadows, the electric generator starts rumbling, and my Toraja family's house transforms into a hub of activity. The dirt-floored kitchen at the rear becomes a gath-

ering place for women, who squat around the hearth, preparing leafy greens and rice as they chatter over the hum of the generator. Local village boys, bundled in brightly colored batik sarongs, arrive to relax with their friends on the rattan mats in front of the family's flickering television (the only one in the village at the time), while others huddle on the front porch. By the time the nightly news airs, the living room chairs are filled with kin and neighbors, and the air is heavy with cigarette smoke and the faint smell of roasting pork.

On my third evening in the village I received my first lessons on the salience of rank and heredity for Kesu' area elites, lessons which prompted me to reflect on my conversation with Tammu's grandson. We were sitting on the velveteen chairs in the living room, watching *The Brady Bunch* when Indo' Rampo leaned over to me and gestured to the cluster of young boys solemnly gazing at the television through the front door, which had been deliberately left ajar. Lowering her voice, Indo' Rampo whispered, "The ones there are descendants of slaves; they are good children, obedient and quiet . . . and they are good about helping around the house." Again, I was startled by the use of the term slaves (*hamba,* BI) and cautiously commented that I had thought slavery was outlawed in Indonesia. She nodded and observed that the language of Indonesian independence was creating a good deal of confusion,

> True, we are not supposed to use the word *slave* anymore, but this doesn't change their birth. These days descendants of slaves . . . think "freedom" means "freedom for slaves." But actually it means freedom from the Dutch. They aren't free because they were bought by our ancestors. . . . It's the same as if an ancestor bought a tree, then his descendants would have claim to its branches, leaves, twigs, flowers, and fruit. The original slave is the trunk, and his children and grandchildren are the leaves and flowers: they all belonged to the descendants of the noble who owned the trunk. That's our tradition.

I was already fond of Indo' Rampo and appreciated the warmth with which she had welcomed me into her household, yet I was uncomfortable to find myself a part of a feudally structured home. Did everyone in her family feel this way? Or was her perspective that of the older generation, reared in very different times?[14]

Our conversation was interrupted by Indo' Rampo's daughter, Emi, who asked me if my house in the United States was like that of *The Brady*

Bunch, with a servant and machines to wash the floors and dishes. When I answered that I had none of these things, she and the others in the room (including the household helpers) looked at me with disbelief. I explained that in the United States only the rich employed servants and, as an ordinary person, I did all of my own chores. I could tell from the skeptical glances they exchanged that they did not believe me. Then, after a pause, Ne' Duma queried, "But isn't your last name Adams? And wasn't there once an American president called Adams?" When I acknowledged that this was correct, he grinned triumphantly and declared, "Then you are being modest—you are not an ordinary person—you are an aristocrat!" I attempted to counter that Adams was a very common name in the United States and that I had no idea if I was even related to that early president. I knew who my great-grandparents were and that was about it. This prompted shock from Ne' Duma and his wife. How could I not know my ancestors? Didn't my parents teach me about my genealogy? The moment of awkward silence was broken by Emi, who piped up, "Nah, she is being modest! She probably has a fleet of servants at home and has never scrubbed a floor in her life." The adolescent helper, Agus, added something in Torajan, prompting peals of laughter. Emi translated that Agus had reported that she had spied me washing my laundry out by the well earlier in the day, and it was clear that I didn't know what I was doing. "She says you only rinsed twice! And many of the cloths you hung on the line fell down!" tittered Emi. Obviously, they concluded, I was accustomed to having servants. My protests only met with more disbelieving chuckles.

While I was perplexed by this exchange at the time, as the salience of rank gradually became clearer to me, I realized that by invoking presidential ancestry and a household of servants, Ne' Duma and his family were renegotiating the "common" identity I had publicly asserted. As a long-term guest in the household, it seemed important that I be aligned with the family and outfitted with a noble identity. That the helper joined in this enterprise, insisting that I doubtlessly had servants at home, was also telling. Through chiding and jest, the members of the household were constructing a place for me in the household (and local) hierarchy, a place that made sense to them and resonated with their own ideas about identity.

Shortly after dinner that evening, Ne' Duma resumed my introduction to the theme of rank identity. Earlier in the evening he had announced that we would begin my "lessons" that night, following the news broadcast. While waiting for the closing credits, I dug out my notebook and studied

some of the questions I had carefully compiled months before, questions that pertained to artistic expression, carving practices, and symbolism. Ne' Duma soon joined me at the table. "Why didn't you get out your tape recorder?" he asked reproachfully, "This lesson is important and should be recorded."

I was relieved to be granted permission to tape the lesson and scurried off to fetch my tape recorder. When I returned, Ne' Duma was busily drawing something in my notebook. Flustered, I asked, "Shall we talk about house carvings tonight?"

"Later," he answered, tapping his drawing, "This is where we start. This is what's important. Tonight we are going to talk about history and ancestors."

I fought to conceal my disappointment. I hadn't traveled all this way to gather mythic histories that had already been compiled by other researchers. It seemed there were some detriments to anthropologists being a known quantity in Tana Toraja. Ne' Duma clearly had an idea of what interested anthropologists, and I was getting trapped by that stereotype even though I had come to study contemporary life, not folklore. Swallowing a sigh, I resigned myself to sitting through a few history lessons so that I would eventually be able to interview Ne' Duma about what really interested me. Later, however, I realized that in starting my lessons with mythic histories, Ne' Duma was relaying something he conceived to be critical to "Toraja identity."

Ne' Duma slid my notebook back to me, opened to a page where he had sketched an elaborate kinship chart stretching back some twenty-five generations to the ancestors who were said to have descended on a locally prominent hilltop.[15] Although his male and female symbols were reversed, in many other ways his chart could have passed for that of an American anthropologist. I wondered if his skills had come from exposure to visiting scholars. Ne' Duma began his narrative by addressing that very question. In a solemn voice he explained that his grandfather had him commit these lessons to memory, and it was thus that they had been passed down through the generations. Raising his voice slightly so that family members nearby could hear, he added that he was relieved that researchers now came to him for these lessons, as his own children had scant interest in them. "Without anthropologists and historians, this history would disappear," he sighed.[16] His daughter, Emi, who was hovering nearby chortled at these remarks, whereupon Ne' Duma directed her to sit down and listen. For the next two

hours and each evening for the rest of the week, Ne' Duma recounted with verve the deeds of his deified ancestors. His narrative offers a window into the identity of Tana Toraja's contemporary elite. His lessons also spotlight the entwined significance of genealogy, mythic history, local landscape, and carved *tongkonan* houses.

ANCESTORS, *TONGKONAN* HOUSES, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE

Ne' Duma began by gesturing in the direction of Tongkonan Kesu', his traditional ancestral house a hundred feet down the dirt road from his modern stone home.

> You know Tongkonan Kesu', ya, Katlin? Where Indo' Rampo does her selling. Tongkonan Kesu' was founded by the ancestor Puang riKesu', who descended from the heavens onto Kesu' Mountain, about 700 years ago.[17] From this center, the traditions and practices of *aluk* [Toraja indigenous religion] first spread in the Kesu' region. This is one reason Tongkonan Kesu' is still cherished . . . it is the most important house of the *to manurun* [people who came down from heaven] in this area.

I already knew from conversations with Ne' Duma's wife that the family considered Tongkonan Kesu' to be "their" *tongkonan.* In Tana Toraja people use houses as reference points in tracing their ancestry. Assuming one maintains one's ritual duties, one can claim membership in any *tongkonan* house associated with the ancestors of one's mother or father. Not all *tongkonan* houses are equally valued, however. Older *tongkonan*s with supernatural founders, such as Tongkonan Kesu', have great stature, whereas more recently established "child" *tongkonan*s are less esteemed. As I had heard guides in the village assert, some of these older "mother" *tongkonans* were once seats of power, where celestial founding ancestors reigned and magnificent rituals were held. In short, as Ne' Duma was setting out to show me, houses have genealogies, some more glorious than others. For many of today's Toraja, these majestic wooden structures are intimately bound up with familial identity, history, and hierarchy.[18]

I nodded to convey that I knew where Tongkonan Kesu' stood, and Ne' Duma continued. Next, he listed the other Toraja peaks where divine ances-

tors descended and settled, watching to make sure that I recorded them correctly in my notebook and quizzing me as to the locations of these peaks. "Originally," he explained, "there was a stone ladder *(eran dilangi')* up to heaven at a place called Rura. You know Rura, ya, Katlin?" Catching my perplexed expression, he shook his head with apparent dismay and said, "You passed through there when you came here from Makassar. It is in Duri (a mountainous Muslim area south of Tana Toraja), you know, near where the bus stops so passengers can buy palm-sugar sweets, the ones wrapped in corn husks . . . some sixty kilometers south. Next time pay attention when you go by there." Having satisfied himself that I could now envision where Rura was situated, he resumed:

> Back before the ladder was shattered, Puang Matua [the "Old Lord" in the Torajan pantheon] decided to send the *aluk* traditions down to the earth.[19] Puang Matua summoned Puang Bura Langi' and his wife Kombong Bura, along with their slave, Pung Pako Lando, to take the 7,777 *aluk* down the ladder to Earth. Puang Bura Langi' and Kombang Bura climbed down the stone ladder first. Next, their slave came down, carrying the 7,777 *aluk* on his shoulders in a big sack woven from pineapple fiber. But the *aluk* were very heavy and Pung Pako Lando couldn't carry them all, so he left behind 7,000 of them. So only 777 of the original 7,777 *aluk* were brought down to earth.

"So the laws of traditional Toraja religion *(aluk)* are incomplete?" I interjected. Ne' Duma blinked in agreement and resumed.

> Puang Bura Langi' and his wife Kombong Bura settled there in Rura. There they had their slave plant vegetable gardens with the seeds they had brought from heaven. One day Puang Bura Langi' was out walking when he encountered several men and women. He asked them about their beliefs, about what they did when people married, when children were born, and when people died. They answered that they did not know what he meant by beliefs—they had no notion of why they were on Earth. When people wanted to marry, they talked and, if they agreed, they married. They had no special practices for childbirth, and when people died, they just buried them in the ground without ceremony. Puang Bura Langi' invited some of these people back to his hut where he explained to them that he, his wife, and his

> slave had descended from the skies in order to bring beliefs and traditions to Earth. He asked them to bring their friends to the hut so that he could teach them all about such things . . .

Ne' Duma continued the story of Puang Bura Langi' and his wife, recounting the deeds and travels of their descendents, as well as their routine trips back up the celestial ladder for consultations with Puang Matua. Eventually Puang Matua became irked by the pestersome queries and misdeeds of these Earth-dwellers:

> Puang Matua summoned Londong diLangi'[20] (the grandson of Puang Bura Langi') to the heavens. Londong diLangi' climbed the stone ladder and Puang Matua told him that he was tired of being bothered by people on Earth and that he was going to entrust Londong diLangi' with the marriage laws. He handed Londong diLangi' four areca nuts—the first was whole, the second nut was in halves, the third in quarters, and the forth in eighths. Puang Matua instructed him to plant these nuts back on Earth. If the first unbroken nut grew, then children from the same parents could marry. If the second half-nut grew, then first cousins could marry. If the third quarter-nut sprouted, then second cousins could marry and, finally, if the last eighth-nut grew, marriage would be allowed between third cousins. Then Puang Matua declared that after Londong diLangi' climbed back down the stone ladder, he intended to destroy it forever so that people on Earth could never again climb up and bother him. Just as Londong diLangi' set foot back on Earth, the stone ladder came crashing down after him. You can still see the remains of it in Kesu'. You've seen the Sarira mountain range, south of Rantepao, haven't you, Katlin? That's what is left of the ladder to heaven."

I nodded, picturing the rocky outcroppings in my mind and imagining them as stony remnants of a gigantic celestial ladder. As Ne' Duma continued, I realized that this mythic history was transforming my sensibilities about the landscape. What to my unschooled eyes had been simply aesthetically pleasing "natural" scenery was now becoming infused with mythohistorical images. I was beginning to have an inkling of a very different sensibility of "place" and identity.[21] Throughout his lessons, Ne' Duma showed great concern that I appreciate the locations of each place he mentioned. Sites of *tongkonan*s that had been consumed by flames long ago, or

sites of *tongkonan*s that had been relocated by descendants of the founders, lands cleared by mythic forebears, watery pools from which supernatural ancestors arose—it was essential that I know the locations of all of these. Ne' Duma would frequently break off his narrative to quiz me: "Now, where is that mountain, Katlin?" When he caught me unable to answer, he would shake his head and describe the modern-day landmarks—the Pertamina gas station, the Catholic high school—until he was assured that I could envision the place to which he was referring. Ne' Duma's lessons made it clear that to know the legends and deeds of the ancestors, but not the locales in which these events transpired, was an incomplete understanding of Toraja identity. Mytho-history, *tongkonan* houses founded by celestial ancestors, and genealogy were all interwoven and entrenched in the local landscape.[22]

Ne' Duma's first lesson continued as he recounted how Londong diLangi' planted the four areca nuts in fertile soil. At the end of a month's time he discovered that the areca nut planted whole had rotted. However, the second, third, and fourth split nuts had sprouted and grown. "And so it was decreed that marriages between siblings were taboo, but marriages between first, second, and third cousins were permissible," concluded Ne' Duma.[23]

Then, with a sly grin in the direction of his wife, he added, "Indo' Rampo and I are like the second areca nut. We're first cousins. See us here on the chart?"

Chuckling gleefully about his lovely wife and his good fortune that the second areca nut had grown, Ne' Duma resumed his narrative, pointing out the descendants of Londong diLangi' on his hand-drawn genealogical chart and occasionally scribbling the names of the Toraja highland communities in which they settled. His tale grew more animated when he arrived at Pabane, one of eight siblings who left Rura (site of the original celestial ladder) and founded various villages throughout the highlands and elsewhere:

> Pabane came to Kesu', bringing with him the 777 *aluk.* There he met and married the widow Ambun riKesu',[24] the daughter of Puang riKesu' [the aforementioned God who descended onto Mount Kesu' some 700 years ago] and Batari Uai.[25] Not long after their marriage, Pabane asked his in-laws for permission to spread the 777 *aluk* in Kesu'. Puang riKesu' agreed and summoned the entire community to a meeting which lasted for

> twelve markets.[26] Puang riKesu' presided over the meeting. At the start of the meeting, Puang riKesu' asked Pabane to open his sack. Carefully, Pabane emptied pieces of wood from his bag—some of the wood was colored white and some was colored black. Pabane then explained, "When my father Tangdilino gave me these things, he said that they were part of the message that Puang Matua gave to our ancestors to take to Earth. There are 777 pieces of wood, either black or white in color. The white ones are *rambu tuka'* and the black ones are *rambu solo'.*" Do you know about *rambu tuka'* and *rambu solo',* Katlin?

I answered that I knew from my readings that they were terms for the two different kinds of rituals in Tana Toraja. To which Ne' Duma nodded and elaborated that *rambu tuka'* literally means "smoke rising." *Rambu tuka'* rituals are the rituals of the life sphere—rites of thanksgiving and rituals pertaining to the well-being of humans, plants, and animals.[27] These rituals are also known as *aluk rampe matallo,* "rituals of the East." As Ne' Duma explained, these rituals are carried out in the morning, on the eastern side of the *tongkonan* house, in the direction of the rising sun. *Rambu solo',* in contrast, translates as "smoke descending." These are the ceremonies pertaining to death and burial of the dead.[28] These rituals are also called the "rituals of the West" *(aluk rampe matampu'),* as they are performed in the afternoon in the western sphere of the *tongkonan* house, in the direction of the setting sun. While Ne' Duma outlined the two major classes of Toraja rituals, I realized that rituals, too, were inscribed in the landscape and entangled with the physical spaces of ancestral houses. This emphasis on directionality and on the locations of ritual sites vis-à-vis traditional houses again underscored the salience of place in Toraja consciousness. As I later learned, an assortment of rites and habitual practices bound together families, houses, ancestors, and specific places.[29]

Once it was clear that I understood the distinctions between *rambu tuka'* and *rambu solo',* Ne' Duma returned to his story, explaining that when Pabane finished introducing the 777 *aluk* to Earth-dwellers, a lengthy community discussion ensued. By its end the Kesu' community had decided to embrace the 777 *aluk,* instituting *rambu tuka'* and *rambu solo'* rituals as well as a rank system (known as *tana'* in Kesu'). Ne' Duma then went on to detail the rank system, as it was laid out by the ancestors. "In the Kesu' area," he explained, "there are four different *tana'.*" Sensing my confusion,

Ne' Duma instructed me to look up *tana'* in my Toraja-Indonesian dictionary. There I found the literal translation of *tana':* "to drive in a stake or peg." Nodding, Ne' Duma explained to me that the *tana'* system pertains to traditional marriage regulations and has to do with one's birth: the *tana'* system established the fines levied in the event of a divorce, in accordance with one's rank. For each of the four ranks (or *tana'*) a specific number of livestock had to be paid by the party responsible for dissolving the marriage.[30] One's *tana'* is the average of both one's parents' *tana'.* Although males could marry down in rank, there were strict sanctions to prevent females from doing so. Formerly those who broke the taboo could be sentenced to death. Each of the four *tana'* categories were keyed to the worth of a particular material object. Members of the highest ranking noble group were known as *tana' bulaan,* or "gold stake." These were the descendants of the celestial ancestors who came down from the heavens centuries ago. I looked at Ne' Duma quizzically, and he affirmed that he and his family were "gold stake." Next came the *tana' basi,* or "iron stake." This slightly lower group of elites could not claim descent from the gods. Below them were *tana' karurung,* or "wooden stake" (*karurung* is the hard core of the sugar palm): these were free men and women. Finally, at the bottom, were the *tana' kua-kua,* the "reed stake." These were the slaves, the descendants of the slave of the first heavenly ancestor.[31] At this point, Ne' Duma brought this first lesson to a close, leaving me to mull over the mythic connections between objects and rank status.

For the remainder of the week, as the generator hummed in the background and villagers clustered around the television at the other end of the room, Ne' Duma and I continued our evening lessons. In each session Ne' Duma progressed further down his hand-drawn kinship chart, giving lively accounts of the deeds of celebrated ancestors. When he arrived at his grandfather's generation, Ne' Duma shifted to detailing the various *aluk* rituals (enumerating the number of pigs or chickens sacrificed for particular rites, etc.) and answering my queries about Toraja architecture and carving symbolism. At the time I was glad to have made it past the initiating stories and into questions more in keeping with my research goals. It was not until I had heard Ne' Duma give an almost identical first "lesson" to two other Indonesian scholars researching very different topics that I realized that Ne' Duma was conveying an important statement about his own sense of identity. His narrative stressed the importance of themes such as heavenly

descent, rank, place, and *tongkonan*s. These concepts are basic to understanding Toraja elites and the role of material culture in conveying aspects of identity.

ZONING AND THE TOURISTIC HOMOGENIZATION OF ELITE SITES

A year later, in 1985, the fundamental ties between place, *tongkonan*s, ancestry, and identity politics in Tana Toraja were further illustrated at a Tourism Planning Meeting in Makale, the Regency's capital. I had accompanied Ne' Duma and several other Kesu'-area elders to this meeting, which was organized to facilitate the development of a Tourism Master Plan for Tana Toraja. I had expected the meeting to be small, drawing only local government officials and representatives from the Regency's eighteen official tourist sites (*obyek wisata,* BI). I was stunned to find over fifty people crowded into the meeting hall, including the *bupati* (head of the Regency), various local government workers, a well-dressed Bugis tourism consultant from Makassar, Indonesian economists, development specialists, an archaeologist, a famed Toraja anthropologist of Kesu'-area descent, and nobles from distant corners of the Regency.

After formal greetings, introductions, and opening remarks, the Bugis tourism consultant was invited to lay out the agenda. Taking the podium, he announced that they had gathered various experts on their team to look at Toraja in a "holistic" fashion, that today they not only wished to tackle the Tourism Master Plan, crystallizing concrete zoning ordinances for the various "tourist objects," but also to consider potential new Toraja destinations that would entice tourists to extend their stays in the highlands. After an energetic speech championing the importance of preserving culture and the local environment via zoning, the Bugis consultant offered his vision for creating a fresh climate for tourism in the highlands. He pointed out that his team wanted to clear up various false understandings, starting with the very basic misconception of what was "Toraja."

> Some people are of the opinion that Toraja is divided into Poso Toraja, West Toraja, and so forth. It turns out that the latest research has found that Toraja is Toraja: Toraja is our own Sa'dan Toraja. So it appears that Toraja has *one* perspective, *one* culture, and *one* set of values. We need to convey that uniformity.

Listening to the consultant, I was surprised by his invocation of these other areas of Sulawesi. His imagery called to mind the old colonial-era culture area maps that divided highland Sulawesi into various "Toraja" groups. Not only had I rarely heard anyone in Sulawesi talk of "confusion" about which of these realms was actually Toraja,[32] but it was the first time I had heard a claim of Sa'dan Toraja culture being uniform. Indeed, since my arrival in the highlands, Toraja acquaintances, and even Toraja anthropologists, had insistently highlighted the local variation. I wondered if the elites in the room, from the different corners of the Regency, would all converge on one version of Toraja culture, one version of Toraja mytho-history to be packaged and presented to tourists. It seemed unlikely to me, given the heated ongoing debates between elites about the age of various *tongkonan*s in the area and the significance of different versions of mytho-history.[33] The Bugis consultant proposed examples of tales that all guides should highlight and emphasized the importance of zoning to the vitality of "Toraja identity":

> We need to create a fresh climate for tourism, in which we offer tourists good information and explain what Toraja culture actually is, drawing on the worldly cultural lenses of consultants. So, for instance, suppose a tour group were to arrive at Mount Bambapuang (the Muslim area just south of Tana Toraja, where Rura and the celestial ladder were located), their guide should tell them of the connection between this area and *aluk* (Toraja traditions), of the significance of Rura, the point of descent of the first Toraja. We've also got to think about the various forms of preservation: cultural preservation, environmental preservation, and the preservation of national identity. Zoning aims to do all of this. It is in keeping with national goals and cultural goals, as the nation's goal is to preserve cultural values. Returning to the question of Toraja traditions, we see that there is a harmony between *tongkonan*s, *rante*s (the field on which funeral rituals are performed), and *liang*s (rock graves): if these were to fall into ruin, our identity would also disappear. This is what zoning aims to preserve.

As I mulled over the implications of this vision of zoning for reifying a homogenized Toraja culture, I turned to look at the various aristocratic Torajas in the room, who were nodding politely. Rura was universally recognized as a spot of historic importance and hence an uncontroversial start-

ing point. The reference to the preservation of *tongkonan*s, funeral fields, and rock graves was also a point of convergence for all in the room. However, the Bugis consultant soon shifted topics and inadvertently opened the door to discord.

> We want to develop a plan of what can be seen on a three-day tour, a four-day tour, and a five-day tour. And we want to develop a zoning plan for all eighteen tourist objects. These eighteen tourist objects will constitute tourist *destinations,* not just stopping points. Tourists have been flocking to the north, to the Rantepao area, so we'll try and find tourist objects of interest in the south, to lure them to stay overnight in the Makale area. We propose establishing a "tradition-free zone" somewhere near Makale where tourists can watch both *rambu tuka'* and *rambu solo'* dance performances at the same time.

My ears pricked up at this last proposal, as normally it is taboo to mix the elements of *rambu tuka'* and *rambu solo'.* During my time in Toraja, local friends had frequently reminded me that I should never attend life-oriented *rambu tuka'* and death-related *rambu solo'* rituals on the same day. I noticed several elders grimacing and shifting in their seats and wondered if they were not equally perturbed by this disregard for the dictates of tradition. The Bugis consultant soon wrapped up his speech and opened the floor for comments. A number of the aristocratic elders from distant southern areas of the regency quickly shot up their hands. When called upon, each made eloquent pleas for the planners to add their ancestral *tongkonan*s and villages to the official list of tourist objects. Some invoked episodes in Toraja mytho-history, arguing the importance of their areas for Toraja *aluk* (tradition). Others noted the significant features of their local landscape and the relationship of those features to various celestial ancestors. The Makassar organizers of the meeting showed signs of mounting impatience, glancing at their watches and whispering to each other. Finally, one official stood and declared emphatically, "This is a zoning meeting. We are *not* here to find new objects." The nobles and traditional leaders who had been vying to have their villages recognized were clearly disappointed and grumbled dejectedly as the meeting broke up.[34]

It would be easy to dismiss these elders' interest in getting their sites inscribed on the official list of tourist objects as entirely fiscally motivated. Certainly, having one's ancestral *tongkonan* recognized as a tourist object promised to bring paved roads and deep-pocketed tourists. However, there

was much more than money at stake. These aristocratic Torajas recognized that the world's definition of Toraja was being shaped by the sites showcased for tourists. For these nobles, as for Ne' Duma and others, Toraja identity was intimately linked to particular mythical landmarks (*tongkonan*s, mountain peaks, etc.). Recognition of one's mytho-historical landmarks as tourist sites meant not only incorporation into the "official" version of Toraja history but also substantiation of their own claims to high rank. Being recognized as having one of the oldest, historically significant *tongkonan*s also relegated other *tongkonan*s and competing seats of power to subsidiary status. As tourism ushered in a move to create a monolithic history, being left off the touristic map carried the threat of eroding one's ancestral claims to glory. In short, tourism was creating a new arena for the aristocracy to vie for legitimacy.[35] As we shall see in subsequent chapters, the ways in which tourism articulated with *tongkonan*s and other material symbols of identity often led to ironic and distressing outcomes for Toraja aristocrats.

But what of those who are not elite, those who cannot trace their ancestry back to celestial beings? What of people of other ranks and classes who do not have the means to participate in the elaborate ceremonial life of many *tongkonan*s, and hence cannot claim affiliation with an array of celebrated *tongkonan*s? How do their sensibilities about identity contrast with Ne' Duma's and the others chronicled here?

A PORTRAIT OF AN "ORDINARY" PERSON'S PERSPECTIVES ON IDENTITY

Not long after I arrived in the highlands, prior to arriving at Ne' Duma's home, I had the good fortune to meet Indo' Melambi. I had wandered into a book and school supply store near the Rantepao market, where I'd browsed the small shelf of Indonesian and Toraja language books. I had been intrigued to find a booklet entitled *Manusia Toraja: Dari Mana, Bagaimana, Ke Mana (Toraja People: From Where, How, and To Where?),* published by the Toraja Church's Institute of Theology (Institut Theologia Gereja Toraja 1983). I had piled this booklet, several notebooks, and a Torajan-Indonesian hymn book (which I hoped would help me develop my Toraja language vocabulary) on the glass counter when the kind-faced, middle-aged woman behind the counter turned to greet me. Spotting the items I

had selected, which undoubtedly struck her as odd for a tourist, the clerk asked me in carefully enunciated Indonesian if she could be of help. I explained that I was beginning research in Tana Toraja and wished to start learning the Sa'dan Toraja language. I already owned the Torajan-Indonesian dictionary. Were there other books that would be useful? She answered that there were no Toraja language lesson books and that I should learn the language from people. Introducing herself as Indo' Melambi, she proceeded to caution me not to ask Toraja youth for vocabulary help, as they would delight in teaching me *kotor* (BI; dirty) expressions without my knowing it. I should ask only older people for vocabulary lessons, people like herself. She then fired off the typical series of questions. Where was I living? Was I single? Was I here alone? What was my religion? When I answered that I was temporarily staying alone in an inn, but that I hoped to move to a village and live with a family, Indo' Melambi looked at me and clicked her tongue in an expression of pity. Then her eyes suddenly sparkled behind her glasses, and she declared that I could move in with her sister, brother-in-law, and herself: they would watch out for me and teach me proper Torajan while I hunted for a suitable village in which to live. She explained that they were members of the Toraja Church (Protestants), the "big *tongkonan*" as it was called by some, and that she and her family routinely "adopted" young people who were alone, helping them with their schooling and taking them to church. I politely declined her generous offer, which she continued to reissue each time I visited the bookstore.

Several weeks later I was walking in Rantepao when I heard Indo' Melambi's lilting voice calling out to me. There on a bench in the small garden of a weathered colonial-era row house sat Indo' Melambi. Next to her was a plump older woman whom she introduced as her sister, Ne' Mina. As we stood in front of their home chatting, several young neighbors spied me through the picket fence that divided the two households. The boys began whooping shouts of "*To Balanda!* (Dutch person)," prompting Indo' Melambi to whisper that people here often assume that all foreigners are Dutch, especially in the more remote villages where people know more about roosters than geography. Raising her voice, she cheerfully called back to the boys that I was not *"to Balanda"* but *"to Amerika."* This exchange prompted me to confide that the first few times I was called *Balanda,* I'd been uncomfortable as I'd feared being associated with colonial oppressors. Laughing, Indo' Melambi replied, "In Toraja, being Dutch is something positive—they were the ones who brought religion."

Indo' Melambi and her sister then ushered me into their modest, dimly lit home for coffee and conversation. A pair of teen-aged girls clad in school uniforms sat at a table in the sparsely furnished living room, their heads bent over a Bible. They were introduced to me as my hosts' *anak buah,* the "adopted" crew Indo' Melambi had told me about on our first meeting. Ne' Mina's husband, a quiet, long-faced man with a deeply furrowed brow, soon joined us from the inner courtyard, where he had been making sausages. Nodding at me, Ne' Mina said:

> You see, I married a Chinese man. But he is a good Christian and that is what counts. And he makes the most delicious sausages in Tana Toraja. Everyone buys his sausages, even the tourist restaurants. So between my sister's job at the bookshop and his sausages we can to live modestly and help out young people who are alone and need guidance. We couldn't have our own children, so we help children from Pasakke, the village where we were born. They come, live with us, and we see that they go to church and continue their education.

As the girls disappeared to prepare coffee and treats, and as Ne' Mina's husband sliced up a sausage for me to sample, Indo' Melambi thrust a photo album into my lap and began slowly flipping through the pages, offering me a visual tour of her life. Mounted on the pages of the album were faded black-and-white photos of deceased family members and of funeral rituals for Pasakke kin. She pointed out cousins and nephews and a familial *tongkonan* in Pasakke, telling me she returned to the village as often as she could and that she hoped to have her funeral there, when her time came. "A simple Christian funeral, not a big, expensive event," she added. Indo' Melambi's photo album also featured a number of snapshots of the adopted teens who had lived with them over the years. Most of the photos depicted these teens in church settings, singing in choral groups, at Christmas pageants, or at church fundraising auctions, although there were also several formal portraits of them, with the photo studio's painted image of Mount Sesean[36] and stylized terraced rice fields in the background. As I studied the images of these teens in their starched school uniforms and flowing church robes, Indo' Melambi told me with pride where they were today. Some were studying at distant universities, one had become a local school teacher, one was an architect, and a few had settled back in Pasakke village and were married with children. Several were now working outside the homeland, in the mining industry in West Papua, in a pattern now common in the Toraja

highlands. One was even in seminary, she beamed. Again Indo' Melambi reissued her invitation to move in with her family, where I would be safe and looked after. I would not have to go to church alone, I would have companions. Thanking her for the generous offer, I explained that I had already made arrangements to move into the home of Ne' Duma in Ke'te' Kesu'. "Ah, then I will not worry," Indo' Melambi declared, "You'll be safe there. The *remaja nakal* (BI; naughty or delinquent youth) won't dare bother you if you are living there. Ne' Duma is a *tokoh adat* (BI; traditional leader). God has been watching out for you."

Ne' Mina jumped in, declaring, "Wah, Ne' Duma, he's a *to kapua'* (lit. a big man, important personage), a *to sugi'* (rich person). Us, we're just ordinary people *(to biasa).* Yes, you'll be in fine hands there."

We chatted over coffee, biscuits, and sausage slivers for another hour; then I excused myself. As I left, they invited me to come back and join them for church that Sunday, adding, "When you live at Ne' Duma's, you can always come spend Saturday nights with us, too. That way you can go with the girls to the Sunday morning church services here in Rantepao. Services here are in Indonesian language, so you'll be able to understand. The pastors out in the villages do their services only in Torajan, you know."

Over the years I was a frequent visitor at the household of Indo' Melambi, Ne' Mina, and her husband. As I discovered, it was a household whose rhythm was punctuated by the church bells, education, and rituals in the familial village of Pasakke. Although there was a black-and-white television in the living room, it was seldom turned on; instead Indo' Melambi encouraged the girls to entertain us with readings from the Bible and their school books. While the family was of modest means, they were deeply committed to the Toraja Church and to educating the teens they took under their wing. Although perhaps more devout than some, in many ways the preoccupations of this household constitute important additional themes in contemporary Toraja identity.

Christianity is a vital dimension of contemporary Toraja identity. Today, over 90 percent of Toraja are Christian. The vast majority are members of the Toraja Church (Protestants), although there are also Catholics and some Toraja have joined more recently arrived churches, becoming Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, and Pentecostals. While the Toraja Church draws members from all echelons of society, the more recently arrived churches generally attract Toraja converts of humbler origins. According to the two American evangelist missionaries in Tana Toraja, their church, Gereja Kibaid, is much more "strict" in its stance on funeral

rituals: members are not permitted to slaughter water buffalo at funerals. As they stressed, the reason for this policy was economic. "It makes the poor poorer," they explained. Their congregants were largely from the southern areas of Tana Toraja and were predominantly "free men" of modest means. Poorer Torajas also tend to feel more at home in the Pentecostal Church, where they can enthusiastically and vigorously embrace their spirituality and where local elites are rarely found in the leadership structure. In contrast, the middle-class Torajas I knew—teachers, government workers, hoteliers, shopkeepers, and others with more education—generally found the boisterous singing and hand-clapping of these evangelistic religions overzealous. For them, the more restrained Protestant and Catholic services had more spiritual appeal.[37]

For many Christian Torajas, particularly those of commoner and slave descent, the mythic histories embraced by Ne' Duma and his aristocratic cohort are not the key (or even an important) frame of reference. For them, it is the parables of the Bible that animate their actions and infuse their world with meaning.[38] This is not to say that Toraja traditions are unimportant for the majority of the population. Quite the contrary, as Indo' Melambi's photo album displayed, ancestral villages, *aluk to dolo* funeral rituals, and webs of kinship remain salient to their lives and sensibilities. In short, for these Toraja, the church is a "big *tongkonan,*" fusing Christianity with the Toraja ideals of familial devotion.

Of course there are many others of commoner descent with less overtly Christian orientations. Although they identified themselves as Christian, a number of the young wild guides I came to know rarely attended church and never used Christian idioms. One wild guide in his early twenties laughed when he responded to my queries about religion: "I only go to church when I know the girl I like is going." And although the currency of their livelihood was their knowledge of Toraja traditions, many of these young men found more compelling inspiration in global cosmopolitanism. Dedicated followers of the latest global music and media sensations, and aspiring collectors of foreign tourist "girlfriends," these young men turned to nonreligious external sources as they constructed their identities. However, despite these passions, all of the young guides I spoke with were emphatic about their love for their homeland and their devotion to their families. Almost all of them expected to take on heavier roles in the ritual world as they grew older, for it is in the ritual world that one ultimately displays one's value, familial duties, and honor.

Not all of these young guides came from the elite or middle classes.

Some were from families of far more modest means. They did not have the resources to be involved in the ritual world of *tongkonan*s. While Christianity and other global movements may fuel the identities of some, how do the lower classes (largely descendants of slaves) deal with the elite narratives and practices that have long subjugated them?

THE VIEW FROM BEHIND THE RICE BARN

As I learned some weeks after my initial lessons with Ne' Duma, lower-ranking people in Tana Toraja ("helpers" and others of slave descent) have their own contrasting and at times competing mythic narratives. Many of these narratives celebrate the exploits of the trickster slave Dodeng, who acquired riches and high status by outsmarting his noble masters. These narratives are recounted in various settings, but I most frequently heard them at funeral rituals. Perhaps this is not surprising, as helpers' subservient status is most publicly on display in these ritual settings. Funerals are frequent events in Tana Toraja, drawing large crowds and lasting anywhere from twenty-four hours to ten or more days. Prominent families such as Ne' Duma's routinely attend funerals, bringing with them an entourage of servants. Not only do these helpers perform a variety of tasks at these funerals (preparing snacks for the family, fetching water, laying out bedding, and keeping the family's temporary funeral quarters tidy), but their presence also serves as a visual display of the family's high status and influence.[39] Traveling with a large entourage of servants is an important way to display power: the public presence of servants affirms and constructs the powerful identities of the aristocrats they serve.

Upon arriving at a Toraja funeral, families and their servants are publicly escorted by representatives of the host family to a guest reception area.[40] In this formal, very visible arrival procession, a guest entourage *(rombongan)* will pause before being ushered to the reception area. Women and men will straighten their somber-colored sarongs and check to make sure their positioning in the procession is correct. After the women have made last-minute adjustments to their wide-brimmed, plaited hats and the men have tightened their headcloths, a gong sounds, the guests' arrival is announced on the PA system, and the procession begins. Former slaves generally lead the procession, ushering in glistening water buffaloes, or carting squealing pigs on bamboo poles. Behind them follow other male

helpers, toting bamboo containers of foaming palm wine, beer, enormous baskets of rice, and other offerings. Next in the procession are the male elders, arranged in accordance with their age, stature, and height. Females follow, similarly arranged, in single file. At the tail end of the procession are still more helpers toting dishware and other provisions. Everyone is conscious of being on display, as guests study arriving entourages, taking note of their funeral attire as well as the number and size of the water buffaloes and pigs they bring. Following welcoming offerings of betel, cigarettes, coffee, and cakes in the guest reception area, eventually the entourage is led to its own bamboo pavilion or to the wooden platform of a rice barn where they will reside for the duration of the funeral. Here, helpers are generally relegated to the fringes. The front of the rice barn is reserved for the most important (generally male) elders.[41] Helpers' time is spent behind the rice barn or at the rear of the pavilion, working and chatting. Not surprisingly, then, it is in this context, where hierarchy is so visibly on display, that Toraja helpers shared humor-laden tales of the clever slave Dodeng.

I was introduced to one of the most popular Dodeng stories at one of the first funerals I attended with my Toraja family. It was an evening of

FIGURE 3. *An entourage of guests entering a funeral in procession.* Ma'badong *performers (in a circle) and temporary funeral housing are visible in the background.*

intermittent drizzles, following a long afternoon of guest arrivals, coffee drinking, and visiting. Prayers had already been amplified over the PA system, several hymns had been sung, and guests were finishing their funeral meal of rice, leafy greens, and pork roasted in bamboo tubes. On our rice-barn platform, the helpers had cleared away the last of our banana-leaf dinner plates, topped off the elders' glasses of palm-wine and beer, and swept away the dinner crumbs. Some family members had decided to hike home on the muddy path through the bamboo grove, seeking the comfort of their own beds. The younger members, most of the helpers, and a couple of the elders, however, were going to spend the night at the funeral, sleeping on rattan mats on the rice-barn platform. At the insistent urging of a favorite foster sister-in-law and a lively neighbor, I had been coaxed out onto the *rante* (ritual field) to try my hand at *ma'badong,* a ponderous and elegiac chant for the deceased. As an older male led the chant, and others sang or mumbled along, men and women locked arms and danced together in a slowly turning, undulating ring. After thirty minutes of hypnotic bouncing and murmured chanting on the muddy *rante,* I returned to the rice barn to catch my breath. As I leaned against the back end of the rice barn washing my muddied legs with rain water that had been captured in a tin drum, several of the helpers began playfully chiding me about my gracelessness on the *rante,* noting that my drenched sarong had repeatedly slipped down my hips as I bounced to the *ma'badong* chant. By then, I had learned that teasing was a favored Toraja style of relating and ribbed two of the helpers back about using the funeral to advance their romance. We sat there in a cluster, perched behind the rear edge of the rice barn, chatting about romances, funerals, and my inept attempts to "learn" Toraja culture.

After a time Ekson, a soft-spoken fifteen-year-old male helper, asked me if Ne' Duma had already taught me the tales of Dodeng. When it became clear that I had never heard of Dodeng, he, his father, and their friends took great relish in recounting the legend of Dodeng to me.

Dodeng was a slave of a young noble named Parengan. Parengan was passionately in love with a woman called Lebonna. The young lovers made a pact that if one should die, the other would immediately commit suicide so that they could be buried together in one grave, their bones commingling forever. One day Lebonna took ill and unexpectedly died. Although grief-stricken, Parengan did not fulfill his promise. Some months later his slave Dodeng was sent to gather palm fruit (for making wine) in a grove

near the burial cliffs. It was there that Dodeng heard Lebonna's spirit call to him, begging him to remind his master of their pact. "Ohhhh Dodeng," she sobbed, "my body is already decomposing and Parengan has yet to join me in the grave." Dodeng returned home, but instead of relaying the message from Lebonna's spirit, he urged his master to hasten to the palm grove to taste the freshly brewed palm wine. His master sped off to the cliffside grove and there heard the reproachful voice of his long-dead love. "Ohhhhh Parengan," Lebonna called, "Why have you forgotten your promise to me?" Parengan was so overcome by shame and remorse that he killed himself on the spot.

Parengan's family held a great funeral and buried him in the familial burial place, unaware of his promise to Lebonna. But Parengan's spirit would not remain in the grave; it followed his kin home and roamed the village. Perturbed, the family decided that perhaps Parengan's spirit was displeased because they had not sacrificed enough water buffaloes at his funeral.[42] His surviving kin slaughtered a prize water buffalo and tried assorted other remedies, all to no avail. Parengan's spirit continued to plague them. Eventually Parengan's family grew desperate, at which point Dodeng (who had remained silent during the sacrifices) slyly declared that he knew what must be done. Parengan's aristocratic family announced that if he could rid them of Parengan's spirit, he would be rewarded with both his freedom and all of Parengan's water buffaloes (his wealth). Dodeng instructed them to rebury Parengan's body in Lebonna's grave, and Parengan's spirit stopped plaguing the village. And so clever Dodeng gained not only his freedom, but great wealth.[43]

In recounting stories of Dodeng's exploits at this and other funerals, these low-ranking helpers both collaborated with and contested the nobles' constructions of their identities. While Dodeng fulfills certain aspects of the imagery of the dutiful, subservient slave, he ultimately leaves this identity behind. In celebrating Dodeng as a hero, these helpers could be said to be making muted statements about their unwillingness simply to accept their legacy of low birth. While they might not have the extensive genealogies of the elite, or be able to claim many celebrated *tongkonan*s as their own, they had Dodeng's exploits to bolster their standing. Indeed, the constructions of noble and slave identity in this story are noteworthy: the nobles in this tale are not only out of touch with what is going on around them, but helpless. It is only the low-ranking servant Dodeng who is fully aware and capable of delivering them from their predicament. In essence,

Dodeng cleverly preys on the nobles' ignorance, winning both freedom and fortune.

I heard Dodeng tales recounted with relish at many rituals during my stays in the field. And at various times, companions of slave descent asked me conspiratorially if I had seen the two tourist restaurants in Rantepao that were named for this hero.[44] For them, the owners were modern-day Dodengs, manipulating the new enriching powers of tourism for their own ends. In fact, I had consumed my first taste of the much-relished Toraja red rice at Chez Dodeng II and was friendly with the owner, who was nicknamed Dodeng. A plump, talkative man in his mid-forties, with a ready laugh and a sparkling silver-toothed smile, Dodeng was also enrolled in a 1985 Local Guide Training Workshop that I attended. He had rapidly become a leader for the younger aspiring Toraja wild guides who were registered in the seminar.[45] Participants in the training seminar often chuckled with admiration over his ability to raise sensitive issues in a humorous, socially acceptable way. As Dodeng cleverly negotiated touchy topics with the predominantly Bugis tourism planning officials running the seminar, various aspiring guides checked to make sure I knew the legend of Dodeng, and they commented on the appropriateness of his nickname. In their eyes this modern-day Dodeng had not only lassoed tourism to escape the constraints of his birth, but was now pole-vaulting over the Bugis tourism officials who had caused so many headaches for these wild guides.

As these invocations of Dodeng in both traditional and contemporary settings suggest, underclass Torajas draw on their own versions of mythic histories to reframe their identities, thereby crafting a more admirable place for themselves in society. In a sense, these Dodeng stories can be seen as "weapons of the weak," offering sly challenges to established local hierarchies of rank, class, and ethnicity.

TOURISTIC IMAGES OF IDENTITY

One last current of identity images in Tana Toraja deserves revisiting here. As Tammu's grandson had hinted to me, imagery originating from tourism is also a source of emergent conceptions of identity, especially for Toraja tourates and younger Torajas. The conception of Torajas as "heavenly kings" was not the only tourism-derived image circulating in the highlands. Much of the travel literature consumed by foreign tourists presents

Torajas as Rousseauian representatives of simpler, more pristine times. Some tourist books and brochures liken touring Tana Toraja to trekking though Eden—a place where people live an "authentic" lifestyle, in harmony with nature. One English-language coffee-table book is entitled *Toraja: Indonesia's Mountain Eden* (Parinding and Achjadi 1988). Another typical brochure describes the Toraja highlands as a land where "nature provides the noble and the low generously with the beautiful . . . its [sic] a garden for the gods and the goldy [sic] to tread upon" (Universal Travel, n.d.). While tourists' motives are extremely varied, most of the Europeans, Americans, and Australians I spoke with had examined touristic literature on the Toraja prior to their trip to the Sulawesi highlands. Not surprisingly, these foreign travelers tended to articulate their impressions with the tourbook imagery: the themes of "voyages of discovery" and Torajas' "harmony with nature" seasoned many narratives.[46] As one Australian tourist said to me in 1984:

> I came to see the people, people who live so close with nature. They don't use machines. Everything they make, their tools, their houses, everything is from the environment. They live in harmony with the environment.

FIGURE 4. *A traditional Toraja village plaza, with* tongkonan*s on the right and rice barns on the left.*

In the eyes of many foreign tourists, as well as in the prose of tourist brochures, this unique harmony is epitomized by Toraja attitudes towards death. A thirty-one-year-old Dutchwoman commented to me, "The people are so close to nature . . . it's striking to find all these aspects in their art and culture . . . even the way they treat their dead. . . ." Similarly, a tourist brochure heralds the Toraja as a people who "believe that life is only a celebration before a happy eternity in heaven, that death is a joyous occasion" (Hemphill Harris 1981). For many foreigners, witnessing a Toraja funeral ritual is the highlight of a visit to the highlands because it represents an opportunity to experience Toraja harmony with nature. Although more often than not foreign tourists were shocked by the blood-filled water buffalo sacrifices at these funerals, the majority of those I interviewed in the 1980s maintained their reverential attitudes about Toraja harmony with nature. Some even apologized for their squeamishness, noting that in their own societies they were unnaturally shielded from the slaughter of the animals they consume.

In short, for many European, American, and Australian visitors to Tana Toraja, attending a funeral ritual, viewing sculpted *tongkonan*s and effigies of the dead, or sipping frothy palm wine at the market with locals offered glimpses of what is imagined to be an "authentic" lifestyle. As a Frenchwoman in her twenties explained, "I am here because of my need for authenticity and beautiful countryside." Likewise, a middle-aged Swiss man told me, "I have come here to experience a living ethnic group in its own authentic milieu." The image of timeless "authenticity," it seemed, was pervasive among tourists.

Ironically, not only were funeral ceremonies and harvesting activities markers of authenticity, but for some tourists I, too, as an anthropologist, became a marker of authenticity. My presence seemed to reify their sense of taking a pilgrimage to the hinterlands of the earth, where "pagan" people still carried on "primitive" rites, where an ancient culture "worthy" of anthropological study (according to the stereotype) was still very much alive. Tour guides I encountered were quick to recognize this and added me to their itinerary of touristic objects, stopping to knock at my Toraja family's door and introduce me to their guests as they ushered them through Ke'te' Kesu'. On one occasion, while I was documenting a funeral ritual I encountered a tour group and was jokingly reprimanded by their Bugis guide for not wearing khaki. "I wear my uniform," he said, "and you must

wear yours. Otherwise they won't believe me when I tell them you are an anthropologist—they'll think you are just another tourist!"

When tourists' encounters did not mesh with their Rousseauian expectations, their disappointments were often framed in terms of the polluting impacts of Westerners. One French tourist recounted, "We went to this funeral in Sa'dan for a little boy and were surprised to discover in the end that it was Catholic! What does the Catholic Church have to say about this? What do you think is going to happen in Tana Toraja? Are we ruining it?" Similarly, a pair of Australian tourists I spoke with in 1985 bemoaned the manipulative emergent capitalism they presumed was an outgrowth of tourism. As one of the Australian women declared to me:

> Those weavers really know their marketing psychology. They got us buying far more than we'd intended. It seemed that all the textiles we bought happened to be made by the same person. All the other women crowded around us saying that we had to buy from them too. What could we do? And then there was this one old woman who lifted her blouse to show us her "poor bruised back" from long hours at the backstrap loom. We couldn't see much of a bruise, but the way she was moaning. . . . As soon as we bought her textiles, though, and offered to take her picture, she became a different woman, jumping up energetically and pulling an ornate, expensive-looking necklace out from under her shirt where it had been concealed, probably to make tourists think she was poor. Turns out her son was a big government official! She sure had us fooled. . . .

An Austrian man speculated after his visit to Ke'te' Kesu' in 1985:

> [Right now] they are still close to nature. But if I were in charge, I would not allow tourists to come here. It will ruin things. In ten to fifteen years it will not be the same anymore—you can already see the beginnings—the sidewalks, the busloads of tourists, the inflated prices. . . . We asked about a small statue at one of the houses here. They wanted 20,000 rupiahs [US $10]. Ridiculous! For what? A piece of wood! But crazy tourists come and buy these things. The people should stick with their traditional ways and not get involved with tourism. I know, I am a tourist, too, and I like to see these things. But it's the same everywhere, it ruins things.

Torajas, especially the tourates I knew, were not blind to these touristic images of timeless, "authentic" highlanders living in harmony with nature. Nor were they blind to the more negative impressions caused by their supposed "loss of cultural authenticity." Toraja guides and many other Toraja tourates I knew spoke some English, Dutch, or French and often asked their foreign charges about their impressions of Tana Toraja. Tourists' responses frequently conveyed both images of paradise and paradise lost. In villages elsewhere on the tourist circuit, souvenir sellers and local youths anxious to practice their English had similar conversations with foreign visitors. More often than not, the topic was Toraja culture. Although most tourists conversing with Torajas conveyed enthusiasm and interest in Toraja culture, on occasions these conversations left Torajas with troubling images. One educated Toraja friend, a lower-level local government official, told me the following:

> Europeans are all fascinated with Toraja. They find it one of the most interesting places around, and it's not simply because of the natural beauty—there's more to it than that—it has to do with culture. I've lived in a lot of places—Menado, Java—and in my view nowhere is as interesting as Toraja from the perspective of culture. Of course, I'm Toraja and not a Westerner, and I live with Toraja culture every day, so I am not as tantalized. But when I was younger, I met a Dutchman who was here and he said Toraja was a "living museum" (*museum hidup,* BI). I felt that he meant that we were *kunot* (BI; old-fashioned, backwards).

My friend was clenching his jaw and frowning as he uttered these last words. Sensing his distress, I gently suggested that perhaps the Dutchman was referring to the well-preserved traditional houses and carvings. My friend swiftly cut me off, firmly and cheerlessly repeating:

> "Living museum"—that would be for things that are alive, like animals, *kan* (right)? Like a zoo. Torajas are not *kunot* (BI; backwards)—there's a lot of progress (*kemajuan,* BI) here, as well!

My friend's conversation with this Dutch visitor so many years ago had clearly left a deep impression. His words called to mind the comments I had heard on my first bus ride to Toraja (see Chapter One). While for some Toraja tourates, the touristic impressions of their culture and homeland are disturbing, for others they are sources of pride and inspiration (witness the enduring resonance among certain Torajas of their tourism-inspired representation as "heavenly kings"). Through such casual conversations and

encounters, as well as through exposure to touristic brochures and slogans, images derived from tourism were gradually being woven into the Toraja vernacular, presenting yet another source for reflections on identity.

As I listened to stories of heroic Dodengs past and present, as I came to appreciate the strength of the Christian idiom offered by Indo' Melambi and others, as I was instructed in mythic history by Ne' Duma and his fellow elites, and as I heard Toraja tourates describing themselves as "heavenly kings" or as "in harmony with nature," I frequently found myself thinking about Tammu's grandson's directive to present the "authentic Toraja identity, unembellished with make-up." Clearly there were many local perspectives on the contemporary significance of rank. Likewise there were as many conceptions of identity as there were individuals in Tana Toraja Regency. However, the narratives recounted here convey some of the recurrent themes that, to varying degrees, preoccupy many of today's Torajas and form the basis for shaping identities: family and ancestral heritage, Christianity, wealth and local status, as well global trends and movements such as tourism.

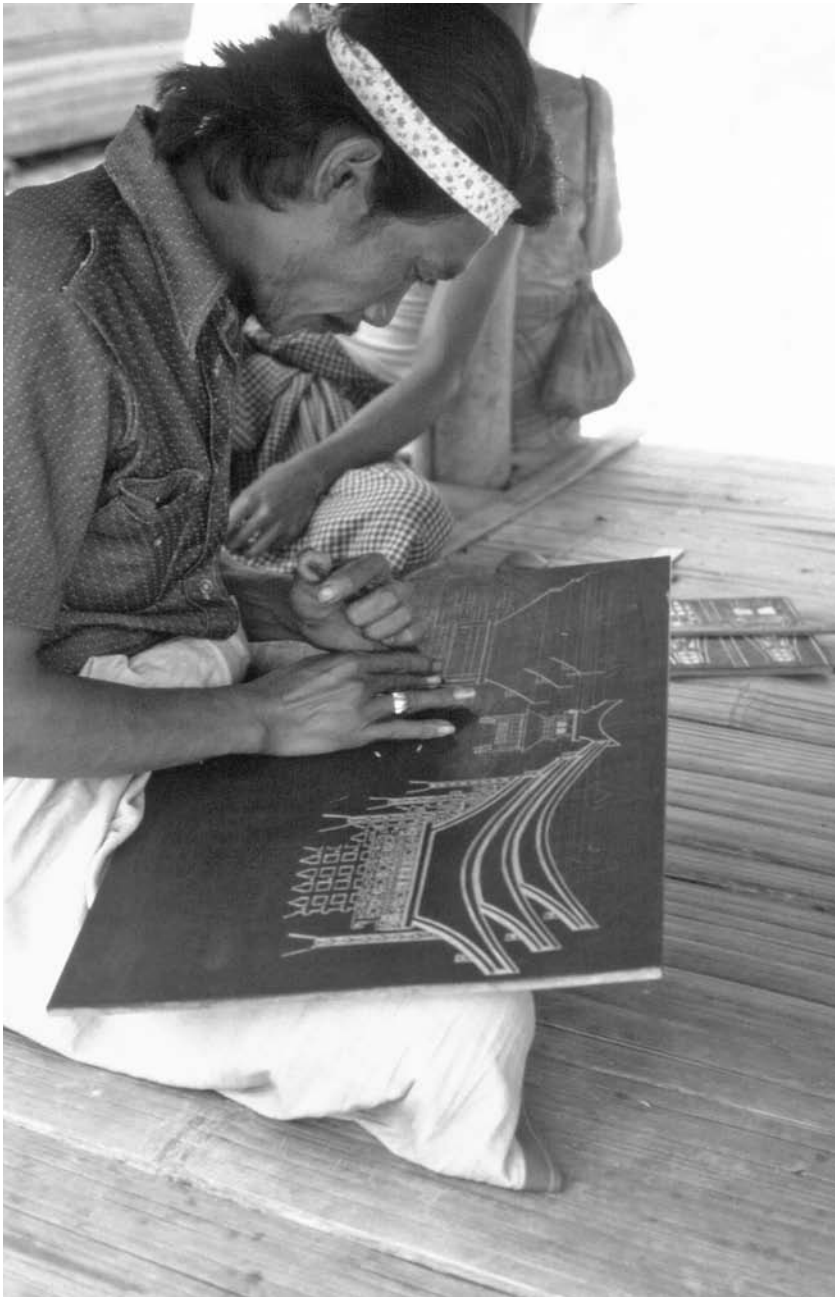


FIGURE 5. *A Kesu' area carver at work on a wall plaque.*

3

The Carved *Tongkonan*

A few weeks after settling in at Ne' Duma's family home, I set out to find a carving mentor. My initial prospect was Ne' Lindo, a charismatic, fine-featured carver in his fifties, with closely cropped salt-and-pepper hair, thick glasses, and twinkling eyes. Ne' Lindo resided with his family in Ke'te' Kesu' and ran a small but lucrative carving kiosk not far from Indo' Rampo's souvenir stall in the "traditional village." For the busloads of tourists who routinely toured Ke'te' Kesu' in the 1980s and 1990s, Ne' Lindo epitomized the master craftsman. Born to a traditional house carver in the mid-1930s, Ne' Lindo had spent his elementary school years carving bamboo flutes and containers, then moved on to sculpt larger wooden objects—trays, boxes, and finally model *tongkonan* houses. During colonial days he trekked his carvings in to the Rantepao market and sold them to the Dutch and, subsequently, the Japanese who were stationed there. Following independence, he took carving orders from Indonesian government officials. In his youth, Ne' Lindo had reportedly spent several years as a traveling salesman, hawking his wares at open-air markets across the archipelago and developing his skills as a witty and compelling speaker. By the 1970s, however, he had returned to the highlands and opened his carving kiosk in Ke'te' Kesu'. The 1970s were a busy decade for him: on several occasions he was called to the nation's capital to build rice barns and *tongkonan* houses for Mini Indonesia Park,[1] as well as for wealthy Torajas living in Jakarta. Chronic tuberculosis, however, eventually took its toll on Ne' Lindo and, by the time I became acquainted with him, Ne' Lindo was spending his days in his trinket shop, flanked by his grandchildren and a few younger carvers who routinely congregated there, lured by Ne' Lindo's lively conversation and seemingly endless supply of cigarettes.

Ne' Lindo's shop was on the balcony of his familial *tongkonan* and brimmed with carvings. Wall plaques depicting traditional rice barns and

houses, decorative wooden hangings carved with quilt-like sampler squares (showing *tongkonan*-facade motifs), incised bamboo tubes of all sizes, *tongkonan*-shaped key chains, gleaming forged knives with hornbill-shaped sculpted handles, and miniature three-dimensional *tongkonan*s all lined Ne' Lindo's shelves, while woven textiles from Central Sulawesi fluttered from the balcony of his shop. The floor of his stall was often littered with shavings, and an array of homemade paints in the traditional colors of red, yellow, black and white[2] could be found near Ne' Lindo's usual perch by the cash box. While Ne' Lindo had carved some of the wall plaques displayed in his stall, most were produced by carvers from the nearby village of Tonga. And Ne' Lindo made routine trips to Rantepao on market day to purchase the finely forged knives and miniature *tongkonan*s which he resold to visiting tourists at a slight profit.

Whenever tourist jeeps pulled up, Ne' Lindo would abandon his conversation midsentence, snatch up his worn metal knife, and begin working on a half-finished piece (generally left out specifically for tourist "demonstrations"). Ever the savvy marketer, Ne' Lindo was well aware that this staged activity reinforced tourists' sensibilities about the "authenticity" of his carved wares and enhanced the likelihood of sales.[3] Much to the envy of competing female vendors who did not carve, tour groups routinely made a beeline for his shop. Filing onto his balcony, tourists would seat themselves on the two wooden benches facing Ne' Lindo and snap pictures of him at work, while their guides explained the carving process, discussed the lightweight *uru* wood used in the carvings, and requested painting demonstrations. Ne' Lindo always complied quietly and unassumingly to such requests, taking a pointed splinter of bamboo into his hand, dipping it into the pigment and studiously filling in the incised lines. Periodically, Ne' Lindo made soft-spoken jests about his wares while carving for his tourist audience. On one occasion, as a guide held up an incised bamboo container holding two smaller carved bamboo tubes, Ne' Lindo quipped, "That one is participating in family planning, one mother and two children."[4] Ne' Lindo's humor and his deft ability to assume the pose of master carver served him well: during the pinnacle years of tourism his carved souvenirs flew off the shelves. And by the time I returned to Tana Toraja for follow-up research in 1996, Ne' Lindo had received national recognition for his talent. In late 1996, at the age of fifty-nine, Ne' Lindo was selected as one of eight Indonesian handicraft makers to receive a six-million-rupiah award from then-President Suharto. He had been flown to Jakarta, where he

spent ten days housed in a five-star hotel, as the government showcased his work in a national interior-decorating exhibition coordinated by Suharto's daughter. His visit culminated in a meeting with Suharto and his daughter, which was memorialized in a photo that Ne' Lindo proudly displays in his carving kiosk.

CARVING LESSONS

In 1984, when I first approached Ne' Lindo about the possibility of apprenticing myself to him, his reputation as a skilled carver was already well established. We had enjoyed a month of conversations about tourism and change in Ke'te' Kesu', and I felt that we had a good rapport. I'd told him that my father was a commercial artist, and he periodically asked me about his work. He also knew that I was interested in studying both "traditional" and tourist carvings, but each time I ventured to ask him about the meaning of a particular carved motif, he would demur, telling me that my host and adopted father, Ne' Duma, was the "expert" and that he feared that if his accounts differed from Ne' Duma's, I would end up confused. While happy to tell me about his new creations *(kreasi baru),* round wall plaques which entailed a merging of Madurese[5] floral designs with Toraja motifs, his reluctance to take me on as a formal pupil was clear. In his mind, I already had a mentor, albeit one who did not carve.

My adopted Toraja family urged me to consider another carving teacher, as at the time no one in the family was carving regularly (although today several of my Toraja "brothers" have become esteemed carvers). As a result, I turned to Pak Tandi, who ran a small carving cooperative on the road to Ke'te' Kesu'. Pak Tandi, a young man in his thirties, was a new father. He had a thick head of wavy hair and a broad, ever-present smile. Admired locally for his elegant, finely carved boxes and expertly crafted decorative objects, he had also carved several Toraja-styled wall panels for hotels in Makassar. Pak Tandi was not involved in the tourist market, although some of the younger carvers in his cooperative sold their work to tourist shops in Rantepao and kiosks in Ke'te' Kesu'. To my relief, Pak Tandi graciously took me on, despite the liabilities that I brought with me. While I knew that carving was a livelihood traditionally open to people of all ranks, I was unaware of informal limitations on who could become carvers. As Pak Tandi informed me on my first day, carving was traditionally a

male activity. However, the tourist demand for carved trinkets had encouraged some rural women to try their hand, and many were now incising bamboo tubes. As Pak Tandi told me, perhaps more to reassure himself, one Tonga woman had even become skilled at carving trays for tourists.[6]

Another unanticipated problem was my left-handedness. For the Toraja, as for most Indonesians, the left hand is the impolite hand. In the 1980s, eating, greeting, and handing objects to others were always done with the right hand. While I had mastered the ability to eat with my right hand, I could not manage to wield a carving knife with anything other than my left hand. When I toiled over a basic pattern at Pak Tandi's workshop, tracing angular penciled lines on a blackened board (in the fashion that most Toraja youths learned to carve), several of the male teenaged carvers would abandon their work to peer over my shoulder, muttering in stunned and astonished tones, "She's carving with her left hand!" Invariably, my knife would slip and, more often than not, my incisions would be colored with my own blood.

Which brings me to my third obstacle to studying carving via full participant observation: my utter lack of talent. I had spent years as a ceramicist and had naively assumed that that my pottery skills would translate relatively easily into wood sculpting. I was sadly mistaken. Whereas clay is a relatively forgiving medium, allowing one to correct one's errors with a few extra spins of the wheel, working with wood was an entirely different matter. What one chipped away was permanent, and errors could not be easily corrected along the way. As I came to appreciate, a Toraja wood carver starts out a project with a fairly defined vision of the object's final appearance. His incisions are careful and precise, as wooden planks are too costly to waste. Unlike clay, which can always be recycled, wood cannot. Moreover, in the 1980s, Toraja wood carvers sculpted a specific array of named motifs. Deviation or transformation of these motifs was rare: if one botched a motif, the entire panel was ruined.[7]

After a month of failed attempts at carving, I finally surveyed my bloodied hands and ruined boards and concluded that I should concentrate on interviewing Pak Tandi and the carvers in his workshop on the names, meanings, and histories of the carving motifs that adorn Toraja homes, rice barns, and tourist trinkets. I decided that I would also need to study the older Toraja carvings stored in Indonesian and Dutch museum collections, as well as hunt through historical archives for early descriptions, photo-

graphs, and sketches of Toraja art and culture. With luck, these musty documents might yield additional clues regarding the significance of *tongkonan* carvings to earlier generations of Torajas reared in the era before tourism.

THE CARVED *TONGKONAN* AND RICE BARN AS PHYSICAL AND METAPHORIC STRUCTURES

Some months after I returned from my first stay in Tana Toraja, I had the opportunity to browse the Indonesia-related historical collections at the University of Michigan Library. While most of the academic accounts I had read prior to my fieldwork derived from the 1950s through early 1980s, I was intrigued to find magazines, memoirs, and novels offering over a century of popular images of the Toraja created by traders, travelers, and explorers. While varied in tone and details, many of these sketches offered sensational images of untamed or wretched Toraja. These largely second-hand accounts shaped many European fantasies about the Toraja, luring some to what they imagined to be a land of wild, cannibalistic artists.[8] Steeped in such imagery of savage Torajas was J. MacMillan Brown, a British adventurer who traveled through the Dutch East Indies during the first decade of the twentieth century. His voyage included several weeks in Sulawesi, where he hoped to encounter the highland Toraja people, or, as he dubbed them, "the Pacific wild men." Brown's disappointment with the "tame and Christianized specimens" of Torajas he encountered in the Lake Poso region of upland Sulawesi is evident in his account of his travels, where he bemoans the extensive influence of missionaries and Chinese and Arab traders and laments that "the old head-hunting and banquets on an enemy's blood and brains are mere traditions" (Brown 1914:118). Brown also chronicles how, when he conveyed his disenchantment to the colonial governor in Makassar, he received a tantalizing invitation to travel up the Gulf of Boni, where the governor promised that "his Toradja,[9] pacified only four years ago, and headhunters up til then, were quite different from the domesticated specimens of Posso" (ibid.). As Brown recounts, the Dutch administrator assured him that "they had real wild men up in their mountains, with their villages perched on precipices. . . ." (ibid.) Unfortunately, Brown could not fit this voyage into his agenda and, as consolation, the colonial governor took him to the raja's palace in Makassar, which doubled

as a museum. At the palace museum, Brown was shown models of elaborately carved Toraja *tongkonan* houses, which he describes at length:

> Their storehouses were, like the Maori pataka, most richly carved, with conventionalized designs, some of them spiral scrolls: and though there were none of them on these models, many of their large community houses have monstrous carved images of the human form as decorations, as in the Maori carved house. Some of the struts and supports were long bird-necks, with heads like that of the cassowary, a bird that is found only in Ceram, westward of New Guinea (Brown 1914:120).

Brown closes his description by declaring his captivation with the carvings of these "wild artists." While Brown's voyage to the Celebes took place nearly a hundred years ago under very different conditions from those experienced by more recent jumbo-jet tourists, some themes in his narrative resonate with the contemporary politics of art and ethnicity in Indonesia.

Brown's experience—an initial, indirect encounter with Torajas through their art—is not unique. Today, most travelers to Indonesia (and Indonesians, as well) are exposed to Toraja arts, even if they never set foot in the Toraja homeland. Toraja material culture has a long history of display in the world's cabinets of curiosity. As Brown's report indicates, as early as 1914, Torajas were being museumized by non-Torajas, their identity showcased through their arts.[10] Moreover, in this early account we already glimpse how Toraja arts can evoke compelling imagery of ethnic and even pan-Pacific islander identity. For Brown, viewing Toraja carvings conjured images of Torajas as "wild artists" and prompted visions of pan-Pacific communities of spirited tribal carvers, from the New Zealand Maori to the highland Sulawesi Toraja.

As with many who followed him, Brown was captivated by the carved *tongkonan,* an object that has become an icon of "Torajaness" for both insiders and outsiders. The miniatures he was shown, like those purchased by urban Toraja visitors today, call to mind the elegantly carved traditional houses embellished with elaborate geometric motifs and arched, sweeping roofs of layered bamboo (see Plate 1). Standing regally on raised pilings, *tongkonan*s are reported by some to evoke the shape of the vessels of the mythical ancestors who sailed up the waters of the Sa'dan River to Tana Toraja.[11] Built of wood planks, split bamboo, pegs, and rattan bindings (no nails are used), the house contains three rooms. In the Kesu' area, the central room generally serves as the family's main living area and contains a

hearth with three cooking stones[12] and a bamboo rack suspended from the rafters holds firewood, cooking utensils, and various rice-winnowing baskets (nowadays, however, the kitchen is often constructed adjacent to the house). It is in the central room that the unmarried men of the family sleep, and where houseguests and slaves formerly slept. Traditionally, the front room was where the unmarried women slept or, in some areas, where guests were received. The back room, in turn, was sanctuary to the husband and wife. Stored in wooden trunks or weathered baskets in this room are the sacred heirlooms associated with the *tongkonan:* prized swords and golden *keris* (BI; daggers), small, mysteriously shaped stones wrapped in bits of frayed cloth handed down through the generations, beaded ornaments, old silver rings embedded with large glassy jewels, golden necklaces, ancient wooden eating bowls on pedestals, and sacred textiles from the ancestors. These treasured items are routinely brought out and displayed for ritual events. Over the years they become visual reminders of the group's legacy.

As several scholars have suggested (cf. Volkman 1985:180, Kis-Jovak et al. 1988:36–38), the *tongkonan* serves not only as a dwelling, but also as a microcosm of the universe.[13] In a cross-sectional view of the house, the *tongkonan* models the tripartite Toraja world of *aluk* to *dolo* (Toraja traditional religion). As my host Ne' Duma had taught me, the lower world is the realm of tailed gods *(deata to kengkok),* and Earth comprises the middle world *(lino),* the realm of humans, and the upper world (or the heavens) is divided into multiple layers, the highest of which is said to be the home of the Old Lord (Puang Matua). In keeping with this basic tripartite division of the cosmos, the space between the *tongkonan*'s supporting pillars traditionally housed prized buffaloes and pigs: this is the realm of animals and a favored haunt of malevolent beings such as the *batitong*—part-human, part-spirit creatures with glowing lights on their heads who greedily suck out humans' livers and consume small livestock. Moving up a layer, the rooms in the *tongkonan* represent the earthly realm of humans, and, finally, the rafters and roof of the house are associated with the heavens. Offerings for the gods are placed on the house's uppermost interior front gable, and it is via this area that the gods of the upper world are reported to enter the house.[14]

The house can also be envisioned as a metaphor for the body. Most houses have a large central "navel" post *(a'riri posi'),* associated with the center of the cosmic axis. Moreover, *tongkonan* entryways are seen, by some, as akin to female bodily orifices. This metaphor is so strong that some Tora-

jas caution women of childbearing age not to sit in *tongkonan* doorways, so as to avoid difficulties and blockages when giving birthing (Volkman 1985:180). Likewise, certain classic Toraja litanies compare the supporting wall beams to a woman's neck chain.[15] Finally, the facades of houses, like Toraja bodies in prior eras, are embellished with carvings or tattoos *(sura')* (ibid.).

Not only is the *tongkonan* a dwelling and an embodied microcosm of the universe, but it is also the locus of ritual activity. This dimension of the *tongkonan*'s function is reflected in its etymology. The word *tongkonan* derives from the verb *tongkon,* "to sit," especially "to sit in a ritual context" (cf. Tammu and van der Veen 1972). A *tongkonan,* then, is both the seat of ritual activity and a mark of one's seat in society.[16] An additional meaning of the verb *ma'tongkon* is "to attend a funeral," indicating the importance of the *tongkonan* as a ritual site as well as the critical link the *tongkonan* provides with one's deceased ancestors and, by extension, with the past. For example, the traditional *tongkonan* consecration ritual, *Passomba Tedong,* begins with a lengthy chant invoking the spirits of the *tongkonan*'s founding ancestors.[17] Accompanying this is a detailed account of the *tongkonan*'s history and the exploits of the ancestors affiliated with the *tongkonan.* Thus embodied in the *tongkonan*'s rites, the kin group's shared history can be drawn upon in the elaboration of contemporary identities.

Closely associated with the *tongkonan* is the rice barn *(alang).* In shape, the rice barn mirrors that of the ancestral house: erected on pilings, the top portion of the rice barn (where the harvested rice is stored before winnowing) boasts a saddle-shaped roof, usually of layered bamboo. The wooden walls of some rice barns are elaborately carved with the same motifs that adorn *tongkonan*s, while others are left unembellished. Beneath the elevated barn, two to three feet above the ground, is an open-air platform that provides a space for socializing or for eating and sleeping during rituals.[18] While there are variations in house and rice-barn styles from region to region within Sa'dan Toraja, *tongkonan*s in the Sa'dan area all face the headwaters of the Sa'dan River or north, and rice barns stand opposite them, facing south. The number and size of rice barns underscore the wealth of the owners. As storage structures for bundles of rice stalks, rice barns can be thought of as enormous jewelry boxes or decorative banks for storing wealth and sustenance. While men are responsible for the construction and repair of rice barns, it is generally the women who tend to their contents, gracefully scaling these lofty structures on notched bamboo poles, unlatching

FIGURE 6. *Toraja women storing rice bundles in a rice barn. The raised platform underneath also functions as a place to receive guests. During funeral rituals, important community members are seated at the front of these platforms.*

their small doors, and gathering up rice bundles to be winnowed for family meals and ritual events, or to be sold on market day in Rantepao. In most villages, rice-husking is a daily task, and the pounding of grains in wooden troughs, or the hum of a distant rice mill, punctuates the rural rhythm of crowing roosters, crickets, squealing pigs, and children at play. In much-touristed Ke'te' Kesu', families who did not take their rice stalks to Indo' Rampo's nearby mill did their own husking behind the *tongkonan*s, conveniently out of the sight of tourists and their cameras. Fortunately for privacy-seeking villagers, most tourists focused on the front facades of the *tongkonan*s or perched on the rice-barn platforms to contemplate the row of four *tongkonan*s that comprise the "traditional village."[19]

The facades of these four *tongkonan*s are indeed mesmerizing in their detail. Covered with finely etched, intricate patchworks of carved geometric and anthropomorphic designs, the houses strike the casual viewer as palettes for encoded messages from the past. In fact, the Toraja verb "to carve," *masura',* is also the verb "to write," and a number of the Toraja I spoke with referred to the carving motifs as *basa to dolo,* or "the language of the ancestors." However, Toraja *tongkonan*s were not always carved. As Kis-Jovak, Nooy-Palm, and others (1988:42) have established, the oldest houses are almost devoid of carvings, save for a few incised rows of vertical bars. One wonders where and how the tradition of carving houses began. I asked countless carvers and elders this question, but only one had a ready, albeit suspect, answer. This hunched and graying old carver from Tonga explained that the first carvings were made when a menstruating woman happened to sit on the wooden platform of a rice barn. Her blood flowed into the cracks of the wood, creating a pleasing pattern that carvers soon sought to mimic with their knives on the surfaces of houses and rice barns. When I first heard the story, I was thrilled at the thought of a female genesis of carving, but my excitement was soon dampened by my Toraja research assistant, Kila, a bright twenty-five-year-old Ke'te' Kesu' "brother" who had worked briefly as a trekking guide for tourists. Once we had left this carver's home and were heading down the rocky hillside trail, Kila erupted with laughter at my gullibility. He denounced the carver's explanation as impossible and declared that he was probably just having fun with me.[20] For the remainder of our trek home, Kila relentlessly teased me about my excited reaction to this far-fetched tale, snatching up a grassy weed to use as a plume in a comical imitation of my frenzied scribbling in my notebook.

The origin of Toraja house-carving remains unknown, although researchers have advanced various theories. One plausible explanation is that offered by Kis-Jovak, et al. (1988:73), who note that the curvilinear designs are clearly of Bronze Age (Dong-son) derivation and that they used to be incised on the heavy wooden sarcophagi once sculpted by the Toraja, a tradition that was abandoned some ten generations ago. They speculate that these designs were probably transferred to houses and rice barns at this time, as the Toraja sought to enhance the prestige associated with their family group's *tongkonan*s.

FAMILIAL IDENTITY, STATUS, AND THE *TONGKONAN*

Familial prestige and the *tongkonan* are closely linked in Sa'dan Toraja society. For the Toraja the *tongkonan* is more than just a physical structure —it is the visual symbol of one's descent. A critical function is its role as the "seat" of one's extended family. Entwined with every *tongkonan* are the people living in it now and those who lived in it in the past. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in Tana Toraja people use houses as reference points in tracing their ancestry. Each *tongkonan* has a unique name and history, a history tied to all family members affiliated with the *tongkonan.* A given *tongkonan* "belongs" to all male and female descendants of its founding ancestor. Not all *tongkonan* are created equal, however: older "mother" *tongkonan*s founded by an offspring of a celestial ancestor are far more prestigious than more recently established *tongkonan*s with shorter, less glorious pedigrees. As the group of kin associated with a *tongkonan* (termed *pa' rapuan*) grows with each generation, it splinters into smaller groups that establish their own new satellite *tongkonan*s. These offspring *tongkonan*s have less stature than the "mother" *tongkonan.*[21] Thus, Torajas can trace their ancestry to multiple greater and lesser *tongkonan*s, assuming they maintain their ritual obligations to these *tongkonan*s.[22] *Tongkonan*s are so essential to Toraja conceptions of kinship that in recent years Toraja has been dubbed a "house society."[23] As Waterson observes, it is challenging to fully comprehend Toraja social organization without an understanding of houses as the orienting point of this system (1990, 1995:47–48).

In fact, so fundamental are *tongkonan*s for kinship relations that when Torajas meet far from the homeland, they will often compare notes on *tongkonan* membership to determine their relations. This was my experience

when I learned from my Loyola University Chicago students that a Toraja graduate student, a priest from the Sangalla' area, was working in our university library. When we met, he introduced himself as Petrus, and within minutes of learning that I had an adoptive Toraja family, he asked me about their *tongkonan*s. I named a few of the *tongkonan*s associated with Ne' Duma, and we quickly established that both his family and my adopted Toraja family traced their descent to Tongkonan Kesu'. Petrus gleefully declared that we were therefore kin. Being kin brought with it an assortment of mutual obligations, as I was to discover. Petrus wasted no time in asking me my age, and when he learned that I was several months older than he was, the template for our relationship was complete. As a younger sibling *(adi),* Petrus took it upon himself to assist me in various ways (on one occasion volunteering to spend a Saturday afternoon barbequing spicy beef *sate* for a party I was hosting). As the older sibling *(kaka),* I was responsible for ensuring that his Loyola University studies went smoothly, for contacting various university offices when his papers and tuition funds were misplaced, and for delivering him to the airport when it came time for him to return to Indonesia. Our *tongkonan*-based "kin" ties were not limited to the American context: when I returned to Tana Toraja some years later, despite his many new responsibilities as a highly placed priest, Petrus showed up at my Toraja family's home on a borrowed motorcycle and whisked me off for an all-day "research update tour" of the architectural changes that had occurred in the area during my absence. Petrus's generosity with his time went beyond friendship: he was acting in keeping with the behavioral expectations of a younger kinsman.

Not only does the *tongkonan* map one's kin but, as many Toraja whispered to me, a quick glance at an unfamiliar *tongkonan* tells you the rank of its members. Fully carved *tongkonan*s adorned with intricate motifs denoted the nobility.[24] Commoners were traditionally restricted to carving small, specified sections of their *tongkonan*s. Slaves, in turn, were strictly forbidden to decorate their houses with carved motifs. The elaborately carved *tongkonan* was, in many ways, a material symbol of the nobles' power and prestige.

Today, for noble Torajas, the *tongkonan* remains fundamentally entwined with Toraja identity, rank, and ritual activity. Just as it is essential to know one's *tongkonan*s, it also pays to know those of one's competitors. On a number of occasions, aristocratic friends told me that the best way to insult a rival was to criticize his or her *tongkonan.* As one politically active, well-

respected noble from the Kesu' area confided at a *tongkonan* consecration ritual we attended together:

> If you want to shame *(pomasiri')* a rival, just attack his *tongkonan.* You can embarrass someone who thinks he's a big shot *(sanga to kapua)* by saying, "You may talk big, but your *tongkonan* is a mess—it hasn't been fêted *(dirara)* in years!" That alone would make your rival urge his *rapuan* (*tongkonan*-affiliated kin group) to gather their resources for a *mangrara banua* (*tongkonan* consecration) ritual, to erase their shame. Just look at the elders here at this *mangrara banua* ritual. Before the ritual, they weren't so proud and joyful—they haven't held their heads this high in years.

Indeed, as my aristocratic friend suggested, those whose *tongkonan*s have been neglected and unfêted attempt to regain their prestige by sponsoring such rituals. Hence, not only are *tongkonan* carvings an arena for articulating and renegotiating relationships, but so, too, are *tongkonan* rituals. In essence, *tongkonan*s become imbued with glorious memories of these past ritual events (or with shame when these events have not happened in some time). Such momentous events centering on the *tongkonan* lend it further emotional force as an "affecting presence."

As a case in point, in 1986, some months after I returned home from my initial fieldwork, my mentor Ne' Duma passed away. My Toraja family was painfully aware that their prestige in the community had eroded since his death. In 1989, they devised a comprehensive strategy to recover their position of authority in the community. Central to the plan was their ancestral *tongkonan,* which, to their shame, had not been fêted for many decades. In January 1990 they staged a spectacular seven-day, pageantry-filled *tongkonan* consecration ritual. The ritual drew thousands of guests. Relatives came from as far away as Jakarta and Australia to participate in the ceremony, thereby reaffirming their ties to the *tongkonan.* Widely publicized, the event drew busloads of Indonesian tourists, assorted dignitaries, and foreign travelers. Even Indonesians who did not attend the celebration watched it on the television news or read about it in the nation's premier newspaper, *Kompas* (where it received three pages of coverage replete with multiple color photos). My Toraja foster brothers reported that the event was a wild success: through their *tongkonan* consecration ritual, the family reclaimed its place of respect in the community.

Even for those nonnobles with less-esteemed genealogies, the *tongko-*

nan is an "affecting presence" and can serve as a means for enhancing one's status in society. While some speculate that originally *tongkonan*s were established only by elite Toraja families, over the past couple centuries, *tongkonan*s have mushroomed in Tana Toraja. According to the mythic histories recounted by my Toraja foster father, Ne' Duma (Chapter Two), new *tongkonan*s were established as sons of the first founding ancestors settled in more remote areas. And, as noted earlier, still more splinter *tongkonan*s were founded as families grew and split apart. Today, everyone, even those who are poor or descendants of slaves, belongs to at least one *tongkonan.*[25] Just as with the rich, for most rural, less-well-off Torajas I knew, achievements in life were, at least in part, measured through the vitality of one's *tongkonan*-based rituals, as well as by their decorations and state of repair. On occasion I heard disapproving whispers from a few elites about people "who had no right [in terms of their ancestral rank] to decorate their *tongkonan*s with carved embellishments," yet were doing so. In turn, several Torajas of modest ancestry delighted in telling me of their own remodeled and refurbished *tongkonan*s, inviting me to come photograph them for my research. Even a poor servant I knew glowed when she spoke of her familial house, noting with modesty that it was "simple," unlike those elaborately carved structures in the heart of Ke'te' Kesu'.

Although the economic status of this servant's family prevented them from asserting membership in a fully embellished *tongkonan,* she took pride in the tourist-oriented, carved *tongkonan* imagery proliferating in Rantepao. After several months of diligently remitting the bulk of her earnings to her parents back in her remote natal village, this young Toraja servant had saved up enough money to buy something for herself. When market day finally arrived, she made a much-anticipated trip to Rantepao and purchased a white T-shirt emblazoned with a colorful image of a carved *tongkonan* and a bold caption reading "Toraja." She regularly wore the T-shirt on her days off, telling me that she liked the *tongkonan* picture and that she was "proud to be Toraja." For her, as for other younger, poorer Torajas I knew without their own elaborately-carved familial *tongkonan*s, it seemed that simply displaying images of fully embellished *tongkonan*s—whether on stickers or T-shirts—inspired a sense of pride. As the servant's words suggested, however, in contrast to those of elite status, it is ethnic pride, rather than familial pride, that is inspired by the T-shirt's carved *tongkonan* imagery. Tourism, it seemed, was helping to broaden the significance of the motif-incised *tongkonan,* at least for younger people of lower status.

REINVENTING THE *TONGKONAN*

Recent decades have not only brought shifts in the significance of the image of carved *tongkonan*s, but they have also brought transformations of the *tongkonan* as a physical structure. Traditionally, a *tongkonan*'s interior is dark and weighted with a musty aroma, as the few shuttered windows are small and years of cooking on an interior hearth lend a smoky patina to the walls and bamboo ceiling. Although today many Toraja families have attached bright florescent lights to the rafters of their *tongkonan*s, and some families I knew had even covered the interior walls of their traditional homes with cheery floral wallpaper or glossy magazine cutouts, other families have abandoned the *tongkonan* as their primary residence, preferring to construct more comfortable modern cement houses or wooden Bugis-styled dwellings on raised pilings. Such was the case where I lived: only the older unmarried sons slept in their ancestral *tongkonan,* but these sons took their meals and spent their leisure hours in the family's cement house a few hundred meters away.

Some families have attempted to fuse modern cement houses with traditional *tongkonan*s. One of the earliest hybrid *tongkonan*s I know of is picturesquely situated on the far side of the Sa'dan River, not far from Makale. This *tongkonan* consists of a wooden Bugis-styled house on stilts, topped with a full-sized carved *tongkonan.* One enters the *tongkonan* via the Bugis house beneath it. This was rumored to be a very old *tongkonan* that was reconstructed in this hybrid fashion circa 1945. According to the head of the family, an engineer, the *tongkonan* was redesigned in this fashion because its interior had been "too dark and cramped."

Another early hybrid *tongkonan* was the Rantepao home of one of my adoptive sisters-in-law, Mama Landang.[26] Situated opposite Rantepao's grassy central square, Mama Landang's familial house had caught my eye on one of my first exploratory walks around town. It was a substantial yet slightly frayed, whitewashed Dutch-era house of stone and cement, with lovely large shuttered windows and an attached cement garage towering off to one side. Above the garage was a weathered room and atop this room was a slightly dwarfed *tongkonan* incised with faded carvings. On the front stoop overlooking the verdant, bush-lined yard, an elderly sarong-clad man could often be seen chewing betel nut while supervising several young schoolboys tumbling on the pebbly grass. The house gave off the aura of having a story to tell, with its odd yet proud fusion of Dutch colonial and indige-

nous architecture. Some months after settling in at Ke'te' Kesu', I accompanied my Toraja sister Emi to Rantepao on market day, and she proposed that we stop by her sister-in-law's house to use her bathroom before heading back to the village. As we strolled down the familiar street near the town field, I asked her what she knew of the odd *tongkonan*-topped house. She answered, "I know it well, and you'll know it, too—that's where we're headed. It's called Tongkonan Pangalloan, and it's our older brother's wife's *tongkonan.* You remember Mama Landang?" This was the first inkling I got that such hybrids could have names and familial histories and might be considered just as legitimate as the more traditionally designed *tongkonan*s.

Once we were all comfortably seated and sipping coffee from delicate china cups in the airy, high-ceilinged living room, my "sister-in-law" Mama Landang surprised me with the revelation that one of her father's brothers who once lived in this house had some claim to fame in Toraja anthropology. He had been the one to accompany the anthropologist Raymond Kennedy around the Sa'dan highlands in 1949–1950, serving as his field assistant.[27] Her revelation prompted me to reflect on a possible relationship between this man's role as a cultural intermediary and the unique

FIGURE 7. *An early hybrid* tongkonan *in Rantepao known as* Tongkonan *Pangalloan.*

hybrid architecture of his familial house (which had apparently been remodeled following his work with Kennedy). Soon we were on the topic of the house. Mama Landang explained that in its prior incarnation, this *tongkonan* once stood near the village of Barana' but was moved to its current location atop the garage in 1953. Her father (the elderly man I had so often spied on the front stoop) leaned in and added:

> We combined it with another *tongkonan,* Tongkonan Rantepulung, and moved them both here out of fear. In those days, with the bandit bands (*gerombolan,* BI), lots of *tongkonan*s in the villages were burnt down. Ne' Mammi', you know him, right? He was the one who made it. He did the sketches.

As he spoke, I wondered how two full-sized traditional *tongkonan*s could become fused into one.[28] I also wondered whether the smaller-than-normal size of this garage-top *tongkonan* gave rise to questions about its legitimacy. Spying my puzzled look, he added emphatically:

> This is considered a *tongkonan.* We had a consecration ritual *(mangrara banua)* in 1953. We sacrificed pigs in front of the house and had the complete ceremony. If you do that, it's a *tongkonan.* If someone dies, we can keep the body up there, and we can hold a funeral here [both these things happen at or adjacent to *tongkonan*s]. But it's a nuisance to hold a funeral here in town, so we usually have them in the village. Still, though some of us consider this a *tongkonan,* others don't.

Later, as Emi gathered up our market bags, I strolled out to the driveway to snap a few shots of the dwarf *tongkonan* atop the room over the garage. I was followed by one of Mama Landang's relatives, a self-assured thirty-two-year-old engineer. Nodding towards the *tongkonan,* he remarked:

> See that? It violates tradition (*melanggar adat,* BI). *Tongkonan*s are supposed to be constructed on a north-south axis. If not, according to tradition, you'll have misfortune. But this one is facing east!

It was clear that he had his doubts as to the legitimacy of this particular *tongkonan.*

More recently erected *tongkonan,* however, have met with greater acceptance, particularly when their designers attend to the details of placement, axis, and scale. By the 1980s a number of families had begun modernizing their *tongkonan*s. When faced with restoring a *tongkonan* that was said to be

twelve generations old,[29] one wealthy Kesu' area family I knew opted to construct a flashy split-level *tongkonan,* with a contemporary cement and glass-walled first floor complete with linoleum floors and a spacious second-floor terrace topped with a full-sized, classic *tongkonan.* While the *tongkonan* portion is rarely used, serving more as a symbolic center of the kin group, the structure's modernization does not compromise its legitimacy as a *tongkonan.* I attended the consecration ritual for this building in 1985—it was a spectacular three-day event that involved months of planning meetings with representatives of all those affiliated with the *tongkonan* (the *rapuan*). Much of the fundraising for the new structure was overseen by a dynamic and prosperous young director of a Makassar mill, who also played the role of ritual director.[30] His aesthetic and ritual sensibilities were critical to the venture. As the elderly sisters who headed the family and resided at the *tongkonan* site were practitioners of Toraja traditional religion but planned to convert to Christianity upon completion of the ritual, the family decided that the ceremony would be presided over by a traditional ritual priest *(to minaa)* and would conclude with a Christian worship service on the final day.

The three-day ceremony entailed various traditional rites and offerings, including the ritual painting of pig's blood on the front interior wall of the house and an all-night "water buffalo litany" *(Passomba Tedong).* At dawn the sacrificial water buffalo was killed with a thrust of a spear. As a local leader at the event explained to me, this sole sacrificial water buffalo played a role "akin to Jesus Christ: it is the one who suffers for all our sins." Throughout the night-long litany, the water buffalo had been tethered to a thin, sandalwood sapling that had been stuck in the ground. The sapling, in turn, was linked to the *tongkonan* by a rattan cord, *ijuk* (black sugar palm fiber, BI), and sacred blue-and-white ancestral cloths *(sarita).* As the local leader elaborated, taken together, these objects symbolized the unity of the families affiliated with the *tongkonan.* At the end of the ritual the sandalwood sapling would be planted nearby. Eventually, as he told me, when it grows into a sturdy tree, it will serve as a reminder of this great house consecration ritual.

As the elder laid out his take on the ritual symbolism, my pen could scarcely keep up with his words. His description of the great tree that would one day call forth memories of this ritual had my head whirling with new ways of perceiving the landscape. His words reminded me of my first history lesson with Ne' Duma, when he had described various "natural" fea-

tures of the landscape as remnants of mytho-historic events. I was slowly coming to grasp that for Torajas associated with various great *tongkonan*s, the local landscape is composed of numerous material "reminders" of the great rituals of the past. In some cases these evocative reminders are trees; in other cases they are large megaliths of roughly hewn stone. All of these objects can be understood as "affecting presences," evoking nostalgic emotions linked to memories and kin group identity.

Later that morning, following the spearing of the water buffalo, the excitement was building. The *tongkonan,* decorated with vibrant red-and-orange banners that billowed in the breeze, called to mind a bird with outstretched wings, ready to joyously lift off to the skies. On this day the crowds at the ritual swelled. Torajas of all ages, clad in their finest brightly colored *sarong*s, packed the clearing around the house, as did hundreds of camera-clutching tourists. Camcorders whirled, as graceful female *ma'gellu* dancers wearing beaded ornaments and golden krises rhythmically swayed atop large wooden drums, while men squatted alongside, beating the drums from the sides. Groups of older males clad in matching sarongs and crisp white jackets also performed, rigorously chanting as they locked arms and danced in a sinuous line. Whoops and hollers were soon erupting every few minutes, with the arrival of various entourages of males bearing bamboo litters weighted with squealing, whimsically decorated pigs. Some were festooned with regal adornments—necklaces of gourds and chili peppers or rice stalk crowns (see Plate 2). The plump faces of other pigs poked out of wooden facades painted to look like *tongkonan*s. Later in the day, all sixty-five pigs were slaughtered and the meat distributed amongst those present.

Visiting urban Torajas, as well as domestic and foreign tourists, were visibly impressed by the scale and pageantry of this ritual. As the event was held during the annual school break, a large number of middle- and upper-class urban Torajas from Makassar and Jakarta had come to the ritual. While some were fulfilling ritual obligations, others (particularly those who were in their teens and twenties and did not speak Torajan) were touring their heritage. I noticed one twenty-two-year-old Toraja from Jakarta scurrying around taking rolls of photos with his expensive Nikon camera. We had met the previous year, when he had returned to Toraja with his parents for a funeral. When we found ourselves side by side shooting pictures of braying pigs, he confided excitedly, "This is my first *mangrara* (house consecration ritual). If it's funeral rituals, I'm already bored with them, but this is

great, isn't it?" His comments, as well as his "touristic gaze," brought to mind an encounter I'd had earlier in the day with a group of American and European tourists.

I had been sitting on a hillside rock during a lull, scribbling in my notebook, when I heard the booming voice of a Bugis guide I knew. He was leading a group of foreign tourists through the crowds towards me, telling them that I was an anthropologist and they could address all their questions about the ritual to me. The tourists turned out to be Americans, and they were anxious to exchange impressions of the event. One middle aged Midwestern man in the group gestured to the crowds and decorated pigs:

> Boy, this is sure not like housewarmings in the USA! I've never seen anything like it—these rituals are really something else. And they're obviously not doing them for us—it's the real thing!

Others in the group echoed his opinion. A few in the group asked about the modern-styled *tongkonan* being fêted, as it clearly did not mesh with their ideas of Toraja traditional houses. But for the most part, aside from stray complaints about the heavy smoke in the air and the pig urine on the ground, they shared Torajas' enthusiasm for the event.

On the concluding day of the ritual, fewer tourists were present. Those in attendance were mainly Torajas who had kinship links to the *tongkonan.* On this day, a lean young man[31] mounted a ladder to the terrace roof of the modern portion of the *tongkonan* bearing a flaming torch (in the past, he would have mounted the arched bamboo roof of the *tongkonan*). With torch in hand, he strode the length of the rooftop three times, in a purification rite said to fend off malevolent spirits. Then, standing at the edge of the terrace, he tossed the flaming torch down into a traditional pedestal-footed wooden bowl. The bowl was filled with water and contained a red flower and other symbolic items. People in the crowd next to me explained that if the flame continued to burn after the torch landed in the bowl, it would mean that the ritual was a success and the family *(rapuan)* would thrive. In this case, although the torch landed in the bowl, the flame died. Someone quickly doused the bowl with kerosene, prompting the flame to reignite. When I half-jokingly asked the Makassar mill director and ritual priests orchestrating the ritual if this was not "cheating," they chuckled and replied, "We're in the modern era now!"

Later that day the Christian pastor from the Toraja Church arrived. By then the family had arranged wooden benches on the modern ground floor

of the *tongkonan* in preparation for the closing, Christian portion of the house consecration. Only about thirty close family members remained: most of the crowd had gone home, disappointing the TVRI television crew that had showed up to film the conclusion of the ritual. After a quick meal of rice and pork roasted in bamboo tubes, we all seated ourselves on the benches and the pastor offered a sermon, praying for God's blessings of the house and the families associated with it. After a hearty hymn, the pastor called up the two elderly sisters who lived in the *tongkonan,* asking them if they now declared Jesus Christ their savior. With trembling voices and downcast eyes, they assented, much to the relief of the Christian members of the *tongkonan.* After several prayers and hymns, the Makassar mill director overseeing the ritual stood and made a speech in a wobbly, uneven voice, eventually breaking into silent sobs. As we learned, a representative of one branch of the family had only moments before arrived at the ritual: the Makassar mill director was inconsolably chagrined by what he perceived as an affront. Not only had this branch of the family neglected to attend the bulk of the ritual, but they had not even sent a pig as a gesture of respect to the *tongkonan.* The latecomer was equally distressed, his face flushed and his voice rocky with anger. At the calm, steady urging of the pastor, he presented his side of the story. Apparently, through some accident, his branch of the family had not received an invitation to the ritual, and they interpreted this as a denial of their affiliation with the *tongkonan*. Breaking into cries of anguish, the latecomer finally fled from the house wailing, *"Matimo aku . . ."* (I might as well die/I'm dead). A family elder and the pastor dashed out after the latecomer, eventually bringing him back into the house, trembling, pale, and sobbing. Prompted by others, the new arrival and the mill director in charge exchanged emotional apologies, shook hands, and embraced. The latecomer's sobbing continued, albeit more quietly, as others succumbed to tears and all strove to comfort him. During this drama I was seated next to one of my Toraja elder brothers, who turned to me with moist eyes and whispered, "It is much better to resolve things right away like this, rather than to hold them in your heart." As the man's cries underscored, without one's *tongkonan,* one may as well be dead.

The final rites concluded and the unintended rupture resolved, everyone deemed the consecration ritual a success. Not only did the event draw thousands of relatives, but equal numbers of guests, none of whom questioned the legitimacy of this new-styled *tongkonan.* Rather, the conversations in the weeks that followed hailed the large crowds, spectacular ritual

decorations, and the abundance of plump and beautifully decorated pigs. Moreover, most commentators admired the clever fusion of architectural styles. Since that time, similarly hybrid structures have sprouted up across the Toraja countryside, as others seek to emulate this new genre of the prestige-laden symbol. While the architecture varies, all these structures preserve the signature carved facade of more traditional *tongkonan*s.

CONTESTED IMAGES OF RANK AND SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

To understand the importance of the *tongkonan*s, however, it is essential to discuss Toraja ideas about the facades. During my first two years of fieldwork, Torajas offered a variety of interpretations of the carved motifs decorating *tongkonan* houses, rice barns, and graves. Carvers I knew outlined a repertoire of approximately seventy different geometric designs and noted that each motif had its own unique name and meaning. Today, except for some carvers and respected elders, few people are familiar with the names and meanings of more than a half-dozen motifs. I was unable to ascertain whether this was always the case or whether knowledge of the motifs was being lost.[32]

After studying individual motifs and photo-documenting dozens of *tongkonan*s, I came to recognize that certain designs tended to appear repeatedly on particular parts of the *tongkonan*'s facade. Was there not, perhaps, some underlying "grammar"? Might there not be mythological explanations for this ordering? When queried about this, many of the carvers I knew confessed that while they knew the names of most of the motifs they carved, and even the meaning of some of the symbols, the reasons for the patterned ordering of these carvings on *tongkonan* facades were unclear to them. After weeks of repeating this question to all I encountered, I found a few acquaintances who had given the matter some thought and were willing to share their hypotheses with me. I had joined several local nobles one morning as they sat idly on a Ke'te' Kesu' rice barn, awaiting the arrival of some companions for an informal meeting. After exchanging greetings, they invited me to join them on the mat and update them on my research. I shared my question of the arrangements of the motifs with them. One seventy-year-old aristocratic elder from Rantepao, Ne' Tombi, took a thoughtful puff on his Gudang Garam cigarette and speculated that, viewed in totality, the ordering of the house carvings conveyed lessons about the pre-

FIGURE 8. *Incorporating* tongkonan *motifs into contemporary Toraja architecture. (Also note the* bangkit *banners along the street, discussed in Chapter Six.)*

scribed relations between gods, nobles, and their dependents. The others nodded as Ne' Tombi grandly declared, "All of Toraja philosophy can be read in the carvings of a *tongkonan*!" Pointing to the pair of carved roosters at the apex of the facade of his ancestral *tongkonan,* Ne' Tombi noted that the rooster awakens us, calling us to life. The rooster motif *(pa' manuk),* then, was a symbol of life and the life force given by the deities. Nodding, my mentor Ne' Duma, who had just joined us, added, "Yes, roosters are also the highest judges." He was alluding to the former practice of settling conflicts via a cockfight, the winner of which was seen as divinely recognized to be in the right. As the elders nodded their heads in agreement, Ne' Tombi continued his exegesis, pointing out that each rooster was always depicted perched atop a sunburst motif *(pa' barre allo),* another motif tied to the life force. He elaborated, "The sun radiates life and livelihood . . . so this symbol is also tied to the gods." Below the sunburst design one usually often finds a pattern of betel leaves *(pa' daun bolu).* As Ne' Tombi explained, traditional ritual priests use betel leaves as an offering to the gods: betel leaves are mediums of contact with the deities. One of the other elders then pointed out a design representing swallows *(pa' kalumpini')* and reminded me of a myth in which swallows serve as the creator god's messengers. According to Ne' Tombi and his aristocratic companions, then, when taken together, the carvings on the upper third of the *tongkonan* can be interpreted as symbolizing ritual obligations to the gods.

Ne' Tombi then moved down to the broad, densely carved middle portion of the structure—the area surrounding the small shuttered windows on the main floor. He asserted that the motifs generally found here announce the status and solidarity of the noble family. He noted designs such as *pa' tedong,* the water buffalo motif, which is a mark of noble wealth in the Toraja highlands. Also found in this central section is the banyan tree motif *(pa' barana'),* an emblem of the noble family's strength. The elder elaborated, "The banyan tree is the sturdiest of trees, the king of trees. Even the Javanese know its importance—a banyan tree always stands in the heart of Javanese rajas' palace compounds—it is where Javanese leaders hold their meetings." Another member of the group chimed in to remind me that Toraja funeral chants sometimes refer to a celebrated noble as "a banyan in the village" *(barana' lan tondok).*

Finally, one elder moved on to the motifs chiseled on the bottom third of the *tongkonan*. Gesturing to the plant and animal designs that predominate in this section, such as the rooster feather motif *(pa' bulu londong)* and

the fern frond pattern (pa' *lulun paku),* he suggested that these motifs allude to the activities of peasants and slaves. They relate to the harvesting or gathering of essential foods, the snaring of wild birds, or the tending of domesticated animals, tasks consigned to those dependent on the aristocracy. Taken together, Ne' Tombi summarized, the carvings on the *tongkonan* facade symbolize the noble family's twofold roles and responsibilities: nobles have responsibilities for making ritual offerings and the like upwards towards the deities and downwards towards their dependents, peasants, and slaves. In order to maintain prestige and a central position in society, a noble must fulfill obligations to both the gods above and the peasants below. If this is done, there will be harmony between the three tiers of society. Nodding in agreement, another elite in our party declared that the *tongkonan*'s carved facade attested to the aristocracy's central position in society.

Some months later, in November 1985, I heard Ne' Tombi present this interpretation of the grammar of *tongkonan* carvings in a different arena. Tana Toraja Regency government officials had organized a Local Guide Training Workshop, designed as a crash course in guiding skills, tourist etiquette, and the history of local tourist sites. The workshop came in response to a provincial decree that only officially licensed guides would be

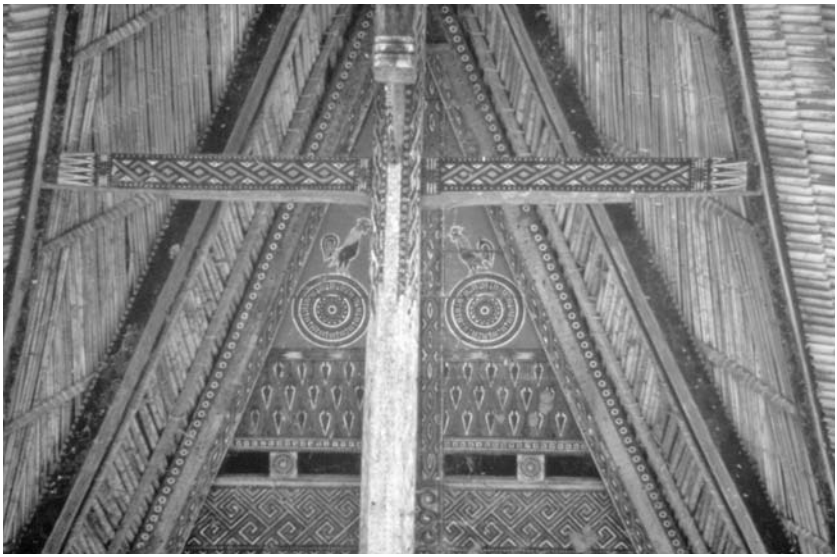


FIGURE 9. *The upper portion of a* tongkonan *facade.*

allowed to escort tourists. As guiding courses were available only in Makassar, local wild guides feared the loss of their livelihoods, and other Toraja tourates worried that the decree would hasten the encroaching monopoly of Bugis guides in the Toraja highlands. The local Tana Toraja government responded by inviting eighty-eight aspiring local guides and representatives from Toraja's most frequented tourist destinations to attend a subsidized twelve-day workshop. At its conclusion, participants could take an exam on the material and receive a local guiding license. Ne' Tombi had been invited to share his knowledge of *tongkonan* decorations in one of the workshop sessions. As he laid out his interpretation, many of the wild guides squirmed in their seats. When he finished and we paused for a coffee break, Ne' Tombi's lecture sparked a heated debate among the workshop attendees. Many of the nonnoble participants emotionally declared that they would not present this "incorrect" interpretation of the carvings to tourists. Ne' Tombi, distressed by the rejection of his exegesis, later told me of his concern that these young guides would end up confusing tourists with their "made-up" explanations. Tacitly, it seemed we both understood that the bigger issue for him was not the risk of tourist confusion, but the loss of elite control over the meaning of these carvings, given the predominance of nonnoble guides.

When I interviewed these younger, nonnoble guides after the workshop had concluded, a number of them offered alternative analyses of the carvings' significance. Several told me that the message underlying the ordering of the motifs concerned Torajas' traditional harmonious relationship with nature. In a similar vein, Waterson (1988:54) reports one informant's interpretation of the carvings as a hope for renewal of the earth's fertility, particularly of rice. Rice is essential not only for life, but for the ritual cycle that links the living with gods and ancestors. These explanations speak more directly to the preoccupations of Western tourists: as one twenty-two-year-old Toraja wild guide declared to me with a grin, "These carvings of nature show that we were conservationists before there was such a thing as conservation!" These younger, lower-status guides also frequently invoked newer religious orientations. For example, during the time I resided in Ke'te' Kesu', I often overheard local guides interpret the ubiquitous cross motif *(pa' doti)* found on both houses and women's coffins as a Christian emblem. When I commented that this motif was used long before the arrival of Christian missionaries, several Torajas declared it was further evidence of their ancestors' intuitive proximity to Christianity. I

interpret such statements not only as possible rejections of the rank-affirming symbolism proposed by some older nobles, but also as embodying sly one-upmanship over the Western tourists and anthropologists gazing at these artistically embellished structures: the Toraja invented conservation on their own, long before it became popular in the Western world. And the Toraja did not need Dutch missionaries to bring them Christianity as their ancient *aluk to dolo* religion had, centuries earlier, already supplied some of the symbols of Christian philosophy.[33]

These lower-status guides could invoke alternative meanings for these carvings precisely because of the polysemic quality of artistic objects. Since the carvings do not speak, at least not in a literal sense, they can maintain ambiguity. And because of their ability to carry multiple messages, the carvings can be drawn upon by those of lower status to effect changes concerning popular conceptions of the elites' centrality to Toraja society.

ETHNIC ENCOUNTERS IN THE CARVINGS

Some of the themes depicted in the carvings on houses and rice barns pertain to ethnic relations. Reminiscent of a fascinating 1937 book by Julius Lips *(The Savage Hits Back),* a select body of these carvings provide commentary on Torajas' ambivalent relationships with the Dutch, who arrived in the highlands in 1906, and the Japanese, who occupied their lands in the early 1940s. These subversive carvings are not routine, and when they are found, they tend to be discreetly located under the eaves of rice barns, in places where only those sitting on the rice-barn platform can contemplate them.

One such sequence of carvings involves a Dutch woman, a soldier beating a Toraja child, and the child's flight to his mother's arms (see Figures 10 and 11). The owner of the rice barn offered a vague explanation for these carvings, which he dated to the colonial period. He said that they depicted a "fussy" Dutch woman who was irked by a naughty Toraja child. Her relationship to the young child is unclear: possibly, he worked as a servant in her household or perhaps he lived in an adjacent village and was prone to dallying outside the Dutch colonialists' home (which would have been an object of Toraja children's curiosity). Although the owner of the rice barn could not illuminate what the child may have done to annoy this colonial woman, the painful consequences of angering a Dutch colonial

woman are clear: in the next frame we see that she has ordered a Dutch soldier to beat the child. In the final frames the child appears, seeking the comforting embrace of his mother. Initially stern, the boy's mother scoops her son into her arms upon learning his version of the events. In this series of carvings we catch a glimpse of the colonial terror of an earlier era, a terror which is recalled each time the carvings are viewed.

Moreover, in these carvings we also witness Torajas surreptitiously "talking back" to colonialists. In a sense such carvings can be approached as "hidden transcripts" (Scott 1990), reframing the colonial ordering of those who are weak and those who are strong. Although these carvings are simply executed, the depiction of the haughty Dutch woman contrasts sharply with the nurturing portrayal of the child's mother. The Dutch woman's darkened face is held high, aloof; her finely coifed hair and low-cut, ruffled dress bespeak vanity, particularly when compared to the modesty of the Toraja woman's attire. The Toraja woman cradling her sobbing son conveys Toraja compassion, the embrace of maternal duties, and devotion to kin. The depiction contrasts markedly with the portrayal of the self-indulgent Dutch woman: not only is she represented as fussy and without patience for a naughty child, but she is also alone, without kin. This is significant

FIGURE 10. *Detail on rice barn eaves depicting a man beating a child and a frilly Dutch woman.*

FIGURE 11. *Detail on rice barn eaves depicting the child of Figure 10 with his mother, who learns of his beating and offers a comforting embrace.*

because, for the Toraja, webs of kinship are considered essential to being human. One who neglects kinship obligations is thought to be less than human. Moreover, to be without kin, particularly children, is considered tragic.[34] Furthermore, the Dutch woman commands the beating of a child, behavior which is considered savage by most Torajas. Embedded in these carvings, then, are Toraja statements about the brutality of the so-called civilizing forces.[35]

Another panel depicts Darul Islam[36] troops shooting at a Toraja male as he flees through scattering livestock. This historically inspired scene conveys Torajas' fear and vulnerability in the 1950s, shortly after Indonesian independence. As mentioned earlier, at this time lowland Bugis and Makassarese troops led armed rebellions in South Sulawesi aiming to establish Indonesia as a Muslim state. The largely non-Islamicized Torajas were frequent targets of such Islamic guerrilla bands. Toraja carvings, then, sometimes serve as expressions of ethnic vulnerability.

Still, one cannot fully appreciate the dynamic role of Toraja carvings in interethnic relations without considering the shifting external views of the buildings they adorn. Having briefly reviewed the significance of the carved *tongkonan* within Toraja society, I turn now to discuss outsiders' shifting conceptions of these structures. My goal here is to explore how these outsider perceptions have, at times, entered the Toraja discourse concerning the relationship of this material object to various dimensions of Toraja identity.

SHIFTING EXTERNAL VIEWS OF THE *TONGKONAN*

While the *tongkonan* has long been a key symbol of an individual's identity and status within Torajan society, the national Indonesian government once adopted a different view. During the late 1950s and 1960s, before Tana Toraja became a touristic gold mine, Sulawesi highlanders were frequently derided as embarrassing primitives. For Java-based government officials, one of the most visible symbols of Toraja "backwardness" was their traditional house. As a consequence, in the 1960s the government launched an active campaign to urge Torajas to abandon their *tongkonan*s and erect modern cinder block homes.[37]

Similarly, certain Toraja converts to Protestantism came to envision the *tongkonan* as a symbol of unenlightened backwardness. Likening the *tong-*

konan's interior darkness to spiritual darkness, they urged their fellow converts to "seek enlightenment"—to abandon their *tongkonan*s in favor of modern Western-styled dwellings.[38] In some cases newly Christian Torajas were driven from their familial *tongkonan*s by *aluk to dolo* elders while in others devoutly Christian families felt compelled to destroy their ancestral *tongkonan*s. Regardless of the circumstances, these actions prompted tremendous strife, anguish, and anger within the kin groups associated with these structures. Some Christian Torajas and Dutch missionaries found other solutions to the dilemmas posed by this linkage of the carved *tongkonan* to pagan orientations: the Christianization of *tongkonan*-styled architecture and carvings. Early on, Pieter Zijlstra, a Dutch missionary stationed in the Toraja highlands from 1920 to 1930, built a church in carved *tongkonan* style at Sangalla'.[39] More recently, the executive committee of the synod of the Toraja Church erected its *tongkonan*-styled headquarters in Rantepao. In keeping with the traditional function of *tongkonan*s as the "seat" of an ancestral group, this building serves as the seat of the Toraja Church, which includes congregations beyond Tana Toraja and even beyond Sulawesi.[40]

Not only are Toraja Church leaders drawing architectural inspiration from *tongkonan*s for their religious edifices, but by the 1960s (if not earlier) a number of Toraja villagers were beginning to Christianize their *tongkonan*s. For instance, in Ke'te' Kesu' my adoptive Toraja family hung an embossed metal portrait of Jesus near the apex of their *tongkonan*'s facade. More frequently, Christmas tree designs or candle images, symbolizing Christian orientations, have been incorporated into the *tongkonan* embellishments.[41] The candle motifs in particular are almost always prominently situated at or near the honored pinnacle position. In some cases these candles replaced the rooster and sunburst motifs;[42] in other cases they are inserted alongside the more traditional designs in the upper tier of the *tongkonan* facade.

Some of the elders I interviewed reported that the candle motif also represented the now-defunct Indonesian Christian Party (PARKINDO), which was the dominant political party in Tana Toraja Regency in the 1960s. By the 1970s and early 1980s, as the Indonesian Christian Party and subsequently the Indonesian Democratic Party[43] lost ground in Tana Toraja, distinctively carved miniature banyan trees began to appear on *tongkonan* and rice-barn facades. This motif is the emblem of Indonesia's ruling government party, *Golongan Karya* (GOLKAR). The artistic incorpo-

ration of these political emblems not only communicates newer allegiances extending beyond the local to the national political frontier but also subtly recasts these once denigrated structures of Toraja traditionalism as vessels for contemporary national concerns. Moreover, these newer carvings transform the *tongkonan*s they adorn into sites for debates and battles about emerging dimensions of identity. In one village, candle motifs and carved banyan trees embellished adjacent rice barns belonging to families aligned with rival political parties: in a sense, through these carvings, a political battle was being waged.

The late 1970s and 1980s brought a reversal of government policy and some local Christian attitudes towards the *tongkonan.* What had been scorned as an embarrassment now began to be hailed as an asset. During this period still more churches designed to resemble *tongkonan*s appeared on the Toraja landscape (see Plate 3). The interiors of many older churches displayed carved *tongkonan*-patterned trim, and needlepoint tapestries portraying *tongkonan* images decorated a number of pulpits. More revealingly, as mentioned earlier, Christian Torajas increasingly came to refer to the Toraja Church as the "big *tongkonan,*" reflecting both the persistence of the *tongkonan* as a key identity motif and the contemporary emphasis on integrating Christian and Toraja identities. In part, this shift in church attitudes toward the *tongkonan* emerged out of the changes in Toraja Church leadership during this period. By the early 1980s, nonnoble Toraja pastors had assumed leadership roles in the church. Many of the clergymen and women I interviewed at the 1984 Toraja Church Synod earnestly embraced the notion of equality before God and were anxious to eradicate Toraja practices which reinforced rank hierarchies. Moreover, they were equally interested in "Torajanizing" the church. In embracing the carved symbols that had previously been limited to the nobility, and in pushing to replace their heavy black European-styled clergy robes with lightweight robes in the brighter colors of Toraja carvings (an unsuccessful move), these predominantly nonnoble pastors were not only using the aesthetic realm to assert Toraja control over what had once been a Dutch-controlled institution, but they were also removing the carved *tongkonan* from the exclusive control of the elite.

A second factor in this shift in attitude toward the *tongkonan* was the New Order government's move to begin actively celebrating regional diversity as a cornerstone of Indonesian national identity. As many have

observed, central to contemporary Indonesian nation building is a process of aestheticization of the traditions of the indigenous societies.[44] In this context, not only traditional dances and costumes, but indigenous architecture in particular, took on tremendous rhetorical importance. In architectural differences the state found "exemplary token[s] of safe ethnic difference" (Keane 1995:109).[45]

Yet another important dimension of this shift in attitude towards the *tongkonan* can be traced to the emergence of tourism in 1972, and the government's new-found appreciation of the touristic value of traditional structures. Tourism promoters began to highlight the most striking aspects of Toraja culture: elaborate funeral rituals, effigies of the dead, and, of course, carved Toraja *tongkonan*s. What were once exclusive embodiments of noble power and dominance were held up to outsiders as general symbols of Toraja ethnic identity, associated with all Torajas regardless of rank. Thus began the proliferation of the *tongkonan* image. *Tongkonan* statues sprang up at major intersections, *tongkonan* topiary were planted in gardens in Makale and Rantepao, a second gigantic *tongkonan*-shaped gateway arch was erected at the entrance to the Regency, and a Tongkonan Pub opened in downtown Rantepao. Local souvenir stores displayed *tongkonan* T-shirts, three-dimensional model *tongkonan*s, *tongkonan* wall plaques, and delicate *tongkonan* necklaces cast in silver. Moreover, Indonesian schoolbooks addressing the nation's ethnic diversity began illustrating their descriptions of the Toraja with sketches of carved *tongkonan*s. This marriage of carved *tongkonan*s to Torajan ethnic identity is not confined to Indonesia; in grocery stores in the Netherlands one can buy Toraja Chips[46] in packaging that features a grand *tongkonan* logo, and various Internet sites offer Toraja *arabica* coffee wrapped in paper stamped with *tongkonan*s.

I wish to stress that I am not arguing that tourism alone generated the uneasy transformation of the carved *tongkonan* from an elite symbol into an ethnic icon. Although tourism, coupled with shifting government policies and religious attitudes, facilitated these symbolic transformations, the extensive socioeconomic changes in Tana Toraja over the past twenty-five years also helped propel the efflorescence of *tongkonan* motifs in the highlands. As mentioned above, the land shortages of the 1960s prompted descendants of poorer and lower-ranking Torajas to leave the homeland for cash-paying jobs in other regions. Their wages were sent back to the homeland and used to educate siblings and to invest in previously inaccessible

FIGURE 12. *Tongkonan Pub in Rantepao in 1992 (now closed down).*

FIGURE 13. *Tourist holding a Toraja shirt incorporating a* tongkonan.

"traditional" symbols of prestige and power, such as elaborate rituals and new houses embellished with traditional *tongkonan* motifs.[47] In addition, the new tourism-related employment opportunities for lower-ranking Torajas that blossomed in the homeland in the 1990s further reinforced these trends.

Tourism legislation in Tana Toraja Regency further codified the new association of *tongkonan*s with pan-Torajan identity. A 1985 statute required, for example, that new homes along the Regency's main roads be embellished with "typical Toraja motifs." Consequently, in a bizarre twist of events, families of low birth who were previously barred by custom from incorporating carved motifs into their architecture were suddenly being ordered to do so by the government. In the Sulawesi highlands I frequently saw Toraja people shake their heads in awe at the rapid proliferation of decorative *tongkonan* motifs. Today, the Regency's official seal features a carved *tongkonan,* and local government headquarters have been remodeled to incorporate the distinctive architectural features of *tongkonan*s. *Tongkonan* mania reached what seemed to be an apex in the summer of 1989, when bamboo gateway arches featuring gigantic, colorful paintings of carved *tongkonan*s were erected in front of most of the homes in northern Tana Toraja Regency. Simpler, unadorned versions of these archways are normally constructed throughout South Sulawesi for the annual activities of Pembinaan Kesejatera Keluarga (a government agency devoted to family and community enhancement). That particular year, however, local Toraja officials decided to embellish the standard constructions with this now ubiquitous symbol (see Figure 14). Enchantment with Toraja *tongkonan*s shows no signs of abatement. Today, cosmopolitan-oriented Torajas proudly sport tailor-made shirts and dresses embellished with *tongkonan* designs, and traditional house carvings once marketed to tourists now decorate most Toraja homes. Toraja-owned cars in Los Angeles and Chicago can be easily recognized by the miniature *tongkonan*s dangling from the rearview mirrors. And over the past decade I've received Christmas cards from Toraja friends of all ranks featuring colorful images of carved *tongkonan*s.

Moreover, when I asked Kesu'-area elementary school children to "draw Toraja" in the 1990s, my deliberately vague directive resulted in many vibrant sketches of carved *tongkonan*s nestled in mountainous scenery, some with crayoned borders depicting *tongkonan* motifs. While in the past the unadorned *tongkonan* was certainly an important symbol of identity for

FIGURE 14. *Temporary archway depicting a* tongkonan.

Torajas, today, for most Torajas, the carved *tongkonan* has become synonymous with Toraja ethnic identity. Although many older Toraja aristocrats continue to manipulate and interpret the carved *tongkonan* as a symbol of elite authority, the younger generation of Torajas, raised in times of eroding rank distinctions, have digested the ubiquitous touristic imagery and embrace these images as their own ethnic markers, symbols of the entire group's glory.

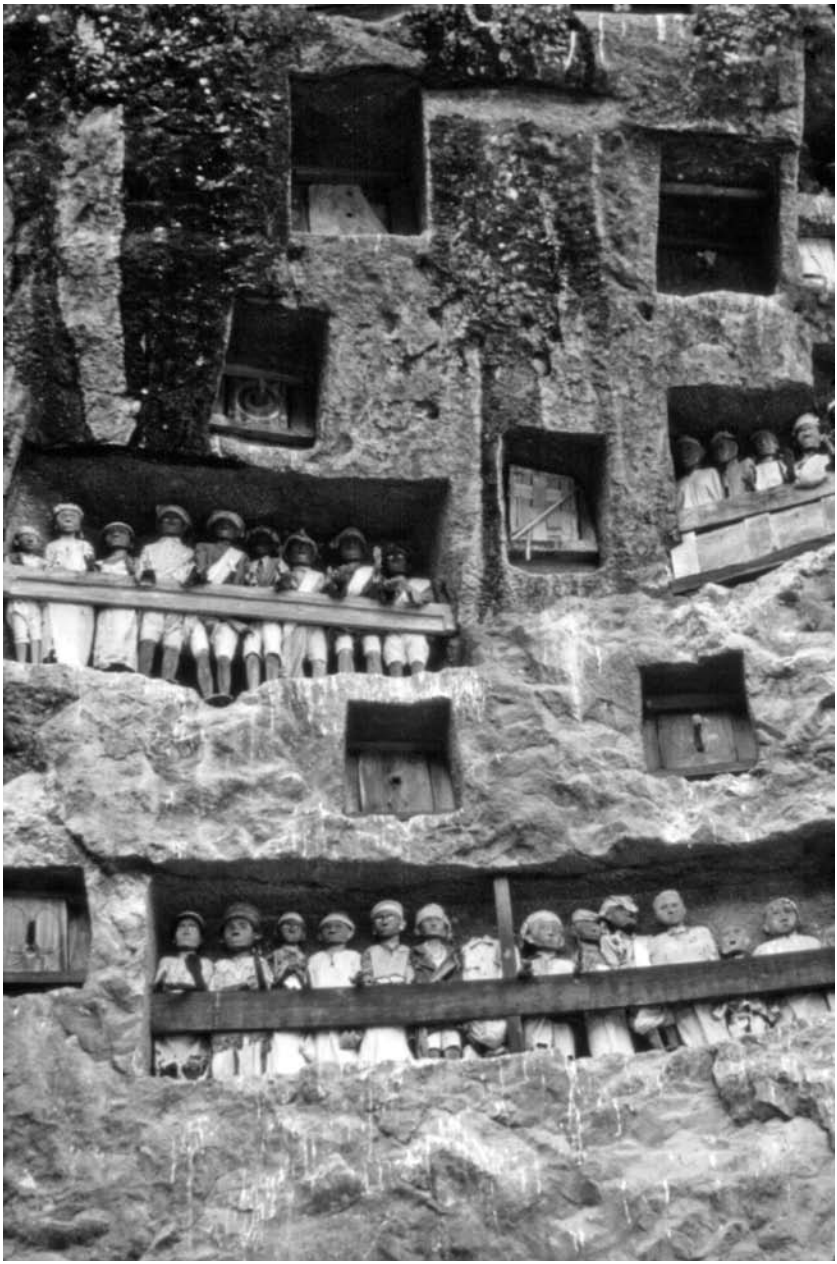


FIGURE 15. *Burial cliffs with effigies of the dead at Lemo, Tana Toraja Regency.*

4 Mortuary Effigies and Identity Politics

In the late 1920s a young Frenchwoman named Titayna set off on an adventure to the Borneo and Sulawesi hinterlands. Her travels were later chronicled in the sensationally titled book: *A Woman in the Land of the Headhunters (Une femme chez les chausseurs de têtes).* Describing her horseback arrival in the Sa'dan Toraja region, Titayna wrote:

> We climb, climb, without cease. In front of us a sheer wall blocks the valley . . . its vertical surfaces attainable only by the birds of prey, whose shadows trace circles on the valley below. Nevertheless, just in the center, dizzily separated from earth and sky, I catch a glimpse of immobile men. My horse whips through the vines and I realize that these beings suspended on the abyss are not men but statues. Their hands extended with palms towards the sky, their blank eyes fixed on the invisible. Crowded together on a rock-hewn balcony, they were at once very human and yet very close to these spirits of which Islanders speak in whispered voices. . . . I slowly bring my horse back to a walking pace. For we are traveling now in full magic. (Titayna 1934:40–42, author's translation)

Ever since the first European explorers arrived in the Sulawesi highlands in the late nineteenth century, outsiders have been captivated by these wooden effigies of the dead that stand solemnly on platforms chiseled into limestone cliffs or clustered like sentries in the openings of musty caves, alongside crumbling ancestral sarcophagi. These sculpted human images, known as *tau-tau,* are deeply tied to Toraja *aluk to dolo* religious conceptions and to elite identity in Tana Toraja. In recent decades Torajas' relationships with their *tau-tau* have undergone dramatic changes, as missionization, nationalism, tourism, the international art market, and the Indonesian economic crisis of the late 1990s have, in different ways, transformed Toraja perceptions of these effigies of the dead. In this chapter I explore the chang-

ing significance of these mortuary effigies and the ways in which these objects are used by various Toraja individuals and groups to project certain identities for themselves and, in so doing, navigate their relationships with others. Such relationships are often enmeshed in complex social, political, and economic inequalities. Like the *tongkonan,* Toraja effigies of the dead are central to ongoing dialogues about the nature of Toraja identity and religious beliefs. Debates surrounding effigies of the dead are also tethered to rank and class relationships in Tana Toraja. Unlike the *tongkonan,* however, the *tau-tau* has met with more controversy.

INTRODUCING THE *TAU-TAU*S

Although I had seen many postcards of *tau-tau*s and had visited a few of the more famed grave sites during my first month in Rantepao, my personal introduction to the figures came via one of my adoptive Toraja siblings. Soon after settling into Ne' Duma's and Indo' Rampo's house, I began to develop a special bond with their youngest child, nine-year-old Lendu. A bright, skinny boy with a radiant, crooked-toothed smile, Lendu had an outgoing, inquisitive nature. His conversations with his older sister, Emi, were peppered with questions about the workings of the world, and my arrival on the scene gave him not only a new object of curiosity, but someone with whom he could assume the role of teacher. In the afternoons during my first weeks in the village, Lendu would scurry home from the open-air elementary school in the next hamlet and station himself on the front verandah where I was often writing in my notebook or interviewing passing tourists. His friends would frequently join us there and, as they carved tops from tree seeds or sculpted bamboo *oto-oto* (little cars) with wheels made from old flip-flops, we would talk about children's games in Toraja and the United States. When he became more comfortable with me, Lendu would shyly ask to see my books, and I would bring out the tattered childhood copy of *Goodnight Moon* that I'd tucked in my suitcase or my crisp new edition of *Where There Is No Doctor,* and we would compare notes on the English and Toraja words for the objects depicted on the pages. One grey afternoon, when we tired of gazing at pictures of dozing rabbits and sketches of maladies like elephantiasis, I proposed that Lendu and his friends give me a "tour" of the village. I was curious to see the village through Lendu's eyes and also intrigued to see how much of the ubiquitous

tour guide narratives about Ke'te' Kesu' would surface in Lendu's representation.

Siu, a soft-spoken nine-year-old servant whose family lived across the rice fields, accompanied Lendu and me on our stroll down the gravel-covered path towards the "traditional village." As we walked, Lendu pointed out the sturdy broad-leafed avocado tree behind the house and described the enormous avocados it would yield. A few paces later, Siu directed my attention to the muddy bank of the rice field and told me of the delicious eel he had recently caught there with his father. When we reached the edge of the plaza, Lendu gestured towards a Bugis-styled house on stilts. The bottom of the house had been walled in with plywood and served as a small kiosk where cigarettes, packages of instant Indomie noodles, salt, Coca-Cola, cookies, souvenir carvings, and a few bright red-and-yellow textiles woven with *tongkonan* designs were sold. With a broad grin, Lendu declared, "This is where we sometimes buy treats with money the tourists give us." Then Lendu proudly indicated Tongkonan Kesu' saying, "There is Tongkonan Kesu', where Mama sells things to tourists and Kila, Solle', and Uncle Lolo all sleep. *Bapak* (BI; father) already told you all about Tongkonan Kesu' in his lessons, *kan* (BI; right)?" As I nodded, Lendu suddenly grabbed my hand and, pulling me in the direction of a well-worn footpath, announced excitedly, "We'll show her the graves. *Bapak* hasn't yet given her a lesson on the *tau-tau*!" Siu concurred, "Yes, tourists like to photograph the graves . . . " As if on cue, several camera-laden French tourists emerged from the path, enthusiastically talking with their Bugis guide about Toraja mortuary practices.

We wound our way down the shady path, passing a metalsmith's modest wooden home tucked in a clearing, and descended into a bamboo grove humming with dragonflies and mosquitoes. The air grew still and heavy as we reached the base of some craggy limestone cliffs, where a lonely cement tomb stood to one side of a small meadow and a stone stairway led up to several broad-mouthed caves.[1] Beneath the overhang of a vine-covered cliff, near the mouth of a cave, stood a cluster of some nineteen sculpted effigies of the dead, a few decaying sarcophagi (one in the shape of a pig and another etched with designs much like those found on *tongkonan*s), a carved funeral bier, and a scattering of human skulls and bones (see Plate 4). While Siu picked up a bone and idly tossed it between his hands, Lendu nodded towards one of the effigies, an almost life-sized weathered wooden image of a hauntingly beautiful woman, with pierced ears and penetrating eyes

of bone. "That's a *nene'* (ancestor or grandparent)—she's called Ne' Lele." I looked over her stylized face, then surveyed her odd assortment of clothing: a decaying sarong, a well-worn betel nut pouch out of which poked some dried tobacco and a few weathered 100-rupiah notes, a tattered bamboo field hat, and a relatively new green woolen sweater. Spotting that my gaze fell on the sweater, Lendu added, "We felt sorry for Ne' Lele, to see her [*tau-tau*] in rags, her breasts poking out, so Mama gave her a sweater." He then moved on to the next *tau-tau,* a thin-faced male, with a sly slant to his brow ridges and wearing a small pointed field hat. Again, Lendu recited the *tau-tau*'s name and familial relation. As we gazed at the *tau-tau*s, Lendu continued with his abbreviated introductions to several of these ancestors, all of whom had died long before he was born. Although he did not know the names of all of them, Lendu clearly had distinct ideas about the identities of a number of them. A few minutes later, raindrops began to splatter down, and we raced back up the hillside path to the shelter of Lendu's sturdy stone house.

Lendu's familiarity with his familial *tau-tau*s was not unusual. Over the course of my fieldwork, Toraja friends would take me to cliffside graves and recount the names and life histories of their ancestral effigies. According to traditional belief, the spirit of the deceased is housed within the *tau-tau.* Some Toraja even refer to the *tau-tau* as *bombo dikita* (the soul that is seen). Especially for *aluk to dolo* adherents, the *tau-tau* image renders the spirit visible—it is both a portrait of and a receptacle for the spirit of the deceased. As Torajas explained to me, the effigy is supposed to bear a resemblance to the deceased. While older effigies are more stylized in form, modern-day *tau-tau* statues tend to be strikingly realistic, with moles, protruding veins, and thinning hair dutifully recreated (see Plate 5).

Even Christian Torajas are careful to show respect for these ancestral effigies by attentively adhering to the taboos surrounding them. When visiting grave sites, Torajas avoid swearing or defecating and caution visitors not to touch the effigies. In a sense, the *tau-tau* is a visual link between the present community of the living and the past community of the dead; it commands respect. As several older Torajas told me, the traditional hand gestures of the *tau-tau* effigy further indicate the ongoing relationship between the world of the living and the world of these deified ancestral spirits. Classically, the left hand is vertical, palm towards the interior, as Torajas say *pa'rinding,* like "a wall," offering the community shelter and protection from illness and malevolent spirits in return for the respectful

offerings of the living. The right hand of the effigy is traditionally extended palm upward, ready to receive gifts of betel nut, tobacco, and palm wine from its descendants.

Nowadays, however, when I accompany my Toraja friends to the cliff-side graves, they are more inclined to offer their ancestral effigies more contemporary gifts of beer, Mentos brand candies, and 1,000-rupiah notes. Likewise, in the 1990s, I occasionally saw local guides tuck a few hundred rupiah into the betel pouches of certain favored effigies, prompting their tourist charges to follow suit, offering ballpoint pens, disposable cigarette lighters, and other odds and ends from their pockets. And in 1998, when I returned to update my research, my Toraja family encouraged me to join them in making similarly "modern" offerings. The morning after my arrival in the village, we made the requisite visit to relatives' graves in Ke'te' Kesu', carrying bouquets of freshly picked wildflowers, a couple of bottles of Sprite, and packages of Djarum brand cigarettes (on the advice of my Toraja brothers, who had told me this was our deceased kinsman's favorite brand). Tucked in my bag, I also had a couple postcards of Chicago and a few crisp five-dollar bills. As we slowly made our way down the hill-side path and came within sight of the newer tombs and the effigy of a Toraja "relative" I'd known well, my Toraja mother called out towards the graves, "Katlin's come back and she's brought you news of America. And pictures. And she has dollars and cigarettes for you!" And so the relationships between the living and the dead continue, albeit in more contemporary currencies, and encompassing more global participants.

SCULPTING AND MAKING RITUAL DISPLAYS OF *TAU-TAU*S

Some time after Lendu introduced me to the Ke'te' Kesu' *tau-tau*s, Ne' Duma declared it time to officially begin my lessons on *tau-tau*s, the rites entailed in sculpting these effigies, and the rituals pertaining to them. By then I knew that the term *tau-tau* meant "little person" or "person-like"[2] and that this material receptacle for the soul played a key role in traditional funeral rituals for high-ranking Torajas. Nonnobles, I had been told, were traditionally barred from using the celebrated jackfruit-wood *tau-tau*s in their funeral rites.[3] While I had read of temporary bamboo *tau-tau*s that were used and destroyed in the course of traditional funerals for both nobles and commoners, it was the enduring wooden effigies of the dead that most

interested me. One evening, while Lendu toiled over his homework and Emi swept up the day's dust, Ne' Duma and I sat at the dining room table to embark on my first *tau-tau* lesson. I clicked on my tape recorder, flipped open my notebook to the list of questions I'd compiled for him, and asked about the origins of *tau-tau*s. Just as there were legends about the founding of historic *tongkonan*s, I had imagined that there would be myths of the first wooden *tau-tau.* Ne' Duma took a long, slow puff on his Djarum cigarette, then shrugged and told me that they'd been around as long as there'd been large rituals in Toraja. "At every ritual where there are at least twenty-four water buffalos [sacrificed], there is a *tau-tau.* But there is no story about the first *tau-tau.*"[4]

Ne' Duma then turned to the *tau-tau* story as he thought it should begin, with the crafting of an effigy:

> First it's cutting. Cutting the wood. Cutting [sacrificing] a dog. The *tau-tau* carver *(to ma' tau-tau)*[5] is the one who does the cutting. He also cuts a chicken. These are all sacrificed when he goes to cut down the tree. It is a jackfruit tree *(nangka)* that the carver cuts down. The dog meat then gets eaten by people who are allowed to eat dog [nonnobles]. The cut jackfruit wood is worked, treated. The carver makes the hands, makes the feet, makes the body, makes the head. When the head is finished, the eyes are inserted, wide open. Now a pig is cut [sacrificed].
> You've already seen *tau-tau*s carved like that, ya, Katlin?

I nodded, thinking of the carver farther down the road whom I'd watched over a period of four weeks[6] as he sculpted a striking effigy for an elite family who were planning a large funeral. Because the deceased had been Christian, the sculptor had foregone the sacrifices to the gods and ancestors but, as in making *aluk to dolo* effigies, he had devoted particular care to the selection of wood. He had spent days searching for an old, thick-trunked jackfruit tree. Freshly cut, the jackfruit wood is bright yellow in color, but over time, the wood will darken, becoming ginger-brown, similar to the color of Toraja skin. Working in a clearing in front of his house, this carver had enlisted the help of a younger friend to carve the removable legs and arms, while he lavished his attention on the effigy's hands, body, and head. As this carver emphasized, the head is the most critical part. In prior times, he told me, carvers fixed darkened pineapple fibers to the head, but nowadays most just paint on the hair—it is easier and looks just as good. As he toiled over the head, he would periodically inter-

rupt his work to admonish his younger friend to work more attentively, "Be careful with those feet—it looks like he's got leprous toes. The family won't like that. You've got to make the toes more refined!" At the end of his labors, the sculptor was paid the price of a water buffalo.[7] I told Ne' Duma what I'd seen, and, blinking his agreement, he continued with his lesson,

> Yes. That is the procedure for Christian *tau-tau*s. For *aluk to dolo,* the *to minaa* [a type of traditional ritual priest] is summoned when the head is complete and the *tau-tau* sculpting is done. He sacrifices a pig, roasts the pork in bamboo tubes on the fire, then offers betel nut, pork, rice, palm wine and a speech to the *tau-tau.*[8] Then the sculptor and several others clothe the *tau-tau*—a shirt, a sarong, pants, if it is a man, and a betel nut pouch. That's according to tradition . . . "

Ne' Duma then launched with great animation into outlining the ritual role of the *tau-tau* and the various sacrifices made for these effigies throughout the different stages of a large-scale funeral ceremony. As he explained, when the funeral ritual starts, the *tau-tau* is reclothed in fancy dress. The effigy is adorned with finely woven traditional clothing, a sturdy

FIGURE 16. *Sculptor carving the face of a* tau-tau.

betel nut bag filled with silver and gold utensils, a head dressing, gold jewelry for a woman and, where possible, an exquisitely forged sacred *keris* (dagger) for a man. All of these adornments and heirlooms are closely associated with the nobility. This conception of heirlooms as signs of power, linked to and legitimizing the rule of elite families, is echoed throughout the Indonesian archipelago.[9]

Ne' Duma continued his lesson for another hour, detailing how, at the start of the funeral ritual, the corpse, wrapped in a heavy roll of red cloth, is removed from the house and placed on the rice-barn platform as female relatives wail. Here, local craftsmen attach traditional gold-leaf designs such as the sunburst motif to the cloth-bundled corpse, while the *tau-tau* carver puts on the final touches, attaching eye glasses or adjusting the cloth headdress. For the next few days the body and *tau-tau* remain on the rice barn, being ritually fed, as guests begin to arrive and the first water buffalo is sacrificed. On the second or third day of the funeral ritual, by which time many guests have gathered and the atmosphere has grown lively, a grand procession *(ma'palao)* takes place. This procession is led by an impressive file of well-groomed water buffalos, their horns tightly bundled in red cloth decorated with geometric gold-leaf designs. As I later witnessed, these sacrificial water buffalos are often festooned with colorful cordyline-leaf necklaces, small pineapples, yellow squash, and crimson bulb-shaped *jambu* fruit. Whooping, bouncing war dancers adorned with bone necklaces and banner-carrying kin follow, along with two men solemnly sounding a gong. Next in the procession come three tented chairs, one concealing the widow or widower and the other two carrying other ritual functionaries.[10] Borne on the shoulders of sturdy men, these chair-litters are boisterously bounced, as is the decorated wooden stand which follows carrying the finely adorned *tau-tau.* Behind the *tau-tau* is the funeral bier (often shaped like the upper portion of a carved *tongkonan*), which carries the corpse. And finally, marching underneath a long red cloth attached to the bier, are the kin of the deceased. The procession bounces, jostles, and weaves around the nearby rice fields, eventually arriving at a specially constructed bamboo stand where the *tau-tau,* the corpse, and the surviving spouse will remain for the duration of the ceremony. From this stand, this threesome watches over the mortuary activities in the ritual field *(rante)* below (see Plate 6). Over the course of the next few days, the *tau-tau* effigy stands like a sentinel, overseeing the long processions of gift-bearing guests, the lively water buffalo fights and attendant betting, the sacrifice of livestock, and the intricacies of the meat division and distribution. In the evenings the effigy witnesses

the *ma'badong* chant for the deceased, solemnly watching through the night as men and women join in the ponderous circular dancing recital of the deceased's history. At the close of the ritual, the *tau-tau* and corpse are delivered to the cliffside graves, caves, or cement tombs, where they join the wooden effigies and sarcophagi of other departed ancestors in "the house from which no smoke arises."[11]

Periodically, as Ne' Duma later explained, families also hold rituals which entail removing the weathered *tau-tau*s from the graves, repairing their decaying wooden limbs and reclothing them in new finery. When Ne' Duma continued his lesson the next evening, he detailed the role of the *tau-tau* in the *ma'nene'* ritual and the ultimate *ma'bua'* ritual, a rare ritual of the highest order.[12] Ne' Duma's lessons presented the ideal scenario. As I was soon to learn, activities involving *tau-tau*s were not always straightforward or uncontroversial. Missionization, tourism, and the global arts market have all contributed to problematizing the role and meaning of the *tau-tau.*

THE CHURCH AND THE *TAU-TAU*

As with the *tongkonan,* the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Mission (GZB) was the first force to irrevocably jostle the reciprocal relationship between humans and *tau-tau*s. In April of 1923, some ten years after their arrival, missionaries from the GZB convened an assembly of several hundred recently converted Christian Torajas in the hamlet of Barana' to discuss the problematic relationship between certain traditional practices and Christianity. In the course of the meeting the Dutch missionaries realized the group was too unwieldy for decision making, and appointed a commission of fifteen representatives to determine which traditional practices were compatible with Christianity and which were not. Sitting on this commission were three European missionaries, three Ambonese and three Menadonese gurus, and three Toraja elders. After some deliberation the commission proclaimed new regulations concerning traditional practices. Among other restrictions, the missionaries' decree forbade the making and use of *tau-tau*s and condemned the Toraja practices of making offerings to or chanting about these effigies (van den End 1994:189). The commission's decision triggered a debate among Christian Torajas which has lasted to the present day.[13]

During my initial fieldwork I attended a major Synod meeting of the

Toraja Church in Palopo, at which *tau-tau*s were a highly charged topic. I had accompanied Ne' Duma (who was on the church council) to this meeting, and we were both anxiously awaiting the scheduled discussion of the church's position on these effigies. Not surprisingly, given *tau-tau*s linkages to the elite strata of Toraja society, Ne' Duma was locally famed for his pro-*tau-tau* stance: he and several fellow elites hoped to sway the more conservative forces at the Synod into officially accepting these effigies. As the Toraja Church leaders attending the Synod were predominantly from the middle and elite classes, participants' positions on the *tau-tau* issue promised to be divided, informed not only by their individual interpretations of church doctrine, but by their rank and class identities. After several attempts by more conservative ministers to drop the "*tau-tau* issue" from the Synod's agenda, a few progressive ministers and elite elders prevailed, and a discussion of *tau-tau* took place. Reinserting the *tau-tau* issue onto the agenda meant at least an extra hour of sitting in the sweltering tin-roofed room, and some participants were clearly displeased. As the debate began, the minister seated next to me made a show of his annoyance by fanning himself with the program and muttering wearily, "Not this again. Every time there is a Synod meeting, the *tau-tau* issue gets resurrected . . ."

The moderator opened the discussion by reiterating the three main reasons the Toraja Church's Theological Institute had condemned *tau-tau* usage: first, it was a "pagan" practice linked with Toraja traditional religion. Second, the *tau-tau* reinforced the traditional feudal system of social hierarchy which the church sought to eliminate. And third, it was a "stumbling block," as the Toraja Church derives from the Calvinist tradition that forbids the use of false idols. The moderator's conclusion was emphatic: "If people in our parish are saying *tau-tau*s are okay, they are going against the advice of the Theological Institute." A young minister immediately shot up his hand to proclaim his objection: "Much of Toraja *adat* (BI; tradition) is already Christianized, why can't the same be done with the *tau-tau?* Whoever can afford to have one, go ahead. There shouldn't be any problem if it is considered simply a picture of the dead . . ."

This declaration prompted an animated discussion of the distinctions between *adat* (BI; tradition) and *agama* (BI; religion). The central issue for many became one of determining whether the *tau-tau* was a cultural or religious object. As the meeting unfolded, the older, relatively conservative, Dutch-trained ministers found themselves being challenged by a group of younger ministers and elites who argued that it was time to "Torajanize"

the church. One reformist vigorously argued, "Cultural traditions and world religions should not be viewed as opposing forces. They are compatible . . ." While several of the more conservative church leaders eventually conceded that, for devout Torajas, *tau-tau*s were no longer the focus of pagan practices, they remained adamantly opposed to their use. As one of these middle-class ministers later told me, the *tau-tau*'s link to the nobility was the biggest threat of all; as a persistent symbol of noble status, the effigy presented an obstacle to the church's attempts to make Toraja society more egalitarian. After much impassioned debate, the church's leadership agreed to turn the matter over to the Theological Institute for additional research. In the meantime the church's stance was to strongly discourage the use of these effigies. However, if a family insisted upon having a *tau-tau,* provided it was not paraded around or prominently displayed during the funeral ritual, the Church would allow individual ministers to determine whether or not they wanted to officiate. The Synod's reluctant reconsideration of the *tau-tau* issue indicates their awareness of the shifting relationship between Torajas and these effigies. In the 1980s, when interest in colorful local traditions, indigenous cultural theme parks, and ethnic tourism exploded in Indonesia, the drive to Torajanize the church had to be handled gingerly.

Despite or perhaps because of this ambivalent Synod decision, the controversies continued as Toraja Church members redefined their relationships and ideas about *tau-tau*s. In one much-discussed 1985 Kesu'-area case, a Toraja Church minister arrived at a funeral to lead the worship services and was enraged to discover a *tau-tau* effigy standing adjacent to the body of the deceased. He immediately departed in a fury, leaving the anguished family members in a state of shock. How were they to bury their grandmother without a Christian minister to preside over the funeral?[14] That evening a distraught, rain-soaked representative of the family appeared at our Ke'te' Kesu' doorstep and begged Ne' Duma to help them. Sympathetic to their predicament, Ne' Duma snatched his dark sarong, umbrella, and Bible and immediately departed. He made fruitless rounds to various ministers' houses: one was sick, another was already booked, and a third had left for the lowlands. Finally, after leaving a series of urgent messages for still other ministers, Ne' Duma gave up and went to the funeral. When his watch crept past 11 p.m. and still no minister had appeared on the scene, Ne' Duma volunteered to lead the prayers himself. His decision to officiate subsequently brought him a stern reprimand from

the Toraja Church Board.[15] This and similar cases in the 1980s sparked much discussion among high-status Christian Torajas. As one aristocratic church elder, Ne' Luther, told me:

> The church is wrong to forbid us to use *tau-tau*s—they're just like pictures. The Catholic Church uses sculptures of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. Protestants in Europe have pictures of people at their funerals, so why can't we? After all, we're not making offerings to the *tau-tau*s—that would be wrong. *Tau-tau*s nowadays are *adat* (BI; tradition), not *aluk* (religion).

Ne' Luther's reference to the church's carefully drawn distinction between "tradition" and "religion" highlights how elite Christian Torajas are reconceptualizing the *tau-tau* as a three-dimensional ancestral photograph. Although the *tau-tau*'s function as a symbol of noble identity persists, the effigy has lost its role as supernatural guardian of the community. Ne' Luther, like other wealthy Torajas, had traveled to Europe and spent time in Holland. He drew on this experience with the world that brought Calvinism to the Toraja to challenge the church's condemnation of the *tau-tau.* By comparing Christian Torajas' use of the *tau-tau* to European Christians' ritual use of photographs, he made compelling arguments for the "legalization" of the effigies.

Other Torajas drew on other institutions to rationalize the continued use of *tau-tau*s by Christians. As Indo' Rampo's brother, an aristocratic Toraja Church deacon, declared,

> The church is going against the national government's goals to preserve culture and tradition. Forbidding *tau-tau*s will wipe out Toraja culture—but according to the government's tourism development plans, we must preserve our cultural traditions!

Tourism, then, also provided elite Christians with a new symbolic means for resisting the church's restrictive policy. The Indonesian government had indeed encouraged the Toraja to preserve the traditions that lured tourists there in the first place. Among other things the government had sponsored the reconstruction of long-collapsed cliffside effigy balconies at some of the more visited tourist sites. It had also paid for sacrificial animals when it came time to replace effigies that had been stolen from these sites. In short, the Indonesian government's increased attention to indigenous cultural traditions in the 1980s and 1990s provided Torajas with another rationale for continuing to use these material symbols of their noble identity, despite strong discouragement from the Toraja Church.

By the time I returned to the field in 1996, some aristocratic Torajas had given up on these lines of argumentation, which had met with only limited success, and instead they were tackling the issue of the *tau-tau*'s problematic link to social stratification more directly. On my first evening back in Ke'te' Kesu', after being updated on the family deaths, marriages, and births, most of the family retired for the evening, save for my oldest Toraja brother, Ambe' Landang, and his wife. Ambe' Landang had inherited his father's thoughtful demeanor and was well on his way to becoming a locally respected leader. He was a natural intellectual, with a quiet, gentle wit that often took one by surprise. Ambe' Landang's interest in his cultural heritage had awakened in the early 1990s, when he was well into his forties. He voraciously consumed all the literature he could find on Toraja traditions, having combed over his father's handwritten manuscripts on Toraja rites and his musty library of Toraja Church documents. I always looked forward to my conversations with Ambe' Landang, as I enjoyed his insightful strategizing about troubling social and cultural issues. On this occasion Ambe' Landang was anxious to talk with me about a recent *tau-tau* challenge that he had faced. Stroking his goatee, he told me about how he had recently relived the same sort of conflict his father Ne' Duma had faced back in the mid-1980s. He had been helping with decorations for a funeral of a recent convert to Christianity. The aristocratic family of the deceased had commissioned a striking *tau-tau,* much to the distress of the Toraja Church minister who had arrived on the scene to discuss plans for his sermon. The minister emphatically declared that he would not officiate at any ritual with a *tau-tau,* as these effigies support social stratification, which the church is against. Ambe' Landang decided it was important to challenge the minister on his decision and spoke up:

> There is social stratification everywhere in the world. Our government has stratified levels—there are *camat*s (BI; subdistrict heads), *bupati*s (BI; district heads), and governors. A governor isn't the same as a president. And our educational system is stratified. If an S1 (a type of degree) is enough, why do people go after S2 (a higher level degree)? Even the church has stratification—there are ministers and there are bishops and they are not equal. To argue that *tau-tau*s are bad because they support social stratification makes no sense when our government and even the church are based on stratification systems. Each person faces God individually, and we are measured on our behavior by

> God when we die, but while we are alive, we live in a stratified world.

Ambe' Landang paused. "What did he say?" I pressed. With the hint of a grin, Ambe' Landang answered, "The minister was confounded and ended up agreeing to officiate at the ritual after all. The funeral will be next week. You can come, if you'd like . . ."

While I didn't make it to that funeral, the minister kept his promise and officiated, despite the prominent presence of the *tau-tau*. And, as I write this from halfway around the world, I find myself wondering if Ambe' Landang's line of argumentation in support of the *tau-tau* will surface at the next Toraja Church Synod, and if he will meet with more success than his father's generation did in their struggle to "legalize" this particularly charged material symbol of elite status.

CONTEMPORIZING THE *TAU-TAU*

Changing Toraja aesthetic sensibilities concerning the *tau-tau* further reinforce elite claims that *tau-tau*s are not pagan survivals, but rather are "just like pictures." Since the 1960s, when growing numbers of Christian Torajas were responsible for the funerals of their *aluk to dolo* parents, *tau-tau*s grew increasingly realistic in style. The impetus for this shift is unclear, although it seems likely that these Christian Torajas recognized that they would have a hard time convincing the Church that the more stylized effigies of their parents were simply "portraits" of the deceased. Realistic *tau-tau*s that could be hailed as innocuous "likenesses" may well have proved a partial solution to their dilemma. In the 1980s the government sent several *tau-tau* carvers to Bali for additional training in sculpture, furthering the trend towards realism in effigy carving. Their detailed work now reflects this Balinese influence. The ready availability of photographs also fostered the shift towards realism in *tau-tau* carving. When I first began my research in the 1980s, elderly elites in Kesu' area villages would occasionally ask me to photograph them so that, if need be, a *tau-tau* carver would have a recent photograph from which to work. Today most elite families have access to their own cameras and no longer need rely on visiting anthropologists or tourists for such favors. Whereas in the past carvers worked at the homes of the deceased (in close proximity to the body) and created stylized effigies, nowadays carvers routinely labor in their own

workshops using photographs of the deceased. Accordingly, families commissioning *tau-tau*s expect them to bear a photographic likeness to the deceased individual it represents. Indeed, *tau-tau*s carved in recent decades are increasingly realistic.

One forty-one-year-old carver I knew, Ambe' Rute, had been sculpting realistic effigies for some time. As a younger man he had spent some time away from the homeland, employed as an office worker at a mining company in the distant Sulawesi province of Kendari. There he discovered he had some artistic talent and was placed in the company's decoration division. When he returned to Tana Toraja, he decided to try his hand at carving *tau-tau*s. Although no one in his family had carved before, he realized he had a natural talent. Soon he was being invited to participate in carving exhibitions throughout eastern Indonesia, where he often found himself sculpting in front of audiences. Ambe' Rute kept a bundle of photographs of the effigies he had carved on his workshop table. Tucked in this bundle were snapshots of regal *tau-tau*s on display at funerals, as well as photographs of several effigies commissioned by wealthy tourists and even a visiting missionary. One morning when I stopped by for a visit, Ambe' Rute flipped through his bundle of photographs and an unusual image caught my attention. It was a snapshot of a life-sized, highly realistic carving of a Dutch missionary's young son. When I naively asked if the child had died, Ambe' Rute laughed and said, "No, he's alive and probably a teen by now." Ambe' Rute's willingness to sculpt for such nontraditional purposes not only reflects his evolving perception of himself as an "artist," but also testifies to transformations experienced by many Toraja woodworkers and artisans.

As Ambe' Rute's work suggests, the stylistic changes in *tau-tau*s are more than the product of new technology and training. The newer realism in effigy carving embodies a fundamental shift in local ideas about the *tau-tau.* Whereas in the past the effigy was revered as a receptacle for the spirit of the deceased, today, as Christian Torajas asserted, it is a three-dimensional portrait. That is not to say that the *tau-tau* has lost its importance to Christianized Torajas; it continues to be treasured as a touchstone for individual and familial identity. But while family members still tuck cigarettes and coins into the betel nut bags of effigies of their deceased kin, these gifts are tokens of affection, not forms of propitiation. In short, the contemporary effigy of the dead no longer enjoys the potency it once had.

Current-day effigies carry another form of potency, however, as a new

generation of Toraja elites use them to make statements about identity, politics, and relationships in the contemporary world. Today's effigies are often gaily painted with store-bought acrylics, some arrayed with modern status symbols such as digital watches and Western suits. Despite repeated government crackdowns on cockfighting, other *tau-tau*s cradle favorite fighting roosters in their arms in what might be construed as final acts of defiance from beyond the grave. Many effigies bear icons of their Christian faith: golden crosses dangle from the necks of some, while others press oversized wooden Bibles to their chests. And for one noble woman, a modern tin-roofed, *erong*[16]-shaped mausoleum had been erected and topped with a pair of enormous, brightly painted cement *tau-tau*s depicting husband and wife standing shoulder to shoulder, each bearing a golden *keris* (dagger). When my host showed me this site, she declared proudly that these were the first modern cement *tau-tau* in Tana Toraja. Actually the husband portrayed in the *tau-tau* was still very much alive, my host explained, but he had commissioned his own effigy early, so that his wife, to whom he was devoted, would always have him by her side. In this display of husband and wife effigies, we see an example of James Scott's (1990) idea of "hidden transcripts." Given the potential for art to carry multiple messages, alternate readings of identities indexed by these effigies are always possible. This is all the more true when the art is mobile, as is the case with traditional wooden effigies. By erecting a paired *tau-tau* couple, and anchoring them in immobile cement, the still-living husband is not only publicly exhibiting his devotion to his deceased wife, but he is also attempting to control future generations' understandings of this spousal relationship, rendering it less ambiguous. In essence, these effigies all communicate distinct allegiances and identities to the living descendants who gaze upon them.

For nonelites, however, the past three decades of economic and cultural transformations, as well as the emerging conceptions of *tau-tau*s as photographs, have not fundamentally altered their relationships to these effigies. Long barred from using these aristocratic symbols in their funerals, few of the nonelites I knew expressed much of a sense of connectedness to them. For those of lower status, these objects were generally less important as "affecting presences."[17] Most frequently when the topic of *tau-tau*s came up in our conversations, devoutly Christian nonelites tended to underscore that these were "pagan" objects that should not be used by Christians. Other nonelite Torajas, whose identification with the church was somewhat less fervent, would alert me to funerals in which *tau-tau*s were to be

displayed. Otherwise these objects seemed to carry little personal significance for most of them. A number of the lower-status Toraja tourates I encountered, however, seemed more connected to these effigies than other nonelites. For these Torajas, whose livelihoods were partly tethered to the tourism industry, the *tau-tau*s were significant not for their own identities but as tourist magnets.

TOURISM, ART MARKETS, AND COMMODITIZATION

The explosion of tourism in the 1980s and 1990s has colored the relationship between the Toraja and their *tau-tau*s. Brochures and posters issued by the Indonesian Office of Tourism, as well as popular guidebooks, all feature images of Toraja burial cliffs and effigies of the dead. Although for Torajas the *tau-tau* is closely associated with noble identity, for foreign visitors it soon became a haunting symbol of pan-Toraja identity, as was the case with the carved *tongkonan.* By the 1980s local carvers had begun accommodating the tourist interest in these effigies. Some started sculpting miniature, stylized *tau-tau*s clothed in bits of well-worn sarong fabric. Others experimented with suitcase-sized carvings of burial cliffs, complete with small balconies holding troll-like effigies. Still others began to make what has become known as *patung model Bali* (BI; Balinese-styled sculptures), small doll-sized sculptures of Toraja villager "types" (see Plate 7).

Lolo was one of the first Kesu' area carvers I knew to recognize the potential income to be had from carving fake effigies. After years of working on Java, Lolo returned to the Kesu' area in the early 1980s and decided to try his hand at carving. He was inspired by a tourist who had arrived at Ke'te' Kesu' wanting to buy a statue (effigy). Although he had never worked wood and was already in his thirties, Lolo knew he was an "artist" and could produce what the tourist wanted. His friends laughed at his moxie, taunting him that just because he could hold a knife didn't make him a carver, but it turned out his instincts were correct—he did have talent. Over the next decade, he and the two assistants he had trained sculpted dozens of statues and fake *tau-tau*s, many of which were purchased by tourists. Such were his skills that he has even been hired to sculpt two *tau-tau*s for American museums. As Lolo did not have a family to support, he worked sporadically, largely to support his passion for cockfighting. As he once told me, "I only carve when I want to, or when I need the money—I

won't carve them for just anyone." When Lolo carves, he tends to be impassioned by his work, and occasionally reminisces about favored pieces. Early in our acquaintance he told me that he was once sculpting a *tau-tau*-like statue of a woman, with the intention of selling it on the tourist market. "She was really beautiful . . . I liked looking at her," he said, adopting the demeanor of a lover,

> I wasn't finished with her yet. Her feet hadn't yet been made. But then a tourist came. He thought she was beautiful too and offered me 30,000 rupiah [US $15]. I told him she wasn't finished yet. He still wanted to buy her. Finally I sold her for 35,000 rupiah [US $17.50]. If I could make them like that all the time . . . But I only carve when I want to.

Despite his erratic involvement in carving, Lolo devoted much energy to creating authentic-looking weathered patinas for the effigies he and his assistants carved. In the late afternoons I would occasionally come upon Lolo and his assistants splattering their carvings with a mixture of palm-wine and rice grains, then turning their roosters loose to peck at them. On other days I would find them pouring urine on their sculptures. To further accelerate the aging process, they told me, they would bury them for several weeks. Their carvings emerged looking suitably haunting and were often sold in Indo' Rampo's tourist stall or in the art shops in Rantepao.

Lolo is not the only carver crafting such tourist treasures. Today, miniature hunchbacked men with canes, sturdy youths toting pigs, roughly hewn elders cradling roosters, and old women bearing funeral offerings all crowd the shelves of local tourist shops. While domestic Indonesian tourists rarely purchase these sorts of souvenirs (possibly due to Islam's prohibition against representations of human forms), these sculptures seem to spark the interest of foreign tourists. Even more intriguing to these tourists are the carved reproductions of grave-related antiquities, which they could fancy to be authentic.[18] Ironically, tourism's showcasing of the Toraja not only promoted the *tau-tau* as an emblem of generalized Toraja identity (rather than personal elite identity), but also played a role in transforming the *tau-tau* from a ritually significant entity into an art object of economic significance.

By the 1980s, a wave of *tau-tau* thefts plagued the Toraja highlands. Since that time, hundreds of *tau-tau* have been stolen and sold to European, American, and Asian art collectors. Burial cliffs once crowded with effigies were pillaged, leaving local villagers anguished and perplexed. Ke'te' Kesu'

was struck several times in the 1980s. On one occasion, in 1985, thieves made off with fourteen of the family's twenty-seven ancestral effigies while we were spending the night in another village at a funeral. When we returned the next morning, we were greeted by teary-eyed fellow villagers who reported with great emotion that the "ancestors" had been "abducted."[19] Upon learning of the theft, one elderly kinsman clutched his chest and sobbed, "Ohhhh, Indoku . . ." (Ohhh, Mother). Others grew angry and declared that the traditional death sentence for grave robbers should be reinstated, instead of the short-term sentences currently in place for *tau-tau* thieves.

Some of the more elderly villagers could not imagine why anyone would covet their sacred ancestral effigies, particularly when there were plenty of new ones to be had in the tourist shops of Rantepao. The thought of Toraja complicity in these thefts was unfathomable to them: "No Toraja would steal a *tau-tau*—it would be like selling your own mother." Other relatives speculated that, like the bombing of Borobudur that had happened around the same time,[20] this was an outsider "plot" to destroy Indonesian culture. Still other Toraja elites in the village offered hypotheses that conveyed volumes about local class and status antagonisms, as well as interethnic tensions on the island of Sulawesi. Indo' Rampo and several other women wondered if the theft was not perpetrated by nonnoble Torajas who resented the aristocracy. They speculated that these nonnobles were working in tandem with jealous Bugis who were stealing *tau-tau*s to sabotage tourism in the highlands. Few of these older Torajas could comprehend the cash value these effigies had acquired on the international ethnic arts market. There was a sense, however, that tourism was somehow to blame. Thus, when my Toraja family summoned a traditional ritual priest to sacrifice a pig in a ritual apology to the ancestors whose *tau-tau*s had been stolen, funds for the pig were sought (and received) from the Regency's Office of Tourism. As the people of Ke'te' Kesu' claimed, without tourism, they would still have their *tau-tau*s. Tourism officials, for their part, began commissioning new "fake" *tau-tau*s to replace those that had been snatched from the burial sites frequented by tourists, for, from their perspective, without *tau-tau*s there would be few tourists.[21]

My Toraja family's ritual for the ancestors whose effigies had been kidnapped was a modest *aluk to dolo* affair. They held what is known as a *ma'nene'*[22] ritual, which usually entails removing the remains of the deceased as well as their *tau-tau*s from the cliffside graves, cleaning the

graves, rewrapping the corpses, ritual weeping, and making offerings of animals and betel nut. Although they were Christians, my family felt it important to offer their ancestors a ritual that respected their beliefs. As one Christian relative who'd contracted the *aluk to dolo to minaa* (traditional ritual priest) explained, "Holding this ritual apology to the ancestors is not at all at odds with my Christianity, for I'm not the one performing the ritual, the *aluk to dolo* priest is!"

Early one misty morning, three days after the *tau-tau* thefts, the *to minaa* arrived and solemnly hacked away at the brush just below the graves, creating a small clearing. In this clearing he roasted sticky rice in bamboo tubes over a crackling fire. As the rice simmered, he incised geometrical motifs on a small bamboo tube that would later hold a palm-wine offering for the ancestors. The sacrificial pig was slaughtered and roasted as well, and a handful of villagers looked on as these foods were offered to the ancestors. We then left the clearing to climb the path to the few remaining cliffside *tau-tau*s, while several scrawny village dogs greedily pounced on the remains of the offerings. The more muscular men of the village gently heaved the remaining effigies onto their shoulders and hauled them up the hillside to arrange them in a closet-sized cement building next to the *tongkonan*s, out of the clutches of future thieves. This structure had been erected some months before by the local Office of Tourism—it had been intended as a toilet for visiting tourists but had never been completed. After the last of the *tau-tau*s was transported, my Toraja brothers solemnly closed the door and clamped a heavy padlock into place.

The effigies were to remain imprisoned in this cement outhouse for several years, until the family could arrange to have a secure cliffside viewing cage constructed to house them. Today the *tau-tau*s are once again restored to their original home under the cliffs, standing in neat rows, just out of arms reach, behind heavy bars. By day the cage is opened, to allow visitors unobstructed views of the *tau-tau*s. At dusk each night, however, the village guard closes the creaky iron grating, padlocking the effigies behind it. Whereas once these *tau-tau*s served as "protectors" of their living descendants, today they are guarded round the clock by a villager on a government salary.

Several years after my Toraja family's ancestral effigies had been stolen, when I was back in Seattle, I received an invitation to attend an exhibit of Art of the Archaic Indonesians at a downtown antique gallery. Featured prominently on the front of the card was a black-and-white image of the

head of what looked to be one of the stolen Ke'te' Kesu' effigies. Shaken, I enlisted a friend to accompany me to the opening preview. In the elegant gallery we found a host of well-dressed, white, middle-aged ethnic art devotees sipping wine and meandering among spotlighted displays of carved Batak staffs, beaded Borneo baskets, and vibrant, finely woven hundred-year-old Sumbanese textiles. Near the center of the gallery we found what we were seeking: two *tau-tau* heads balanced on shiny dark plastic pedestals. The label under one weathered male head with painted dark hair and a swirling grey patina claimed that it dated from 1918 and listed the price as $3,500. The second head, a female, was newer and being offered for $2,000. The male seemed familiar to me, and I snapped several pictures of it to send back to my Toraja family in the hopes of finding a way to have it repatriated if it proved to be theirs.

Next to these disembodied heads, under the spotlights, stood a large unclothed male effigy, with a protruding belly, enormous genitals, chunky toeless feet, and a large hair-knot. The asking price for this *tau-tau* was $6,000. I had turned to my friend and was telling her I suspected this *tau-tau* was a fake, probably made in Bali, when the gallery owner interrupted me, declaring emphatically, "No, it's real. It was sent out from Indonesia." I asked where they had acquired it, and she volunteered that an American dealer living in Jakarta had purchased the group of *tau-tau*s from Indonesians. As I was asking the name of the dealer, we were joined by her husband, who seemed to sense that that I was not the usual buyer. I decided it was time to be more direct: Did he know that these effigies were sacred to Torajas and illegal to export, I queried. Shifting on his feet, the gallery owner acknowledged that he had mixed feelings, and that hardly a day went by when someone didn't come into the gallery and raise this issue. His wife, however, quickly pointed out that gallery owners should not be singled out, since museums with their blockbuster exhibits on Indonesian arts played just as much a role in the commodification of sacred arts as did dealers. I nodded, wondering how I could possibly convey to them the anguish these thefts had caused. Feebly, I left with my camera, warning them to treat these effigies with respect and urging them to consider repatriating them. Although I promptly sent the photographs to the Toraja authorities, the matter was never pursued. Since that time I have seen several *tau-tau*s offered for sale on eBay and have heard stories of wealthy collectors who display these chiseled heads as conversation pieces in their living rooms. For these collectors, *tau-tau*s are art objects for aesthetic

contemplation, sculpted testimonies to the owners' worldliness and connoisseurship.[23]

Despite international repatriation laws,[24] stopping the drain of *tau-tau*s to Europe, the United States, and Canada seems a hopeless matter, particularly in the wake of the Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s and the political turbulence that has followed. As prices for basic goods spiraled and tourism dwindled to a trickle, economic desperation inspired new thefts. In addition, political instability and interethnic violence rendered pursuit of *tau-tau* smugglers a low priority. As Torajas tell me, there are obstacles to stemming the flow of effigies to the West at every level—international, national, and local. International art dealers assert that the *tau-tau*s they sell were "legally acquired," and those *tau-tau*s that are recovered frequently become entwined in lengthy legal processes. Stolen effigies that are acquired before leaving Indonesia often end up languishing in police warehouses, where they become "evidence" awaiting the capture and trial of the thieves. And at the local level Torajas are themselves sometimes reluctant to reclaim their stolen *tau-tau*s, as returning them to the graves requires *ma'nene'* rituals and the installation of new security systems, both of which cost money at a time when cash is in short supply. Thus a number of the *tau-tau*s that have been recovered continue to reside in crowded police warehouses.

Today, Torajas' relationship to the *tau-tau* has come full circle: once "protected" by these effigies, Torajas now find themselves in the reluctant role of *tau-tau* guardians. The Toraja experience is emblematic of the changing relationship between ethnic groups and their sacred art in other parts of the world.[25] As ethnic arts become increasingly coveted by international collectors, their sacred value competing with their new economic value, more and more groups will find themselves becoming guardians of the spiritually potent creations that once promised protection.

NE' DUMA'S FUNERAL

The continuing link between the *tau-tau* and dimensions of personal and political identity was poignantly underscored for me by the effigy that was sculpted for Ne' Duma at the time of his funeral. In the late summer of 1986, some eight months after I had come home from my first long-term stay in Tana Toraja, I received word that Ne' Duma had passed away. I has-

tened to make plans to return to Tana Toraja for the funeral, which was scheduled to occur several months later. As I flew to Makassar, I found myself agonizing over how I would juggle my dual role as researcher and adopted daughter in mourning. As I descended from the plane in Makassar along with dozens of tourists, I was handed a pamphlet produced by the South Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office. Written in Indonesian and English, the photocopied brochure announced a "truly unique Toraja event —the largest, most elaborate, and impressive funeral in several decades." I skimmed the pamphlet, which outlined the cultural functions of Toraja funerals, made brief reference to an origin myth, and presented a schedule of events for the ten-day ritual, and it slowly dawned on me that the brochure was heralding the funeral that had been planned for Ne' Duma. As exceptional as the publicity was, the funeral proved to be momentous, but for very different reasons than those proclaimed in the tourist announcement.

I arrived in Tana Toraja at dusk, two weeks before the funeral was slated to begin. Ke'te' Kesu' had already been transformed for the ceremony, with sprawling plaited-bamboo complexes erected around the central ritual arena. These pavilions, colorfully painted with traditional *tongkonan* motifs, were to shelter guests and relations over the course of the ten-day ritual.[26] My Toraja "kin" poured out of the family's stone house, looking skinny and exhausted, after months of sadness and ceaseless funeral preparations. After an emotional reunion on the verandah, Indo' Rampo and the rest of the family began filling in the details of Ne' Duma's death. An attack of acute high blood pressure had prompted them to take him to the hospital in Makassar, where he languished for forty days. His wife and many of his children had relocated to Makassar during this period, to tend to him in what they suspected would be his last days. As they reminded me, when Ne' Duma had been hospitalized with similar symptoms the previous year, he had clairvoyantly foreseen two possible dates for his ultimate demise. One was August 1986, and the other in the 1990s. His August 1986 prediction proved correct, down to the day. Seeing my eyes widen at this revelation, my Toraja foster sister Emi commented softly, "Many of the old ones, those of *Bapak*'s generation were like that, they knew when they would die."

As the cool evening air began to envelope us, we moved into the house, settling into the velveteen chairs to continue our discussion of the funeral planning. Indo' Rampo's sons plunged into a description of all of the work

the family had been doing in preparation for the ceremony, which was expected to draw 30,000 guests, several cabinet ministers, two governors, the Australian ambassador, and vanloads of tourists.[27] While we talked, Ambe' Landang fetched a six-page mimeographed sheet from the dining room table and presented it to me. My name had been written in block letters across the top of the sheet, which contained lists of the various funeral committees that had been devised to assure the smooth running of the ritual. Some two dozen had been formed, including an entertainment committee, a drinking water committee, a safety committee, a decorations committee, and an accommodations committee. "Your name is there too, Katlin. We put you on committees that would use your anthropology training," Ambe' Landang told me. I scanned through the pages and found myself listed under the Funeral Documentation Committee and the VIP Guest Reception Committee. I was deeply moved that they had thought to devise a way in which I could participate as a family member in the funeral while still tending to my anthropological tasks.

It was only later that I came to appreciate the ingenious political dimensions of my committee assignments. I will digress momentarily to elaborate, as the family's funeral planning strategies illustrate Toraja agency in the face of the troubling ethnic group imagery imposed by tourism and government promoters of national development. My Toraja kin astutely recognized the potential of the funeral ritual to reinforce outsider images of Torajas as "primitives." As I discovered over the course of the ritual, via my committee assignments, I unwittingly had become part of the family's strategy to combat such negative stereotypes. Several days into the ritual, just before the VIP guests arrived, my Toraja foster siblings sat me down in the family's living room and coached me on the finer points of my tasks. Wearing traditional Toraja garb, I was to formally greet these influential outsiders at the specially constructed VIP guest pavilion. With a sly grin, one of my Toraja brothers speculated that these guests would initially be amused at the "tourist gone overboard." "But then," he said, as the others in the room chuckled, "the VIP guests will become awed (*kagum,* BI) when they learn that you are Ne' Duma's adopted daughter and also the family anthropologist assigned to explain the funeral ritual to them."

The family was explicit about what I was to tell the visiting dignitaries: my primary task was to emphasize that they were "not pagans, but Christians." I was to underscore this by pointing out the church hymns and Christian ministers officiating at the ritual. As one Toraja brother observed,

"this time no visitor will return home thinking the Toraja are animists." Furthermore, as the family was well aware of outsider disdain for the "wasteful" Toraja practice of slaughtering water buffaloes at funerals, they instructed me to convince these important guests of the merits of these funerary sacrifices. My Toraja brothers stressed that I must not forget to tell the VIPs that the water buffalo meat from the funeral would be redistributed, eventually reaching poorer villagers who often do without meat. "They won't believe us if we say it, but they'll believe you," declared one Toraja brother, "You're an anthropologist. You can convince them that our rituals are not wasteful."

"Yes," added another, who had been working sporadically in the travel business, "you can tell them what I tell tourists who say we waste so much money and energy on our funerals—that Europeans work like animals every day, eight hours a day, saving up their money so that they can travel for two weeks of the year or have money when they are old. Isn't this the same? For us Torajas, it makes more sense not to work like that, but rather to take it easy. If we get a little money, we'll use it to improve our *tongkonan* or make a great funeral. We just have different priorities. They'll pay attention to you when you say that."

In short, recognizing the power of outsider images over their own claims, my Toraja family cleverly borrowed my voice to challenge the negative imagery that lurked in the Indonesian media. By placing me on the VIP Guest Reception Committee, they saw the potential for a public relations coup. They could draw on the authority of my discipline, degree, and nationality to establish the merits of their cultural practices. As my Toraja kin laid out their plans for me, I was struck by how they were actively challenging touristic and national government stereotypes that had been imposed upon them. This hardly fit the classic image of passive hinterland people being overwhelmed by external forces such as tourism.

But let me return now to the evening I arrived back in Ke'te' Kesu' for Ne' Duma's funeral. After I'd had a chance to douse myself with brisk mountain water, scrubbing away the dust from my long bus journey, Indo' Rampo, Ambe' Landang, and a few other family members led me down to Tongkonan Kesu' to pay my respects to Ne' Duma. As we entered the *tongkonan* and caught sight of Ne' Duma's body bundled in red cloth, Indo' Rampo fell into sobs, and I felt the tears I'd been holding back spilling out onto my cheeks. Ne' Duma's corpse, accompanied by his framed photograph, dominated the central room, whose walls had been blanketed with

Toraja weavings and sacred ancestral textiles. As we sat near the body on rattan mats slowly regaining our composure, Ambe' Landang turned to me and whispered that before his death Ne' Duma had expressed his desire for a *tau-tau.* A carver down the road had been charged with sculpting a fitting effigy. Overhearing this, Indo' Rampo looked up, furrowed her brow and interjected, "But we hear from people that the carver doesn't have the chin and eyes quite right. Katlin, you must go check Ne' Duma's *tau-tau* tomorrow. We can't do that ourselves—it wouldn't be fitting. But you can check on the progress, and call it part of your research." Ambe' Landang nodded, thoughtfully adding, "Yes, this can be your first task on the funeral Documentation Committee—to photo the carver at work on Ne' Duma's *tau-tau* . . . and to report back to us on how it is coming along."

As it turned out, the family fears were unfounded. Ne' Duma's effigy bore a striking resemblance to him and ingeniously embodied his controversial political struggles as well. During his lifetime Ne' Duma's political activities had been legendary. Not only had he been a locally respected elder and church leader, but Ne' Duma had also served as head of the Toraja Parliament *(ketua DPR)* for almost ten years. He had also been a founding member of the Indonesian Christian Party (PARKINDO), the majority party in Tana Toraja Regency during the 1950s and early 1960s. When this party was dismantled in the early 1970s, and he became a devoted advocate of its successor, the minority Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI). Despite considerable pressure, through his final years Ne' Duma had steadfastly refused to join GOLKAR, the ruling government party of the Suharto era, a party whose symbol is the banyan tree. Proud of his political affiliations, whenever he left home Ne' Duma sported a cowboy hat he had embellished with a penciled picture of a wild steer, the PDI party emblem. Quite appropriately, Ne' Duma's realistically carved *tau-tau* depicted him standing on a stump which was emblazoned with an enormous wild steer's head (see Plate 8).

When it came time, during the course of Ne' Duma's funeral, to parade the effigy around the ritual arena before the thousands of guests who had gathered, PDI party sympathizers began to titter. Pointing to the stump on which the *tau-tau* stood, one of them chuckled, "The banyan tree has been chopped down and replaced by the wild steer!" Although some outsiders might have mistaken the PDI party's wild steer head for the ubiquitous Toraja water buffalo motif, for all the Toraja people I spoke with, the polit-

ical symbolism was clear. From beyond the grave, through his *tau-tau,* Ne' Duma was making a final statement concerning his political identity.

On the concluding day of Ne' Duma's funeral, his body and *tau-tau* were solemnly carried down to the hillside graves behind Ke'te' Kesu', where an oversized cement crypt designed by his second son had been erected. Following Ne' Duma's wishes, this crypt was shaped like an enormous *erong* (a traditional casket, often shaped to echo that of the upper portion of a *tongkonan*). Oversized, ornately chiseled, traditional Toraja motifs embellished the concrete facade of the *erong.* As Indo' Rampo proudly pointed out to me, a few special symbols had been incorporated: above the traditional pair of sunburst and rooster designs at the top, her son had inserted a candle, the motif of the Indonesian Christian Party (PARKINDO) that Ne' Duma had helped to found in Tana Toraja when he was young. Carved into the cement, directly above this, was a cross, symbolizing his Christianity. Gathering around the grave, the family members made one last prayer, inserted Ne' Duma's body in the crypt, and installed his *tau-tau* on a shelf high on the façade of the crypt. Later, the effigy would be encased in Plexiglas, as the family feared it would be stolen or destroyed by political enemies if left exposed. Over the years since Ne' Duma's death, countless guides have paused at this crypt with their tour groups, drawing on the embedded symbols to narrate Ne' Duma's life and politics to their charges. In so doing, Ne' Duma's political causes are reanimated and projected to ever-widening audiences.

As Ne' Duma's effigy conveys, contemporary *tau-tau*s are amplifiers not only of elite status, but of particular identities, activities, and causes. For those of high status, these statues carry strong emotional force, calling to mind departed loved ones and the accomplishments of deceased family members. But as the Plexiglas shielding Ne' Duma's effigy attests, like other artistic objects, these statues carry multiple and often conflicting meanings, not unlike the carved *tongkonan.* Because of some of these meanings, families such as Ne' Duma's feel obliged to protect their ancestral effigies that once stood unencumbered as solemn sentinels in cliffside balconies and in the mouths of highland caves. For nonelites, wooden *tau-tau*s can be reminders of local rank and class hierarchies, reminders that some Toraja Church leaders think would be best eradicated. But for many outsiders, touristic posters, T-shirts, and postcard images have transformed

these effigies into generic symbols of Toraja identity. For still other outsiders—collectors and dealers involved in the international art market—these effigies, like the carved panels of *tongkonan*s and rice barns, carry monetary value: they are commodified art objects that warrant display, but not behind the Plexiglas and iron bars that are now so prevalent in elite Toraja burial sites. Rather, these effigies merit exhibition in climate-controlled living rooms and galleries halfway around the world. For Toraja elites and nonelites alike (albeit for differing reasons), the ramifications of the varied and clashing meanings embodied in the *tau-tau* can be deeply distressing.

5 Ceremonials, Monumental Displays, and Museumification

It was early evening in August 1995, on my second night back in the village, and I was sitting with my adopted Toraja family absently watching the national television station (TVRI) that was broadcasting around the clock in celebration of Indonesia's fiftieth anniversary of independence. The flickering TV screen served as a backdrop to the family's assorted activities—the younger children worked on their Indonesian citizenship class homework, while the older women folded the laundry and began preparing dinner. Across the room two local teens counted the day's revenues from the now-booming tourist visits, and Lolo, a Ke'te' Kesu' carver, sat with his friends discussing the new, stricter bans on cockfighting, while cradling and stroking their favorite roosters. All activities were abruptly abandoned, however, when a brief program break commemorating Indonesian independence appeared on the screen. Entitled *The Face of Indonesia,* the short began with aerial views of celebrated national sites such as Java's Borobudur and Bali's Tanah Lot, as well as shots of picturesque Javanese villages and close-ups of tea-harvesters. Murmuring *"Aduh . . . bagus"* (Wow . . . great), the family members closed in around the television in time for the climax, which featured hundreds of Indonesians energetically waving enormous red-and-white flags atop a mountain peak, the flags spelling out the ubiquitous independence logo "Indonesia's 50 Year Anniversary" *(50 Tahun H.U.T. Indonesia).*

As soon as the segment ended, there was a burst of excited chatter. After hearty agreement that the short was a spectacular tribute to Indonesian independence, my Toraja hosts proudly noted that the hands clasping a woven bamboo basket in one of the shots were "Toraja hands." When I asked how they knew these were not Javanese hands, one brother declared, "We know *our* peoples' hands when we see them!"

"But how?" I queried again, completely perplexed. Grinning slyly, one

of my foster brothers then revealed that a relative living in Jakarta had made the segment and that the televised hands were, in fact, another relative's hands. For the remainder of my 1995 stay in the highlands the airing of the short prompted similar reactions and discussions. It was apparent that, for my Toraja friends, this commercial not only served to emotionally inscribe a nationalist sensibility but simultaneously embodied (in a very literal sense) a local, even familial, sense of collective identity.

LOCALIZING THE NATION, NATIONALIZING THE LOCAL

Having examined some of the more traditional symbols of Toraja identity, this chapter will explore newer arenas in which Toraja cultural identities and memories are creatively invoked and enshrined, examining in particular the ways in which these newer displays articulate broader nationalist sensibilities and agendas. Inspired by the publication of Benedict Anderson's (1983) treatise on nations as "imagined communities," anthropologists and other scholars have increasingly directed their attention to the study of nationalism as a form of consciousness. In particular, a number have begun to explore the ways in which the imagined nation becomes cemented in the everyday experiences, narratives, and memories of its diverse citizens.[1] As a relatively new archipelago nation, composed of over 6,000 inhabited islands and hundreds of different ethnic and religious groups, Indonesia is particularly dedicated to enterprises designed to foster a unified national identity. Because similarly heterogeneous nations such as Yugoslavia have crumbed, and because religious tensions between Indonesian Muslims and Christians have mounted, such efforts are becoming all the more important in Indonesia. The 1995 fiftieth anniversary of Indonesian independence was a major occasion for the project of national history-making. While some state-sponsored commemorative enterprises failed to resonate with local peoples, others, such as *The Face of Indonesia,* became vehicles for regional groups to imagine the nation as cradled in their hands, thereby commingling local and national orientations.[2] To the extent that my Toraja friends were able to reinterpret a nationalistic commercial to highlight their group's role in its production, the short was imbued with an emotional local salience. This chapter is broadly concerned with the role of Toraja cultural "displays" in local and national memory-making projects. In examining newer genres of creative display in Tana Toraja, this chapter further details how effective cultural displays *embody* collective memories,

infusing them with emotional resonance such that these displays can serve as "affecting presences."[3]

I am specifically interested here in exploring how tensions between national and local conceptions of identity and history are embodied, mediated, and domesticated through public ceremonials, museums, and landmarks of remembrance. To address these themes, I examine the activities surrounding Independence Day in the Toraja highlands in 1995. In addition to the standard flag-raising rituals and music competitions, these activities included the construction of temporary gateway arches embellished with artistic displays of Toraja heroes who rebelled against the Dutch and Japanese invaders. As I will illustrate, the visual elements of several of these public exhibits embody both competition and collaboration with the dominant Indonesian narratives of independence and nationhood. This chapter also addresses how these themes are infused in the current Toraja fascination with establishing village-based museums dedicated to local revolutionary heroes and preeminent aristocratic families.

Greg Acciaioli (1985), Edward Bruner (1979), and others have noted that the Indonesian approach to nation-building entails a process of aestheticization of indigenous societies' traditions.[4] As Acciaioli writes, "Regional diversity is valued, honored, even apotheosized, but only as long as it remains at the level of display, not belief, performance, not enactment" (Acciaioli 1985:161). While in earlier chapters I have explored the commodification of Toraja material culture in the context of tourism and nationalism,[5] the on-the-ground processes whereby Torajas imagine, assert, and articulate their own identities vis-à-vis these aestheticizing nationalistic productions are the focus here.[6] How does "the national" fit into "the local" in a way that reaches beyond decorativeness to become emotionally compelling? What roles do local museums, monuments, and ceremonials play in this process? Not only does this chapter explore Toraja attempts to inscribe themselves on the national landscape, but it also examines how and why official attempts to create national subjectivities may achieve or fail to achieve emotional resonance.

THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE IN TANA TORAJA

The build-up to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Indonesian independence lasted for weeks. Following a government directive,

Toraja adults busied themselves repainting their bamboo picket fences and installing colorful flags and banners in front of their homes, shops, and offices. Neighborhood and village youth groups designed and erected stunning gateway arches celebrating Toraja independence fighters. Red-and-white bunting draped all of the shop fronts in Rantepao, and "Fiftieth Anniversary" posters and stickers adorned the windows of houses, cars, and trucks. Even shopgirls at the largest Chinese-run general store in Rantepao wore specially made T-shirts emblazoned with the "Fiftieth Anniversary of Independence" logo. The mood in town was one of frenzied excitement, as normally sleepy Rantepao was transformed into a suitably sparkling seat for the festivities. Afternoons leading up to Independence Day were heavily scheduled with intervillage and interoffice sports competitions and Pancasila knowledge tournaments, while groups of school children and their teachers created daily traffic jams as they practiced marching drills for the upcoming parades.

On my third day back in the village, a government worker arrived on his motorcycle, bearing glossy red, white, and gold embossed invitations to the Regency's formal commemorative activities. The invitation listed eight ceremonial events to be held over three days, along with notations regarding proper attire. These state-orchestrated ceremonies included a reception for retired Toraja veterans, a flag-raising ceremony, a candlelight vigil at the military graveyard, a midday grave-site memorial service, a grand roll call of scouts, and a state reception. As I read the invitation, I imagined how the national story of independence might be retold from a Toraja perspective at these local ceremonies. Knowing the Toraja penchant for evocative oratory and their talent for crafting spectacularly decorated ritual structures, I was excited about the prospect of witnessing these festivities. I assumed that the celebrations would entail lively speeches chronicling the heroic deeds of Toraja freedom fighters. I also envisioned commemorative reenactments at key locales where Toraja heroes had valiantly resisted Dutch colonialists, complete with choreographed performances of Toraja war dances and specially built bamboo spectator pavilions splendidly embellished with Toraja motifs.

I also imagined that Toraja officials would stage a memorial service for Pong Tiku, whose exploits are proudly recounted in Toraja classrooms and celebrated in a number of local publications.[7] At the turn of the twentieth century Pong Tiku and another leader, Pong Maramba, played key roles in the resistance against the Dutch. Pong Tiku was assigned to lure the Dutch away from Rantepao, while Pong Maramba's troops were to follow

the Dutch and trap them between the two forces. The Dutch, however, learned of these plans and drew on ancient rivalries between Toraja "big men" to quash potential resistance (Bigalke 1981:99–100, 103). According to Toraja accounts, Pong Tiku and his army were steadfast in their stand against the Dutch, fighting fiercely from their mountain stronghold. Using rifles, spears, swords, boulders, and even pepper juice, Pong Tiku and his troops successfully resisted the Dutch for several months (Crystal 1970:48). Eventually, however, Pong Tiku's supplies dwindled, his troops surrendered, and he was shot by the Dutch, reportedly while bathing in the Sa'dan River. Although the Dutch had hoped that Pong Tiku would soon be forgotten, for many Toraja he remained a symbol of resistance. Some years after independence, in 1964, Pong Tiku was officially recognized as a national hero, and today he is commemorated in the provincial capital of Makassar each year on July 10, the anniversary of his death. In 1970 government officials in Tana Toraja Regency commissioned a monument to Pong Tiku that now stands near the muddy banks of the Sa'dan River, memorializing the spot where he was reportedly killed.[8] This, I imagined, would be a fitting spot for Toraja officials to stage a portion of their Indonesian independence celebrations, a spot where orators could hail the early struggles of their hero Pong Tiku. I envisioned a moving ceremony alongside Pong Tiku's monument, which would be draped in sacred heirloom textiles, with the sounds of the rushing river waters in the background.

Instead, the state-sponsored ceremonies I observed rarely attended to uniquely Toraja experience and terrain. Rather, the official commemorative events featured uniform-clad officials delivering routine speeches that either hailed Indonesia's fifty years of accomplishments or focused on Java-based events leading up to the declaration of independence. While some of these state-sponsored rites were bracketed by brief bursts of Toraja drumming or dance displays, such Toraja activities always appeared alongside groups performing national anthems or patriotic Indonesian songs, or, on one occasion, Sumatran Minangkabau dances and Buginese songs from lowland Sulawesi. In short, these ceremonials tended to constitute a largely generic, bureaucratic commemoration of national heritage.[9]

Given the limited, almost decorative quality of the Toraja elements at most of these public ceremonies,[10] the question arises as to how, if at all, these formal state events link the national experience to the local? What role, if any, do these ceremonial practices play in articulating different, occasionally competing, dimensions of identity (that is, national, religious,

regional, and ethnic identities)? To address these questions, I turn now to several events that occurred in conjunction with Indonesia's golden anniversary. Three were state-sponsored independence commemoration activities that deliberately drew on Toraja themes. Two met with tremendous success, but the third was problematic. The final event to be discussed is a small, uniquely Toraja village-based ceremony of remembrance.

THE SONG-WRITING FESTIVAL

When I began asking about the various events planned to commemorate independence, friends in the village invariably spoke passionately about two activities: a regional Toraja song-writing festival and the banner-flying required by the new head of the Regency *(bupati).* While my village friends had no desire to witness most of the government-sponsored Independence Day observances, dismissing them as "boring," everyone I knew eagerly anticipated the song-writing festival. This was one event that almost every villager hoped to attend. Many of the younger people in Ke'te' Kesu' excitedly promised me that this would be far more interesting than the "dull flag-raising ceremonies and marching drills." Significantly, unlike most of the public ceremonials, the song-writing festival highlighted the Toraja component of Indonesian identity. The festival, held in Rantepao's Youth Meeting Hall, drew a standing-room-only crowd ranging in age from young teens to adults in their late forties. Hundreds of spectators crammed onto wooden benches and folding chairs in the tin-roofed meeting hall, chatting excitedly about the evening's agenda. As my Toraja siblings settled into their seats and began waving at friends around the room, I surveyed the stage, which was framed by hand-painted banners, one marking the "Fiftieth Anniversary of Independence" and the other proclaiming that "Developing and Preserving Toraja Regional Culture is the Responsibility of Us All." There was a noisy, excited mood in the room: teenaged boys wearing their best jeans flirted with bashfully giggling girls; parents readied their cameras, testing their flashes on family members; and mothers distractedly fed biscuits to their squirming toddlers. The meeting hall finally quieted down when a prominent local pastor arrived on stage to offer a brief prayer, which was followed by a Toraja welcome dance. The charismatic local pastor then launched into an opening speech, which heralded the Toraja song competition as one of many planned activities to celebrate

Indonesia's fifty years of existence and its success in unifying its many distinct provinces and cultures. As the pastor declared, "North Sumatran songs are already quite well known and have even been Torajanized. But let us not only sing *dandut* (BI; Sumatran Islamic pop music) when we can sing our own regional verses. This is one of our responsibilities as believers and as citizens of a nation that can live forever."

In highlighting regional, national, and religious pride, and in drawing on music to obliquely acknowledge the more troubling Toraja anxieties concerning Islamic religious domination in Indonesia, the pastor's speech clearly resonated with the audience and was met with a burst of applause. The crowd's excited chatter resumed, rendering inaudible the formal welcome speech from the *bupati* (head of the Regency), a Bugis Catholic from the predominantly Muslim lowlands of Sulawesi.[11] The audience remained inattentive for the duration of the *bupati*'s speech, quieting down only when he officially opened the event with a bang on a Toraja ceremonial drum. Immediately, a group of slickly dressed young male singers wearing Toraja ritual headdresses strode onto the stage and sang a spirited traditional song of Toraja unity and glory. The audience listened attentively, murmuring their approval. A second rock group followed, their pulsating electric guitar chords and indecipherable verses prompting enthusiastic applause and squeals from the teenaged females. Finally, the crowd grew hushed as the *bupati*'s wife, a Muslim Javanese woman, strode onto stage wearing traditional Toraja attire. The Toraja women sitting next to me exchanged surprised glances as the *bupati*'s wife apologized for her poor Toraja accent. Then, clasping the microphone, she began to sing *Tondok Toraya,*[12] a song that many Torajas consider their regional anthem. As with many Toraja songs, the verses of *Tondok Toraya* speak nostalgically of the Toraja homeland, the land of one's parents and ancestors, which embodies the emotional ties between person, place, and parentage:

> Beautiful [bountiful] Torajaland,
> the land and place where I was born,
> the land and place where my parents live,
> Is so far away.
>
> The tears stream down my cheeks
> when I, in my loneliness, reminisce
> that beautiful [bountiful] Torajaland
> is so very far away.

So be it that I am far away
I will continue to remember
that beautiful [bountiful] Torajaland.

As people in the audience recognized the song, they burst into applause. Grinning with approval, one Toraja friend declared that the *bupati*'s Javanese wife had a good accent. The plump Rantepao woman sitting behind us whispered that the traditional Toraja clothes suited her. As the *bupati*'s wife continued to sing, many Torajas in the audience could be heard softly singing along with her, while others swayed gently in their seats. The spell was broken when the song ended, and officials arrived to usher in the jury, marking the start of the song competition.

The contest itself lasted two hours and featured eighteen Toraja groups performing songs of devotion to God, the Toraja homeland, and the nation, as well as a few love songs and a particularly enthusiastically received song about Toraja devotion to gambling. When we returned to the village late that night, those who could not attend the event were still awake and awaiting our accounts of the competition. My companions plunged into a description of the *bupati*'s wife's song, offered glowing reviews of her moving rendition and declaring that while she sang, they forgot that she was not Toraja. As it turned out, the *bupati*'s wife's performance was the subject of admiring conversation for several days. Likewise, the gambling song, delivered by a young candidate for the priesthood, was also much admired in the village. Many of the males in Ke'te' Kesu' were devotees of cockfighting and the song clearly resonated with them. The *bupati* had recently introduced a harsh, new antigambling policy that these cockfighting aficionados found deeply troubling. In the eyes of these male villagers, the Bugis *bupati*'s new policy was a direct affront on Toraja culture, as betting on cockfights and water-buffalo battles traditionally accompanied funeral rituals. Several of my male friends took particular delight in the fact that the singer of this gambling song was a candidate for the clergy. As one cockfighting devotee slyly quipped, "If the government isn't on the side of preserving Toraja culture, at least we have allies in the church. And, after all, God is the higher authority!"

For the Torajas I interviewed, the song-writing contest was clearly one of the more memorable components of the commemoration activities. While the pastor's opening speech tacitly marked off religious and regional

oppositions between Torajas and other Indonesians, and the gambling song underscored tensions between popular Toraja activities and government policy, the *bupati*'s wife's performance mediated those clashing perspectives. That is, her public use of Toraja language, Toraja verse, and Toraja dress transformed her into an imagined consociate, and in so doing helped localize modern governmentality.[13] For these Torajas, the sight of a Muslim Javanese representative of the national government singing a Toraja song of remembrance constituted more than a simple symbolic bow to the Toraja homeland—the performance lent emotional force to a sense of an expansive national collective reality. In short, the Toraja song-writing festival served as an arena in which potentially cacophonous cultural, regional, and religious identities were, to some degree, reconciled and harmonized with nationhood. However, villagers' animated discussions of the gambling song illustrate that this melding of ethnic and national sensibilities, while largely successful, was not entirely seamless.

BACKFIRING BANNERS

If the song-writing festival achieved a relatively effective mediation of local and national subjectivities, a second activity was far less successful. Apparently in compliance with a national decree, the *bupati* of Tana Toraja Regency announced that all Toraja families were to erect two multicolored Balinese-styled banners in front of their homes as a tribute to Indonesia's fiftieth birthday. Throughout Indonesia, similar banners were being raised, and the Toraja landscape was speckled with these banners. In a sense, the banner-raising activity appeared to be symbolically transforming the local terrain into Indonesian terrain (see Figure 8 in Chapter Three). When I commented on how festive the banners made the countryside look, my Toraja friends responded by grumbling bitterly about the substantial expense entailed in purchasing the banners. Several went so far as to vociferously complain about being required to use their limited cash to frame their doorways with government slogans. As one friend lamented, his children were so well programmed by the daily barrage of televised nationalist directives that they cried when he and his wife dragged their feet in putting up the decorative banners. Suddenly remembering that I was jotting our conversation down in my notebook, he was quick to add that this

was, however, a "good influence of television," as it "increases children's love of country."

According to the *bupati*'s stipulations, the banners were all to be emblazoned with a slogan he had carefully chosen for Tana Toraja—"TORAJA BANGKIT," which roughly translates as "Toraja rises up" or "Toraja resurrects." Undoubtedly, this Bugis Catholic *bupati* envisioned the slogan not only as celebrating the progress of modernization in the Regency but also as obliquely alluding to Christianity. Given Indonesian government officials' fondness for acronyms, it surprised no one that the letters of "BANGKIT" were made to stand for an assortment of desirable Toraja characteristics. According to my friends, the *bupati* decreed that all Torajas should memorize this list of characteristics; none of the Torajas I interviewed, however, could recite the meanings of the acronym.[14] Ultimately, the *bupati*'s ambitious *bangkit* theme backfired. When the topic of the banners came up in conversation, Torajas invariably made wry jokes. As one told me, "Ya, 'Toraja rises up'! Before we were thought to be sleeping, but NOW, our new Bugis *bupati* thinks he has finally woken us up!" The Muslim migrants who ran noodle shops and sewing stalls near the Rantepao market, however, had a different perspective. When I stopped by to catch up with a family who ran an unassuming noodle kiosk alongside Rantepao's dusty main road, they soon pointed out all the wonderful changes wrought by this Bugis *bupati* whom, they noted, had a beautiful Muslim wife. As we sat slurping up noodles on the wobbly wooden benches in their shop, the family matriarch proudly pointed out the "BANGKIT" banner rippling in the breeze outside her kiosk and gleefully observed, "Before this Bugis *bupati,* Tana Toraja was slumbering, but now it is finally waking up! Toraja was gloomy and dirty before he came. But now, with his cleanliness laws, and his banners and decorative lights, Tana Toraja is gleaming!" For these lowland Muslim migrants, the banners prompted admiration rather than resentment. But these Muslims were a small minority in Tana Toraja.

Ultimately, the *bupati*'s effort to use the banners to inscribe a national terrain onto the local Toraja landscape was a dismal failure. Undoubtedly, rural Torajas' general resentment of the banners was prompted in part by the sizable expenditure entailed in their purchase. However, the same rural Torajas who complained to me about the expense of the banners did not hesitate to spend far more on decorations for funeral rituals and other locally meaningful events. I suspect that a key problem with the banners

was that, in contrast to the televised short displaying "Toraja hands," the *bangkit* banners did not offer anything for Torajas to clasp, magnify, or embrace as their own. Ultimately, the sight of the *bangkit* banners evoked more Toraja resentment of Indonesian governmental policies than allegiance to national causes.

Significantly, when I returned to Tana Toraja seventeen months later, in December 1996, most of the rural banners were no longer flying, although in Rantepao the banners could still be spotted in front of Chinese-run businesses and government workers' homes. As my Toraja hosts told me on this visit, the upcoming national elections had inspired the *bupati* to move on to a new revisionist landscaping project: the recasting of Tana Toraja's main road in the color yellow. In the 1990s the color yellow was associated with GOLKAR, the government party (red and green being associated with GOLKAR's two rival parties). According to my friends, the *bupati* had requested that all homes alongside the main road through the Regency either repaint their curbs and flower boxes yellow, or plant large patches of yellow flowers along the roadside. As my friends commented, the *bupati* was particularly irked by the color red (the color of the PDI, the Indonesian Democratic Party, which had a strong following in Tana Toraja). A few days later, I chanced to ride a public *bemo* (minivan) along the main road and was astonished by its transformation. As we sped past emerald-colored rice paddy fields, weathered wooden houses on stilts, squat cinder-block homes, and dusty roadside shops, I soon came to see that some Torajas' ambivalence about this new "yellow" directive could be read in the roadside scenery: while much of the thoroughfare was newly fringed with marigolds and freshly painted yellow flowerboxes, a few families had craftily asserted their own allegiances to the rival PDI party by planting alternating rows of yellow and red flowers or painting their curbs in yellow and red stripes. Once again, identities, political allegiances, and political challenges were being embodied and displayed in the Toraja terrain.

I turn now to several additional arenas in which Torajas constructed counternarratives to the government's conscription of the Toraja landscape for its project of national history-making. Not only do these cases reveal how local-level displays and ceremonial practices can transform a local geography into a valorized and sacred terrain, but they also illustrate the rhetorical practices and institutional strategies whereby Torajas attempt to inscribe local heroes onto the national map.

EPHEMERAL ENSHRINEMENTS OF THE TORAJA NATIONALIST SPIRIT

In conjunction with Independence Day activities, one of the most visible ways in which Torajas inscribed local revolutionary memories onto the contemporary Indonesian landscape was through erection of both temporary and permanent gateway arches and monuments. These commemorative constructions were not unique to Tana Toraja Regency. Each year members of rural and urban neighborhood associations throughout Indonesia construct, repaint, and decorate monuments and gateway arches in honor of the anniversary of independence. These construction rituals are sponsored and promoted by the Indonesian government, which organizes yearly gateway arch competitions between the towns and villages of each district. While there is tremendous regional variation in the styles and themes celebrated in these local archway monuments, in 1995 one embellishment was relatively constant throughout Indonesia. Prominently displayed on most of these gateway arches was the inscription HUT RI KE-50, an acronym for the fiftieth anniversary of Indonesian independence *(Hari Ulang Tahun Republik Indonesia Ke-50).* Many also featured two dates—17–8–1945 and 17–8–95—a reference to the time that had elapsed since Indonesia's declaration of independence.[15] As John Pemberton (1994b:156–157) notes in his discussion of cultural discourse in New Order Indonesia, this 1945 date serves initially as a sign for continuity, but in its various manifestations and reproductions—such as being encoded in the dimensions of celebrated monuments in Jakarta's Mini Indonesia Park, as well as in the feather count of the mythical Garuda bird that serves as Indonesia's emblem—it becomes transformed into a "sacred number" for Indonesians and ultimately an ahistoricized symbol. That is, the number has become a magical figure divorced from the actual calendar. I would further argue that Torajas reinfuse their gateway arches with a sense of local time, local history, as well as their own ahistoricized symbols by inserting sculpted representations of Torajas' battles for independence or by fringing these dates with carved motifs drawn from Toraja houses, motifs which have become ahistoricized symbols of Toraja identity par excellence.

Unlike the other largely generic state-sponsored Independence Day rites discussed earlier, the ritual gateway arches constructed by Torajas are clearly arenas for the exhibition of Toraja ethnic pride. Through these local monuments Torajas celebrate and display their own contributions to

FIGURE 17. *Independence Day gateway arch in Rantepao with Toraja motifs and adjacent "BANGKIT" banner.*

Indonesian independence. The more elaborate of these largely temporary constructions feature images of heroic Toraja freedom fighters (see Plate 9). For the most part, the Toraja men depicted are bare chested, with woven Toraja sarongs slung over their muscular shoulders. Wearing traditional Toraja shorts and headdresses, they clutch bamboo spears and Indonesian flags in their outstretched arms. Some statues portray Toraja men bursting free from heavy chains, the shackles of colonialism. Others depict 1945-era Toraja males fiercely rejoicing over independence by assuming so-called warrior dance poses. Still others feature triumphant freedom fighters on platforms embellished with carefully selected carving motifs and miniature *tongkonan*s. There is no mistaking these statues for Javanese or Bugis freedom fighters: they are clearly and proudly Toraja.

In the weeks prior to the fiftieth anniversary, younger Torajas launched into an unprecedented frenzy of statue and gateway arch construction. Newly erected landmarks sprang up at almost every intersection, showcasing the place of local history and identity in the national narrative. Villagers enthusiastically discussed the dramatic monumental displays in Rantepao, and a number of Torajas I knew took detours to view the gateway arches rumored to be the most spectacular. Everyone had opinions about which was the most artistic or compelling display and all impatiently awaited the judges' decisions.

Like the *bangkit* banners, these Independence Day arches and statues transformed the local Toraja landscape into a national terrain. However, unlike the banners which were generally a failure, these statues were imbued with emotional resonance for Torajas. Some inspired awe and even reverence. All of these statues worked to historicize the landscape, imbuing it with revolutionary memories and local pride, at the same time providing important links between local and national identities.

REMAPPING EDEN

Four days prior to the anniversary of Indonesian independence, my adopted Toraja family gathered to commemorate another event: the anniversary of Ne' Duma's death. Ne' Duma's widow, children, grandchildren, and I spent that afternoon at Ne' Duma's cliffside tomb, removing weeds from the cracking cement surrounding the tomb, sweeping, dusting the tomb's interior, making offerings of wild flowers, Bintang brand beer, and

cigarettes, and posing for family photographs in front of the tomb, with Ne' Duma's *tau-tau* towering above us. Later that evening approximately sixty relatives and neighbors filled the family's stone bungalow for an evening worship service. The Protestant pastor, Anton, was a vibrant Toraja man in his forties who had worked with Ne' Duma on church business and had remained close to the family after Ne' Duma's demise. After calling the gathering to order with a prayer reading and hymn, Pastor Anton outlined the reasons for the service. These included the commemoration of Ne' Duma's death, thanksgiving that their "developing nation" was successfully celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, thanksgiving for Ne' Duma's granddaughter's acceptance at Sulawesi's premier university, as well as thanksgiving for the birth of a new grandson, and for my safe return to Tana Toraja. After leading us in another hymn, Pastor Anton opened his sermon by announcing that it was a fitting time to "remember beginnings," as we were in the midst of commemorating Indonesia's golden anniversary. His sermon, however, would return to "even earlier beginnings," namely, the creation of Earth and the Garden of Eden. After describing all that was to be found in Eden, Pastor Anton concluded that it was a veritable "Taman Mini." While Taman Mini translates as "Mini Park," it was clearly intended as a reference to Mini Indonesia Park in Jakarta. The park, conceived by President Suharto's wife, was created as a monument to Indonesia's cultural and ecological diversity, and displays a sampling of traditional houses and cultural arts from each of the country's provinces. Smiling in my direction, the pastor cited archaeological research that had shed light on the historical location of Eden in the Middle East, and then resumed his narrative of the story of Adam and Eve and the forbidden fruit.

A few minutes later Pastor Anton startled us all by abruptly interrupting his recounting of the delights of Eden and announcing that he wanted to pose a question to me. Pausing dramatically, the pastor queried, "In your opinion, Kathleen, where is Eden? Is it in the United States or here in Tana Toraja?" Flustered by the unexpected question and feeling bashful about all the eyes peering in my direction, I groped for an appropriate answer and finally warbled, "For me, it is in Tana Toraja." As the congregation chuckled and smiled approvingly, I added, "Well, it's also where the archaeological research indicates it is . . ." To my relief, Pastor Anton nodded and responded, "Yes, you are right. Here, Toraja is declared the Eden of our country, all the more so with tourism." This, too, met with smiles, as people recognized his reference to the title of a newly published

coffee-table book entitled *Toraja: Indonesia's Mountain Eden* (Parinding and Achjadi 1988).[16] The book, cowritten by a Jakarta-based Toraja and his reportedly Australian wife, was being featured not only in the Rantepao tourist shops but in bookstores throughout Indonesia. Pastor Anton then triumphantly clarified the point of his sermon: namely, that "Eden is not just in one place. It is in *us*—we carry it in our hearts . . . Eden is a state of mind. When we are suffering or when we are joyful, it is there within us." As we all nodded thoughtfully, I wished I'd had the wisdom to have come up with that answer.

After a pause, the pastor shifted away from Eden and reminded us that the service was primarily to commemorate Ne' Duma's death:

> With Indonesia's fiftieth birthday we must pay homage to our heroic national warriors (*pejuang nasional,* BI). Ne' Duma was a heroic warrior. He struggled for his country, and he struggled to preserve our culture. Today we are grateful to him because of his struggles to preserve Torajan culture. Today we feel pride that our area is a tourist destination, that our culture is now famous. In some countries they present certificates to people deemed "cultural treasures." . . . With or without such a certificate, Ne' Duma was a true cultural treasure and cultural warrior. Certificates and titles are meaningless in front of God and Jesus Christ Our Savior—what counts are our deeds.

After more prayers and singing, Pastor Anton delivered his closing remarks. He noted that "when we die and are resurrected (*bangkit kembali,* BI), we will all know Eden." His invocation of the now politically charged term *bangkit* clearly evoked associations with the ubiquitous banners, as it produced a number of chuckles and grins.

While there is not sufficient space to discuss this sermon in the depth that it deserves, I wish to highlight several themes. First, Pastor Anton's remapping of Eden merits underscoring. Not only do we see the salience of "place" for Toraja memory-making projects, but we also witness a clever inversion of conventional national histories, which tend to acknowledge local histories as afterthoughts or as decorative embellishments. In his sermon the pastor subsumes the Indonesian celebration of national origins under the search for origins that reach much farther back in time, that is, the search for human origins, albeit in a Christian framework. In essence, Pastor Anton strategically dwarfs the state's narrative of history by invoking the broader Christian narrative of humankind. Moreover, in breaking frame and asking me whether Eden was in the United States or in Toraja

(no doubt suspecting that I would answer Toraja), we again see the pastor subtly asserting a sublime Toraja primacy over not only Indonesia but the Western world—the message being that not only do other Indonesians and tourists recognize Toraja as Eden, but so does the American anthropologist with advanced degrees. Yet after establishing Toraja as an Eden, Pastor Anton shifts course and relocates Eden in our hearts. In so doing, the physical Toraja terrain of Eden is rhetorically embodied (literally "in our hearts") and emotionally inscribed. Thus the pastor's liturgy offers a counternarrative to the government's conscription of the Toraja landscape for its project of national history-making. Pastor Anton's reaffirmation of the touristically constructed imagery of Torajaland as Eden imbues the Toraja terrain with a universal sanctity and preeminence.

An additional dimension of the sermon is the rhetorical relocation of Ne' Duma in national space as a "national warrior" (*pejuang nasional,* BI). In the sermon, Ne' Duma's struggles to preserve Toraja culture become linked to the struggles of Indonesian freedom fighters of the 1940s. Pastor Anton elevates Ne' Duma from the status of local hero to national cultural treasure, and the thanksgiving commemoration becomes an avenue for valorizing and nationalizing the local. The pastor's memorial to Ne' Duma ultimately personalizes memories of the nation's past, linking those at the worship service to larger spheres of imagined national reality.[17] Let us turn now to pursue the unfolding of this theme in the arena of Toraja museums.

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM DISPLAYS AND ETHNIC AND REGIONAL POLITICS

Benedict Anderson argues that monuments face two ways in time.[18] He observes:

> Normally they commemorate events or experiences in the past, but at the same time they are intended, in their all-weather durability, for posterity. Most are expected to outlive their constructors, and so partly take on the aspect of a bequest or testament. This means that monuments are really ways of mediating between particular types of pasts and futures. (1990: 174)

Anderson's insights about monuments are all the more apt for museums, as museums can be viewed as particularly complex sorts of monuments—monuments to civilizations, nations, regions, ethnic groups, or interest

groups.[19] Both museums and monuments are engaged in memory-making for the present and the future. While monuments such as the Independence Day neighborhood statues often overtly celebrate the emotional, museums tend to make implicit claims to objective, dispassionate versions of history. In this section I explore how Toraja museums serve as yet another way of inscribing certain selectively chosen local memories and ancestral heroes onto the national landscape. The locally run Toraja museums are not simply backwards-looking institutions; rather, they are highly political and self-consciously future-oriented. In Tana Toraja, as in other parts of the world, museums project local concerns and perspectives beyond the region and, through international tourism, often beyond the nation itself. Before examining museums in Tana Toraja, however, I want first to survey the governmental model of museums found in and around the provincial capital of Makassar.

In 1984, when I first arrived in Makassar to process my research permits, I explored the city's old Fort Rotterdam (Benteng Ujung Pandang), part of which had been converted into South Sulawesi's provincial museum.[20] As I entered the enormous seaside complex, passing through the fort's heavy stone walls and into a tranquil grassy field bordered by old colonial-era buildings, I imagined the compelling exhibits on local cultures that I would encounter. Although I knew that Makassar was a predominantly Makassarese and Bugis city, I nevertheless envisioned a museum in which spectacularly carved Toraja treasures would be prominently displayed. No doubt, Tana Toraja's preeminence in the South Sulawesi touristic literature helped to shape my expectations. As a foreigner I had perhaps naively assumed that this museum would be primarily oriented towards tourists, most of whom were far more interested in the Sa'dan Toraja than in other South Sulawesi ethnic groups. When I entered the cool, stone-floored museum gallery, I found to my surprise that Toraja culture was barely visible in the museum's wooden display cases. Instead, the museum placed a heavy emphasis on maritime history, with exhibits on seafaring and Bugis sailing vessels. This emphasis, as some have observed (Taylor 1995:116), effectively highlights one dominant local ethnic group, the traditionally maritime Bugis. Strolling into another gallery, I found life-sized displays featuring the colorful male and female wedding garb of each of the major ethnic groups in the province. I later came to appreciate that this was one of the most widely used exhibition techniques in Indonesian government-run museums. Such exhibits send a calculated message of

national continuity and unity amid colorful diversity: in essence, these sorts of comparative presentations are aimed at urging visitors towards a sense of shared provincial identity, sending the implicit message that "while we all may dress differently, we all celebrate weddings."[21] While the display of wedding costumes certainly meshes with Bugis cultural emphases, from the Toraja viewpoint it would have been far more appropriate to display the dolls in mortuary garb, since funerals are the predominant ritual in Toraja culture. In an adjacent gallery I finally found a few display cases filled with Toraja ritual and household implements: one glass cabinet featured a collection of carved wooden pedestal bowls that were traditionally used by aristocrats, another displayed miniature carved *tongkonan*s and rice barns arranged in two neat rows to evoke a traditional Toraja village. These limited Toraja displays offered a further glimpse of provincial and national conceptions of how "remote" ethnic culture should be presented in the nation's museums.[22] Toraja's relegation to the margins of the provincial museum did not go completely unnoticed by Toraja visitors. Toraja employees of Tana Toraja's Office of Education and Culture made frequent trips to Makassar for meetings at the La Galigo Fort, taking in and discussing the provincial museum's displays while they were there. Several of these government workers returned to Tana Toraja inspired to establish Toraja-oriented museums in the highlands, museums which would spotlight their own culture.

A few years later, in the late 1990s, when the grassy fields of Makassar's Fort became the setting for performances showcasing the various ethnic dances found in South Sulawesi, Toraja tourates in the highlands once again scrutinized the display of their culture in the provincial capital. This time the concern was that too much Toraja culture was cropping up in the provincial capital. As rumors of these Makassar dance performances trickled back to Tana Toraja, some tourates grew disgruntled, suspecting that such performances were Bugis and Makassarese attempts to horn in on their tourism cash cow. As one lively Rantepao souvenir seller told me, "Those Ujung Pandang [Makassar] folks are sly. Now they are staging dances at the fort [site of the provincial museum] so that tourists will go there instead of seeing dances here in Tana Toraja. Those Ujung Pandang [Makassar] people are always trying to make a profit from us Torajas." Poking me vigorously, she reminded me of how, two months earlier, Singapore's prime minister had been scheduled to visit Tana Toraja following the opening of a cement factory in lowland Sulawesi. Instead the prime minister was whisked away to the Makassar Golden Hotel in Makassar, where he was

entertained with Toraja dances. "What's more," she added in an exasperated tone, "They say the dancers weren't even Toraja! Those Bugis are always trying to profit from our Toraja culture!" Whether or not the rumors about Bugis performing Toraja dances were accurate, Toraja commentaries about state-sponsored displays of Toraja culture in Makassar were frequently laden with these images of urban-rural and lowlander-highlander ethnic rivalries, revealing how cultural displays become infused with interethnic politics and suspicions.

Highlander fears that Bugis and other lowlanders would attempt to siphon off tourists by replicating Toraja in Makassar cultural displays mounted in the late 1980s, when the government announced plans for the construction of a mini-South Sulawesi park in another historic fort four miles south of Makassar. Envisioned as South Sulawesi's key contribution for the touristic promotion of Visit Indonesia Year 1991, the park was to be an open-air museum featuring the houses and cultures of the key ethnic groups found in South Sulawesi. The setting of Somba Opu Fort is significant, as the fort is the site where, approximately 350 years earlier, Makassarese fighters led by Sultan Hasanudin waged one of the last battles against the invading Dutch army. Thus, several hundred years later, in 1989, the fort was being unearthed and restored as a sacred site where various South Sulawesi groups would once again encounter outsiders. However, this time the invading outsiders were not Dutch soldiers but coveted tourists bringing economic rewards.

South Sulawesi tourism developers regaled the selection of this site for Taman Miniatur Sulawesi (Miniature Sulawesi Park) as an opportunity to restore Somba Opu to its former position of glory. As the authors of a book promoting investment in South Sulawesi proclaimed, "Somba Opu is therefore nothing else than a fortress of defense mythologized as a symbol of greatness, courage and pride of the South Sulawesi people at that time" (Wahab 1992:n.p.).[23] In short, through its designation as the locale for the Miniature Sulawesi Park, the fort was being refashioned into a key symbol of pan-regional identity. Although South Sulawesi regional identity was only beginning to be cultivated and was far from seamless, the mythologizing of the Somba Opu Fort promised to lend this newly crafted pan-regional identity the authority of a glorious past.

What does "South Sulawesi regional identity" mean? During the 1990s, when Indonesia's New Order government was actively seeking to instill national integration through cultivating common values, several

writers suggested that a pan-provincial identity was being forged in South Sulawesi. Christoph Antweiler (1994), for instance, pointed to the dwindling ethnic residential segregation in Makassar, the growth of ethnic intermarriage between South Sulawesi Islamic groups, and the increasingly frequent reference to common South Sulawesi cultural traits by Makassar academics, journalists, and ordinary people. However, observing that riots between youth groups are often couched in ethnic and religious terms, and noting the endurance of powerful ethnic stereotyping between these groups, Antweiler also offers ample evidence for the persistence of powerful ethnic sentiments despite the state's orchestrated moves to tame them. Likewise, in her exploration of the emergence of the platform house[24] as a symbol of South Sulawesi regional identity, Kathryn Robinson (1993) is careful to note that this symbol of common identity has salience only for the Islamic groups in South Sulawesi (the Bugis, Makassarese, and Mandar peoples), not for the Toraja or Chinese. Thus, while the foundation for a common provincial identity may be salient for some groups at some times, it is not yet sturdy, and some groups (particularly the Toraja and the Chinese) tend to be set apart from this identity. In part, this separation reflects the fact that, at the provincial level, political power remains largely in the hands of the Bugis.

Returning to Miniature Sulawesi Park, this open-air museum was deliberately modeled after Ibu Suharto's celebrated Mini-Indonesia in Jakarta. In fact, the name of the park was later changed to Taman Budaya Sulawesi (Sulawesi Culture Park), because of concerns about detracting from the "uniqueness" of the then First Lady's park in Jakarta.[25] The sprawling grounds of Taman Budaya Sulawesi feature four "cultural villages" highlighting traditional architecture and cultural displays from the four primary ethnic groups of South Sulawesi (Bugis, Makassarese, Mandar, and Tana Toraja). Despite the strong presence of the Toraja traditional-styled house in the park's promotional brochures, the park represents the first effort to launch the architecture of Islamic groups in the province as a touristic attraction.[26] As with the provincial museum displays, a number of Toraja tourates were aware of the park's potential to displace them as the most celebrated group in South Sulawesi and lamented that Torajas had little to say in the matter. In Tana Toraja rumors circulated that Torajas were not represented on the park's planning committee, rumors which turned out to be unfounded.

To make matters worse, as opening day approached, a number of Tora-

jas lamented that they had little control over how the park presented them and their rituals.[27] One Toraja student studying in Makassar told me of how irked he was to learn that the park officials planned to alter significantly the Toraja house consecration ritual *(mangrara tongkonan)* that was to accompany the opening festivities of the park.[28] Several years after the park opened, he was still perturbed and told me, "The Bugis said there'd be no live pigs at the ceremony! But pigs are essential for the *mangrara* ritual—how can you have a house consecration without pigs? Just because they are Muslim and uncomfortable with pigs doesn't mean they should be allowed to change our rituals." He and many of his Toraja classmates decided to boycott the park's opening ceremony in protest.

The park's grand opening in the summer of 1991 coincided with South Sulawesi's Second Annual Festival of Culture.[29] Newspapers and television news heralded the festivities. At the opening ceremonies, the governor of South Sulawesi declared, "It wouldn't be in the least bit astonishing if Miniature Sulawesi Park one day becomes the most interesting tourist object in all of eastern Indonesia."[30] Widely quoted in local news, the governor's words were for many Toraja tourates ominous signals that Makassar residents were promoting Miniature Sulawesi Park to compete with their title as the "Primadona of South Sulawesi."

These worries proved to be unfounded. The park never became firmly ensconced on international tourist maps. And even domestic tourists tended to opt for other, livelier destinations. Some years later, long after the park's opening hoopla had faded, I expressed my desire to visit the park to some affluent Bugis friends with whom I was staying in Makassar. While all of them had made several touristic trips to Tana Toraja, only one had ever visited Taman Budaya Sulawesi, and she had gone only because I had asked her about the park, and she wished to gather literature to post to me in the United States. From their comments, it was clear that they had little interest in the park. One well-to-do Bugis friend in his mid-thirties joked, "We Indonesians would rather go shopping than go to a cultural theme park. Nine kilometers is too far to go for a Miniature Sulawesi Park, but Indonesians would go all the way to Singapore for a sale!" His entire family burst into laughter, nodding in bemused agreement.

Still, as good hosts, my Bugis friends insisted on escorting me to the park. And so, on a sweltering August afternoon in 1995, I found myself speeding out to Taman Budaya Sulawesi with my Bugis host in her chauffeur-driven BMW, accompanied by several companions from her women's club. I couldn't help noticing that these well-traveled urban Bugis women

seemed more curious about me than the park, as their comments and questions focused exclusively on life in the United States. After a thirty-minute drive on unmarked rural roads, whizzing through sheared rice fields and quiet villages, we finally crossed a rickety bridge that had been hastily erected for the park's grand opening a few years earlier and found ourselves at the gates of the deserted park. Save for the inhabitants of a small village *(kampung)* which predated the park and a few stray cats, we were the only beings in sight. Surveying the expansive sun-drenched grounds, my companions determined that there was no point in walking through the park when we could drive. And so our car slowly crept along the empty, weedy pathways of the park, passing arid fields and pausing momentarily at each of the "living villages," all of which seemed uninhabited and forlorn. At each stop, after a round of quick group snapshots in front of the houses, my Bugis friend's companions either declared the site *sunyi* (BI; lonely, desolate) or, fanning themselves, announced that there was no need to tour the interiors of the houses as "they are just empty, anyway" and retreated to the air-conditioned sedan. While we encountered several people who supposedly lived in the empty display houses (working as house guardians), the only other visitors we saw in our hour and a half at the park were a Western tourist and his guide. They, too, had opted to drive through the grounds in an air-conditioned vehicle, a late-model Makassar taxi. I wondered aloud to one of the house guardians if we had not arrived at the wrong time of the day, or at the wrong season, and she replied that the park was only busy during sponsored on-site festivals or conferences; otherwise it was "empty and lonely." A scan of the guest book she had me sign confirmed her assessment, revealing only a couple visitors per day. In the car on the drive back, my companions joked that I should shift my research to something more lively (*ramai,* BI), like their women's group. I had to wonder if they were not right. The visit, however, had confirmed that my Toraja tourate friends had nothing to worry about: Miniature Sulawesi Park was unlikely to divert their tourists or usurp their reign as "Primadona of South Sulawesi."

MUSHROOMING MUSEUMS AND LOCALIZED MEMORY

In the 1990s Toraja leaders, tourates, and aristocratic families were becoming increasingly conscious of the potential authority-building power of museums. The dramatic growth of tourism to the Toraja highlands also

spurred Toraja interest in the revenue-generating potential of museums. In the summer of 1995 leaders in approximately half a dozen Toraja villages and towns were talking of establishing museums.

Up until the 1980s there was only one official museum in Tana Toraja Regency, the Buntu Kalando Museum. This family-run museum, which houses 733 objects, opened informally in the 1970s and was granted official status as a museum in 1984. According to a Sombolinggi family elder, the genesis of the museum was prompted by the death of an aristocratic ancestor, the Puang (prince) Sombolinggi.[31] Shortly after his demise, a *tongkonan* was erected as a temporary repository for his body. The family held a splendid, pageantry-filled funeral for the *puang* in 1971, following which a debate ensued as to what to do with the heirloom objects used in the funeral. Ultimately, the family decided to install these objects in the *tongkonan* and establish an informal museum, allowing the objects to be borrowed from the museum for ritual use.[32]

Today the museum is housed in two interlocking buildings connected to the Sombolinggi family's home. Displays in the *tongkonan* include cooking implements, baskets, wooden bowls, and spoons, while the newer cement room between the *tongkonan* and the family home features aristocratic family heirlooms such as silver betel nut containers, golden *keris,* and even token dolls clothed in Toraja funeral and wedding garb (in a nod to the government's exhibition formula). Simpler bamboo betel nut containers and other objects more typical of Toraja commoners are not to be found. One wall of the modern structure is explicitly devoted to the memory of Puang Sombolinggi. Portraits and formal photographs of the *puang* adorn this wall. In the very center of this section is a large framed Certificate of Appreciation from the Indonesian government given to the *puang* for his role in the 1945 revolution against the Dutch. In the Buntu Kalando Museum, then, we see the enshrinement in physical space of a family's ties to an aristocratic, patriotic, and heroic heritage. The Buntu Kalando Museum not only keeps alive the memory of a deceased Toraja prince, but also, with each tourist visit to the museum, the glory of this prince (and by extension his descendants) is projected beyond the local and national to the transnational stage. Embodied in the museum, then, is an imagined future of international celebrity and authority for the prince's descendants.

Given this political dimension of family-run museums in Indonesia, it is not surprising that the second museum to open in Tana Toraja was established by another noble Toraja family with a long history of both col-

laboration and competition with Puang Sombolinggi's family. This second museum was also born out of a death. In 1985, an aristocratic collector and trader of antique goods and Toraja arts passed away without leaving any children. This dynamic woman, known as Indo' Ta'dung,[33] had both her shop and home in Ke'te' Kesu' and was a beloved elder in Ne' Duma's family. Following her funeral, Ne' Duma and Indo' Ta'dung's other siblings were faced with deciding the fate of her collection. Several Jakarta relatives proposed that a museum be established in the village and named for Indo' Ta'dung, an idea that was quickly embraced by her relatives. Many of the Ke'te' Kesu' family members had long felt disadvantaged in their ability to achieve the same level of recognition as the *puang*'s family in the southern region of Tana Toraja. A museum celebrating their own Kesu' heritage would correct this. Family members immediately began planning the Indo' Ta'dung Museum. The museum opened in 1988 and was initially housed in one of the ancestral *tongkonan*s, in the heart of Ke'te' Kesu'. The core of the collection had come from Indo' Ta'dung's inventory of antiques, trinkets, sculptures, and textiles and was supplemented by other objects collected and donated by her living relatives. When I visited in the summer of 1989, a steady stream of domestic and international tourists were touring the *tongkonan* museum, gazing at the simple displays of prized ritual textiles, knives, and traditional eating utensils designed specifically for nobles, as one of my brothers explained the significance of the objects and briefly summarized the life of the woman who had collected them. In 1989, Indo' Ta'dung's family often expressed their concerns about the curation of the objects and the museum's simple display style. By this time, propelled by the touristic celebrity of Ke'te' Kesu', several of Ne' Duma's sons had spent time overseas, carving traditional Toraja houses for museums in Japan and elsewhere, and it was on these trips that they developed grander aspirations for Indo' Ta'dung's museum.

By the time I returned for the 1995 Independence Day celebrations, the family had drawn up elaborate architectural plans for a glorious new Indo' Ta'dung Museum in the shape of an enormous *tongkonan.* The museum itself was already half completed and dominated the village plaza. On this visit there was much talk in the village of the timeliness of this museum, given Indo' Ta'dung's role as a revolutionary hero. As people in Ke'te' Kesu' reminded me on this visit, not only was Indo' Ta'dung a popular local figure with a surplus of humor and charisma, but she also had some claim to local fame, having been married to a Toraja freedom fighter

who died in the revolutionary struggle against the Dutch. Moreover, as numerous villagers asserted, Indo' Ta'dung was said to have been the first courageous Toraja to raise the Indonesian flag in Rantepao following Indonesia's 1945 declaration of independence. This original flag was still amongst Indo' Ta'dung's possessions and was envisioned as a cornerstone of the new museum's collection. Plans were also underway to install a life-sized *tau-tau*-like carved image of Indo' Ta'dung high on the facade of the *tongkonan*-shaped museum. As one of the family members told me, the statue-embellished museum would ensure that Indo' Ta'dung's role as a revolutionary hero would not fade from memory: she would continue to have a presence in the heart of the community.

When I returned to Tana Toraja in 1998, the work on the new museum was finished and those tourists who came to the village invariably spent some time examining its collections. The ground floor of the museum displayed Kesu' heritage objects: glass cases exhibited ornate betel nut utensils, antique ceramics, beaded ceremonial ornaments, and finely woven old baskets. Along one wall was a row of newly carved diminutive sculptural figures depicting warriors wearing horn-shaped helmets or carrying small shields and spears. Towering above them was the sculpture of Indo' Ta'dung that had once been envisioned for the facade of the museum. Wearing a golden embroidered Javanese-styled blouse (*kebaya,* BI) and batik sarong, she stood raising a cigarette to her mouth, in a pose that prompted memories of her in life. Behind Indo' Ta'dung's sculpture, the family had hung an oil portrait depicting an ancestor on horseback, a stately painting that had once graced Ne' Duma's living room. An artfully stacked arrangement of the wooden pedestal bowls traditionally used by the aristocracy towered in a rear corner of the building, and another corner was filled with large antique ceramic vessels. Visitors' eyes, however, could not help but be drawn to the central support beam of the *tongkonan*-shaped museum, which was sculpted in the shape of a bare-chested man with arms extended to support the building's ceiling. Upstairs, the lofty second floor of the museum was envisioned as the library and future headquarters for research on Toraja culture and heritage. Since Ne' Duma's death, the family had been gathering scholarly books and other manuscripts concerning Toraja culture and planned to house these in this space. As family members told me, together the museum and the research center would ensure that, even though knowledgeable, charismatic elders such as Ne' Duma and Indo' Ta'dung were now deceased, people would continue to perceive Ke'te'

Kesu' as a source of ancestral wisdom. Whereas in the past both local and foreign researchers traveled to Ke'te' Kesu' to interview now-deceased elders, in the future they would still make pilgrimages to this locale to seek out the research materials housed in the museum. In short, this museum was to embody, in a very physical sense, all of Toraja culture and heritage. While the heroes of Ke'te' Kesu' were omitted from the provincial museum, and from the *puang*'s Buntu Kalando Museum, the Indo' Ta'dung Museum would reassert their preeminence, not only locally but nationally and internationally to researchers, government officials, and foreign tourists. In discussing their plans for this museum, it was clear that my Toraja friends were hardly passive recipients of the national version of history that relegates them to the margins. Instead, they were actively strategizing and devising ways to reinsert themselves and their ancestors into local, national, and international history. Central to the history-asserting plans were museums, monuments, and memorials.

In the spring of 1998, just prior to the collapse of Suharto's New Order, the family plan appeared to be poised for success. The construction of the new museum was complete and the building was slated to be consecrated in a grand *mangrara banua* ritual the following year.[34] The vision was derailed, however, by the Asian economic crisis and Indonesia's decline into political turmoil. And so while the museum remains open, the family now turns to other strategies for ensuring its prestige and place in history, strategies that will be addressed in the final chapter of this book.

Having explored a variety of newer arenas in which Toraja cultural identities and memories are creatively invoked and enshrined, I have sought to illustrate how tensions between local, regional, and national concepts of identity and history are embodied, negotiated, and occasionally exploded. One recurrent theme in this chapter has been how and why public state-sponsored attempts to create national subjectivities may achieve or fail to achieve emotional resonance. As we have seen, the Indonesian state's strategy to relegate ethnic elements to background decorative roles has occasionally been successful. But it was successful in an ironic fashion. That is, while it appears that the state intended for these ethnic elements to remain colorfully in the background of its ceremonies of remembrance, it was precisely these things that became the most salient aspects of the celebration for my Toraja friends. Toraja audiences seized on and embroidered the Toraja elements of the public ceremonies. It was these elements that enabled Torajas

to forge a link from the local to the national and to recreate a central role for themselves and their ancestors in local, regional, and national history. Where such elements were absent, as in the case of the *bangkit* banners, the attempts to generate national pride failed.

One thread that merits some teasing out has been the salience of place and body to memory-making practices. A number of recent writers have suggested that focusing on "embodied memories" will shed light on the production of cultural memory and power.[35] The Toraja cases discussed in this chapter suggest that approaching Independence Day activities, commemorative statues, and museums as embodying practices enhances our insights into how cultural and national power is asserted and why, at times, such memory-making projects and national-identity building projects may fail to achieve emotional resonance. Examining state history-making ceremonies and activities as embodying practices is particularly productive in Southeast Asia, where history is frequently given a *physical* form (S. Errington 1989; Rodgers 1995:27). Objects and sacred places that link the past to the present can be critical to the construction of futures. Celebrated objects and locales work as touchstones for memory-making and often "unlock elaborate worlds of ritual oratory" where communal identity is both constructed and commemorated (Rodgers 1995:27). As we have seen, those state and local narratives that underscored the salience of place and body for Torajas achieved a commingling of local, national, and even universal dimensions of identity. Examples of this are the Toraja homeland song sung by the *bupati*'s wife, the television short that placed cherished Indonesian locales and objects in "Toraja hands," the pastor's sermon that remapped Eden into Tana Toraja and our hearts, and the erection of museums and monuments that physically inscribe Toraja war heroes onto the landscape for posterity. However, the commingling is not always harmonious and smooth—for embodied in this commingling are oppositions between self and other, Christian and Muslim, and local and provincial.

6 Toraja Icons on the National and Transnational Stage

This chapter pursues a number of themes pertaining to cultural pastiches, cultural appropriation, art, and the negotiation of Toraja identity and values in ever-widening spheres. Central here is the issue of how, in the context of growing interethnic, interreligious, and economic turmoil, Torajas are struggling to project their identity and viewpoints beyond the local onto the national and global stages. This Toraja struggle for self-assertion and symbolic preeminence has to do not only with a desire for respect and glory, but also with fears that, as tourism becomes jeopardized in an era of uncertainty, so do the livelihoods of Toraja tourates and their families. Through global recognition of their arts and culture, Toraja highlanders stand to gain, at the very least, acceptance for their "traditional" ways. And at best, they may gain expanded options and possibilities for their life trajectories.

The efforts, however, of Toraja tourates and tourism developers to project Toraja imagery to broader audiences usher in new challenges. As the material icons of Toraja identity become better known on the global stage, fears of design appropriation mount and old interethnic hostilities are reignited. In this chapter I trace the ways in which reproduced images of Toraja identity have been appropriated by other groups for their own economic enrichment. I also look at the architectural outcroppings of Toraja icons in Makassar and elsewhere, examining how interethnic battles may be symbolically waged through material constructions, and triumphs may be asserted on ever-grander stages.

ART AND LIFE IN MAKASSAR IN THE LATE 1990S

In late April 1998 I arrived in South Sulawesi's capital of Makassar en route to the Toraja highlands after a two-year absence. It had been a tumul-

tuous period in Indonesia: the Asian economic crisis had battered the country the previous July, prompting unprecedented unemployment, currency depreciation, and soaring prices of staple goods like rice and baby formula. The mid-1990s had been a period of increasing Muslim-Christian tensions, and a wave of anti-Chinese violence was now sweeping parts of the country. As has happened in the past, Indonesia's ethnic Chinese, who traditionally dominated large- and small-scale commerce, were being scapegoated for the country's economic woes. Anti-Chinese rioting rocked Makassar for two days in September 1997, leaving over a thousand homes and businesses burned and those remaining Chinese fearfully barricading themselves behind fortified walls. In the months that followed, city traffic snarled as daily student demonstrations shut down major thoroughfares and firebombs continued to target Christian churches, Chinese temples, and foreign business franchises such as Kentucky Fried Chicken. A little over three weeks after my arrival, on May 21, President Suharto would be forced to resign, and South Sulawesi's own B. J. Habibie would be hastily sworn in as the new president of the Republic of Indonesia, but at the time I arrived the mood in South Sulawesi was far from jubilant.

As I whisked through the Makassar airport, a familiar voice called my name. It was a young man I had known in Ke'te' Kesu' years earlier. He was now grown, married, and working at the airport desk of a Toraja-run travel agency. After filling me in on the village news, and sketching the economic and physical woes sweeping Makassar, he packed me into the cab of a Muslim Bugis coworker, assuring me that I would be "safe" with him. His assurances troubled me; in my earlier visits such assurances would not have been necessary. As we made the thirty-minute drive into the heart of Makassar, my driver offered his own account of the city's hardships since the plunge of the rupiah. Between blasts on his horn, he told me of the rioting, fire bombings, and demonstrations, noting that the anti-Chinese activity had fallen off since the police had started guarding the Chinese shopping districts. To illustrate, he detoured down Jalan Sulawesi, the once-bustling Chinese shopping street that had been the focal point of the violence. It was mid-morning and the street was eerily quiet. Although most of the stores had reopened, the scars of the violence were visible. Many second-story windows (where Chinese shopowners normally reside) were broken or boarded up, while others were shuttered with newly installed metal doors and grates. Several unscathed buildings had the word "ISLAM" spray-painted across their facades, an apparent effort by the inhabitants to

preempt violent attacks on their properties. As we neared a historic Chinese temple, my driver shook his head and recounted how this temple, "the oldest in Makassar—the one all the tourists go to photograph," was burned down by the mobs during the "incident." The weathered exterior courtyard walls of the torched temple still stood; strung up across these walls was a large yellow banner emblazoned with the Indonesian words "We Support Indonesia." Seeing the fluttering banner, my heart grew heavier, as I began to fathom the fear and desperation behind such declarations of loyalty. For the first time I seriously wondered if Indonesia's nation-building efforts were doomed, if the mini-Indonesia theme parks, the push for Indonesians to forge bonds with one another via domestic tourism, the televised cultural variety shows, and the independence anniversary festivities would never succeed at working their state-solidifying magic.

We continued on through the narrow seaside alleys, eventually snaking down Jalan Somba Opu, where largely Chinese-run gold shops lined the street, interspersed with a few curio and handicraft stores. Still more shuttered and charred windows lined this street and only a third of the businesses appeared to be operating. The driver shook his head, commenting softly, "Jalan Somba Opu has been *sepi* (BI; quiet, lonely) since the riots. No one can afford to buy gold now." As I later learned, the only business activity on this once-thriving lane of gold shops was driven by desperation, as anxious residents brought in their gold jewelry to have it melted down into small bricks. We emerged onto Makassar's seaside esplanade, arriving at the Hotel Sedona Makassar where I was to meet with another anthropologist. This flashy new luxury hotel had sprung up during the economic optimism of the mid-1990s. I was astounded by its opulence.

I entered the building tentatively, feeling self-conscious about my wrinkled travel clothes and disheveled hair. The expansive marble-floored lobby, where I was to meet my friend, was a study in sleek modernism, with few allusions to local Sulawesi culture. Encased in glass, the reception area boasted sweepingly high ceilings. My eyes immediately flew to the carved facade of an old Toraja granary that adorned the wall above the golden elevator doors. The only other nods to local culture were the Toraja *tongkonan* silhouettes embedded in the hotel's trademark, which was stenciled on the glass entry doors and replicated in the hotel's stationary, as well as on hotel postcards sold in the gift shop. The more elaborate postcard images featured a watercolor drawing of a New Mexican adobe building facing a row of *tongkonan*s, all set in a Southwestern desert terrain: the odd design

seemed to conjure an image of Toraja as the Wild West. Such a juxtaposition was striking in a hypermodern hotel that boasted a "Bellini California-Italian Restaurant" and a "Salsa Tex-Mex Bar and Grill," especially after passing though the scarred Chinese shopping districts. The disturbing disjunctures and cultural pastiches fostered by globalization had my head spinning.

I noticed a sign announcing a painting exhibition of works by South Sulawesi artists at the other end of the lobby. Since I was early for my meeting, I wandered over to the art show, only to discover that my arrival had coincided with the opening reception. Dozens of government officials in official dress uniforms and their stylishly outfitted wives clustered around several long-haired, baggy-jeaned artists and their paintings. On a banquet table were enormous cakes with congratulatory messages written in Makassarese script. I picked up a sheet listing the artists, titles, and prices of the roughly hundred paintings on display. Scanning the twenty-six painters' names, I realized that, with one possible exception, none were Toraja.

Nonetheless, I was surprised to find that the European-style oil paintings depicted Toraja funeral scenes, complete with *ma'badong* dancers, buffaloes, and bamboo guest pavilions in the background. There were also oil paintings of Toraja burial cliffs, a funeral procession, and a Toraja village with young boys perched on swaybacked water buffaloes in the foreground. The exhibit included a striking pencil drawing of a grey-haired Ke'te' Kesu' man wearing a pig-tusk necklace, a mixed-media portrait of an *aluk to dolo* priest, and an awkwardly proportioned batik painting of the ubiquitous Toraja *pa' tedong* (water buffalo) motif. While many of the paintings portrayed lowland landscapes, local sailing vessels, Bugis villages, and still lifes of wild orchids, roses, and other flowers, over a quarter of the work on display by these Bugis and Makassarese artists depicted Toraja scenes. What would my Toraja friends make of this, I wondered? Would they be honored or would they see this as yet another way in which their age-old rivals were capitalizing on them, selling their likenesses for hundreds and thousands of dollars?

I fell into conversation with a pony-tailed Bugis artist in his twenties who painted Toraja subjects and had spent time in the Toraja village of Palawa. After admiring his work, I commented on the scarcity of Toraja artists in the exhibition. He confirmed that there were no Toraja painters. Stroking his thin goatee, the artist ventured that this might be because

"people always like to draw places that are not their home, places that seem far removed from what they are accustomed to." And so I found myself thinking about the overlap between the sources of artistic, touristic, and anthropological inspiration.

TORAJA PAINTING IN THE HIGHLANDS

The Bugis artist's speculations about the lack of Toraja painters struck me, particularly because when I had been in Tana Toraja two years earlier, I found that a number of budding Toraja painters were exploring their cultural and natural terrain in the medium of oil. I wondered whether the presence of tourists and touristic images had, for some Torajas, sparked new perspectives on their landscape. No doubt the relatively prosperous early 1990s had enabled some Torajas to purchase imported oil paints and canvas, items which had not been readily affordable in leaner times. Most likely, the growing presence of television in rural villages meant that new Toraja audiences were being exposed to occasional documentaries or interviews with prominent Indonesian artists.

The Ke'te' Kesu' household where I lived had long appreciated painting as an art form. In the 1970s my Toraja family had hosted a Balinese artist who passed his days in the highlands painting village scenery and left one of his paintings as a memento. Prominently displayed on the living room wall, it depicted Ke'te' Kesu' *tongkonan*s, rice barns, water buffaloes, and palms, all rendered in the classic Balinese style of collapsed perspective. My Toraja siblings had grown up with this painting, and by the early 1990s one of my Toraja foster brothers, Ambe' Landang, was encouraging his artistically inclined teenaged son to take up oil painting. When I had visited in 1995, Ambe' Landang's son Stanis had created several oils of Toraja scenes that were reminiscent of work by the French Fauves. His colorful images were set in carved, wooden frames embellished with elaborate Toraja motifs. Stanis's paintings were exhibited in his parents' Ke'te' Kesu' tourist stall and a number of the smaller ones had sold to visiting tourists. One, that Stanis presented to me as a parting gift, now hangs in my dining room. It depicts an evocative medley of Toraja icons—a stately water buffalo, an abstract *tongkonan* facade, and a male Toraja funeral dancer—all rendered in a burst of bright reds, yellows, oranges, and blacks, drawn from

the traditional Toraja palette (see Plate 10). In contrast to the Bugis artist's speculations, Stanis had clearly been inspired by local motifs (and by the availability of a touristic market as well).

A few other Torajas had followed suit and, by the mid-1990s the lofty upstairs of a souvenir shop in Rantepao had been converted into a Toraja gallery. Displayed alongside imitation antiquities (such as hefty Toraja grave doors) were impressionistic paintings of water buffaloes, some lazily idling in front of golden rice fields and others in funeral settings, majestically adorned with decorations. Also on display were a number of large abstract canvases with splashes of intense color. Clearly, these mostly self-trained Toraja artists were experimenting with new styles drawn from the broader world. In embracing forms of expression that were novel for Toraja, these painters were, in a sense, engaging in an artistic dialogue that crossed cultures and nations. While the art gallery was always deserted when I visited, the clerk reported that in the months since they had opened, several of the paintings had sold, primarily to urban Torajas and expats residing in Indonesia.

AMBE' LANDANG'S CARVED "PAINTINGS"

Other Torajas were drawing on traditional carving forms to send new messages to a broader audience. By the mid-1990s, Ambe' Landang had embarked on an innovative new carving project, one that he envisioned as "painting" (*lukisan,* BI). Although his new works were sculpted on wooden boards and drew from the traditional inventory of Toraja geometric motifs, Ambe' Landang explicitly rejected the term "carving" (*ukiran,* BI) to describe them. He stressed that these new creations did not echo the dictates of the past, but were, rather, imbued with his own sociopolitical commentary and critiques. Ambe' Landang's past had clearly helped to shape the vision informing his new genre carving.

As an adolescent, Ambe' Landang had a wild streak, skipping school, routinely getting into fistfights, gambling, and frequenting the smoky billiard dens by the Rantepao market. As he once put it, "I was a *remaja nakal* (BI; delinquent youth)." His family worried that he would never shape up and shipped him off to work for a timber company in Kalimantan. When he eventually returned, his parents arranged for him to marry the daughter of another respected elder, and the couple soon started a family. By the

time I first arrived in Tana Toraja in the mid-1980s, Ambe' Landang had become a dedicated family man, taking his roles as father, husband, and elder brother very seriously. On several occasions during my initial fieldwork, he had quietly pulled me aside to offer brotherly advice about various Toraja behavioral expectations. Once, for instance, after I had spent an afternoon interviewing a raucous group of young wild guides in Rantepao, Ambe' Landang gently warned me about fraternizing with them:

> You are my *adik* (BI; younger sibling), and it is my duty to offer you guidance. I know you are with those wild guides for research, but people in Rantepao don't understand that—they'll assume that you are also *nakal* (BI; naughty, wanton), and your virtuous reputation will suffer, as will our family's standing.

I was always touched by his brotherly concern, and swayed by his reflective, soft-spoken manner. Try as I might, I had a difficult time imagining him as a wild young man. But as his peers observed, his early years of rebellion put him on the path to his later years of dedication to family and social reform.

By the mid-1990s, Ambe' Landang could see that trouble was brewing among the youths in the Kesu' area. Many had graduated from high school and college, but had returned home unable to find employment. Some were dejected and still others resentful that their years of schooling had not produced the income or jobs they envisioned. As Ambe' Landang observed, with nothing but empty pockets and time on their hands, these youths were veering towards gambling and petty crime, threatening to become *remaja nakal,* as he had once been in his own youth. Recognizing the need for local sources of income and productive activity, Ambe' Landang established a carving workshop. He started by gathering together a few unemployed teens from his hamlet, working with them to develop their carving skills. He reasoned that if they were kept busy carving in the workshop, they would soon forget about gambling. As he reminded me, "I used to gamble, to the point where gambling became my profession. Hopefully, this workshop will give them a different profession, a profession that will not torment the spirits of their wives and children."

Initially, the teens at the workshop produced the standard wall plaques and trays depicting rural scenery and daily life. They would routinely chip away at their creations while perched on the airy front porch of the studio. Because the workshop stood at the edge of the trail to Ke'te' Kesu''s much-visited gravesite, passing tourists often paused to take snapshots of these

photogenic young men at work. Ultimately, the tourists would be drawn into the workshop and purchases soon followed. Between Ambe' Landang's careful attention to quality, and the studio's ideal location, the workshop quickly became financially viable. Gradually, Ambe' Landang and his assistants began to experiment with new carving styles and novel genres, infusing seemingly innocent landscapes with embedded political and philosophical messages. Drawing on the traditional vocabulary of Toraja symbols, Ambe' Landang would sketch models for his new visions, then turn them over to the workshop carvers, who would bring the visions to life in multidimensional carved "paintings."

One misty morning in 1996, the day after I had returned to the highlands, I went to pay a visit to Ambe' Landang and his family. The pounding of carvers' mallets echoed in the bamboo glen as I came down the narrow path leading to his home and studio. I found Ambe' Landang seated at a sturdy old wooden table in the center of his breezy workshop, his head bent over some papers. From the entryway, I cast a quick glance around his studio, which was greatly changed since my last visit. Scattered around the workshop were several benches on which stood dozens of figural sculptures of all sizes: old hunched-over men with enormous canes, elegant traditionally clad women in funeral finery, and even miniatures of squatting grey-haired grandmothers clutching betel nut bags. The walls around Ambe' Landang were covered with striking three-dimensional carved paintings. Some shimmered with colors I had never seen before on Toraja wall decorations, innovative metallic gold- and silver-saturated scenes. Others glistened with layers of shellac, and many were framed. Astonished by all of the creative productivity, I paused to take it in before calling the traditional Toraja greeting, "*Manasumorekka?* (Have you cooked rice yet?)"

Ambe' Landang's bespectacled head bobbed up from his papers, and he flashed a broad grin, calling out the standard reply, "*Manasumo!* (The rice is cooked already!)," and gesturing for me to come sit with him. His wife rushed out from the curtained doorway that divided the family quarters from the workshop, carting a couple of molded plastic chairs. We plunged into a discussion of the most important news—updates on all of the deaths and funerals in the community during my absence. A few minutes later the couple's teenaged daughter emerged, balancing a finely carved Toraja tray laden with three cups of steaming dark coffee and a heaping plate of *pa'pion* (sticky rice encased in banana leaves, roasted in bamboo tubes over an open

fire). As the three of us sipped the syrupy coffee and nibbled on the *pa'pion,* I heard more about Ambe' Landang's new carving projects.

Gesturing to the carved art adorning the walls of his studio-shop, he declared:

> [Through our carvings] we want to communicate to our fellow citizens and to all the peoples of the world that there is a Toraja philosophy of life that was recorded in carvings in the eras before writing existed, and that this Toraja life philosophy still has relevance for us all. All that you see here, it's all our philosophy. [The word Ambe' Landang used for "us" is an inclusive form, conveying that he meant all peoples of the world].

Ambe' Landang paused as he saw me taking a closer look at a large three-dimensional carved depiction of a water buffalo in the foreground of an Eden-like pastoral scene (see Plate 11). The style of execution was not at all like the Toraja carvings I had studied in the past. Instead, the carving evoked the classic Balinese paintings I had seen in Indonesian art books, with a profusion of lush landscape—banana, palm, and banyan trees crowding the background—all in collapsed perspective and many etched with traditional Toraja motifs. Towards the center, behind the grazing water buffalo, a bare-chested Toraja man sat under a shade tree, contentedly playing his bamboo flute. A rooster and a carved wooden bowl *(dulang)* were by his feet. Next to him, a Toraja woman was gathering freshly harvested rice bundles into a large woven bamboo basket *(baka).* On the slopes behind them were terraced rice fields, a small cluster of rice barns and *tongkonan,* and finally, glittering at the top of the carving, was the *pa' barre allo* (sunburst) motif. The entire landscape was painted a brilliant gold (another innovation) and shimmered in the morning light.

"Ah, yes, the relief!" he declared. "In order to teach Toraja philosophy I started creating relief carvings. You can know our [Toraja] perspective by looking at that relief painting." No doubt, the expression on my face betrayed my bafflement. Just how did a golden, three-dimensional painting carved in Balinese style reveal the Toraja worldview, I wondered.

Gesturing to the water buffalo, Ambe' Landang elaborated:

> There is an intimacy, a closeness, here between the environment, the animals, the plants, and everything else in Tana Toraja. Just look at this water buffalo and you'll see what I mean . . . Humankind needs plants for building homes and the water buffalo

> serves as a means for carrying these plants. Also, throughout its lifetime, the water buffalo gives us fertilizer. Ya, Katlin, the water buffalo's excrement is our fertilizer. What's more, the water buffalo's milk, that's our calories [nourishment]. And the water buffalo helps plow our rice fields. Water buffaloes even serve as our witnesses.[1] And at ritual time, the water buffalo becomes extremely . . . *wah* . . . the water buffalo plays a very, very important role at rituals! Even in death, the water buffalo is *still* useful, its meat feeds humans. Ya, Katlin, if I were a water buffalo, I would be genuinely happy, because I would be useful for mankind.

I contemplated the intimacy with nature and the celebration of service to humanity conveyed by Ambe' Landang's unpacking of the painting. To me it had looked like a simple, well-executed landscape, but for Ambe' Landang it was clearly far more than that. As if reading my mind, Ambe' Landang continued:

> Ya, these three-dimensional paintings . . . if I were to compare our three-dimensional carved paintings to those from Bali or Yogyakarta,[2] ours are just as interesting and beautiful. *And* our paintings can even talk! These three-dimensional paintings that we're making now, or rather their carved symbols, it's as if they were able to converse with the owners.

As he spoke, I surveyed the walls of his studio. In contrast to the generic tourist wall plaques displayed in most tourist stalls, these new carvings were sparsely painted, the wood surfaces shellacked, and the carved *tongkonan* motifs exquisitely executed. Moreover, Ambe' Landang's new creations (as well as some of his team's more traditional carvings) now had frames. As Ambe' Landang had explained to me:

> Usually Balinese carvings get the label "art" (*kesenian,* BI), but Toraja carvings just get dismissed as "handicrafts" (*kerajinan tangan,* BI) or "ornaments" (*hiasan,* BI). We are putting frames around our carvings so people won't see Toraja things just as ornaments, but rather as art or paintings (*lukisan,* BI) suitable for the rich.

I had nodded in agreement, reflecting on the ramifications of what he had said. Clearly, through the addition of frames Ambe' Landang and his carvers were striving to renegotiate the position of their ethnic group's productions

(and by extension their ethnic group's position) in the hierarchy of Indonesian tourist arts. Ambe' Landang gestured to one of his framed new-genre carvings and, with seeming clairvoyance, declared, "We Torajas have to make our productions into weapons."

As I was to learn, encrypted in these new carved paintings were various political messages, as well as criticism of political corruption in the nation's capital. In 1996, overt verbal critiques of President Suharto's regime were still risky, but Ambe' Landang's carvings offered the perfect vehicle for lodging camouflaged political protests. They could aptly be called "weapons of the weak."

PROJECTING A VOICE TO THE NATIONAL STAGE: ARTISTIC "WEAPONS"

Ambe' Landang urged me to write about his new carved paintings, as this would strengthen his arsenal. Much of his work addressed the tragic ramifications of greed and vanity, whether Toraja aristocratic vanity or the greed of corrupt politicians in Jakarta. One carved painting depicts a formidable Toraja structure, known as an *ampang bilik,* superimposed on a large wooden bowl *(dulang)* traditionally used by Torajas in leadership positions (and hence a symbol of one who plays a political role). The *ampang bilik* is a carved, ladder-like structure that is found inside certain prestigious *tongkonan*s that have celebrated the bua' feast: it is a symbol of aristocratic prestige. Slithering down this structure is a large voracious-looking snake, which Ambe' Landang noted is not merely an old *tongkonan* motif, but in this instance the biblical symbol of Satan. The underlying message, he explained, is a critique of people who use their political office to gain prestige and feed their personal ambitions, instead of fulfilling their responsibilities to the masses. Two gluttonous pigs with enormous bellies embellished one of the lower struts of the *ampang bilik,* further underscoring the imagery of greed.

At the base of the painting was a trough-like rice huller and two water buffaloes locked in combat. Reminding me that the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) was symbolized by the steer's head, Ambe' Landang told me that he had substituted water buffaloes for PDI steers, since there are no steers in Tana Toraja. This portion of the painting represented factions

in the underdog PDI party battling one another for the few grains of rice in the rice trough.

At the time Ambe' Landang created this work, the Indonesian government (that is, the GOLKAR party) had intervened in the leadership of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), removing the tremendously popular Megawati Sukarnoputri[3] from office and replacing her with a leader of their own choice. This action prompted riots in Jakarta in late June 1996 and spurred many PDI loyalists to abstain from the 1997 presidential election. In addition, it caused rifts within the PDI itself, greatly weakening the party's ability to challenge GOLKAR. As Ambe' Landang summarized, the two PDI water buffalo shown in the painting were being played off against each another, while greedy profiteers took the spoils. Just above the battling PDI water buffaloes was the sunburst motif *(pa' barre allo)* that normally appears at the apex of *tongkonan* facades. The positioning was deliberate, Ambe' Landang said, "for we, the little people never see the brightness of day, as everything is orchestrated by the greedy ones at the top [where the sun should be]. It is as if the sun has been shackled . . . and the future looks increasingly dark."

After he finished unpacking this carved painting, Ambe' Landang thoughtfully observed:

> I am a Toraja without an avenue for protest, because I am just a villager. Others have lanes for their protest. For example, Rendra [a famed Indonesian writer], when he screams about something in his poetry, people hear him. But there is no way I'll get to Jakarta—I am obliged to remain local [in Tana Toraja]. But now my protests are painted and my soul is satisfied. I will laugh if my painting is purchased by the people I am critiquing. If they want to pay only 20,000 rupiah [roughly eight dollars at the time] for it, or even if they ask for it for free, I'd give it to them, because my protests would have reached their target.

Ambe' Landang's conception of Toraja art as an avenue for stealthily voicing political dissent remained vivid in my mind. In reframing carved *tongkonan* motifs and jostling "traditional" design orderings, he was clearly and self-consciously shaping a "secret weapon" (*senjata rahasia,* BI) against groups perceived as exploiting Toraja and other Indonesian villagers. I was fascinated not only by his attempts at resistance but also by his perception of the potential power of the artistic voice. I was also struck by the fact that

it was Toraja's touristic popularity that made it possible for Ambe' Landang to imagine his artistic protest hitting its target. Having a workshop in a region frequently toured by Jakarta political officials and cabinet ministers lent his art a certain degree of visibility. It was entirely plausible that this painting might one day capture the fancy of an unsuspecting Jakarta-based politician. Although Ambe' Landang recognized that he was disadvantaged by not working in Jakarta, his identity as a Toraja residing in a tourist destination gave him and his creations a certain degree of power and prominence, particularly in comparison with other Indonesians in more remote corners of the archipelago. As a "simple villager," he could hope to resist and challenge the established political order of the 1990s through his creations precisely because tourism had lent his group a certain degree of preeminence.

FROM PREY TO RAIDER: *TONGKONAN*S AND CARVINGS IN MAKASSAR

Sometimes, even without deliberate strategizing, Toraja art can subtly renegotiate established ethnic hierarchies. In the 1990s Toraja carvings appeared to be achieving this with ethnic relations in the province of South Sulawesi.

As we've seen in earlier chapters, highland Torajas and the Islamicized lowland groups (Bugis and Makassarese) have a lengthy history of tense relations. During my first two years of fieldwork in the 1980s, the comments of Toraja villagers about the port city of Makassar often reflected this ambivalence. Each time I prepared to leave the highlands to renew research permits or have film developed in Makassar, Toraja friends cautioned me to be wary of the tempestuous Bugis, warning that Bugis pedicab drivers carried knives and would stab visitors for pocket change. Toraja accounts of their own visits to the city often conveyed their sense of vulnerability: some feared that Bugis and Makassarese merchants would attempt to cheat them, while others commented more generally on the alienation they experienced as country villagers in a big, bustling city dominated by rival ethnic groups.

In the early 1980s, shortly after tourism developers began to hail Makassar as the "Gateway to Tana Toraja," the luxurious Makassar Golden

Hotel was constructed, overlooking the sea on Makassar's popular esplanade. Significantly, the architects designed the most prominent end of the hotel to resemble a grand pair of carved Toraja *tongkonan*s, three times the size of ordinary *tongkonan*s. In the same year a new bank building with a row of large *tongkonan* patterns on its facade was erected on a busy downtown Makassar thoroughfare. When it came time to give the Makassar airport a facelift in the late 1980s, it too was lavishly adorned with Toraja carved motifs. Moreover, officials ordered a ten-foot-tall three-dimensional *tongkonan* implanted adjacent to the main airport landing strip, so that tourists arriving from Bali and Java would know that they were on the trail to Toraja. By the early 1990s *tongkonan* carvings had also crept into many Makassar government offices, businesses, restaurants, and hotels.

The Torajanization of this Bugis-Makassarese city has not gone unnoticed by Torajas. By 1989 a number of Torajas were beginning to express different views of this port city. On my prior trips to Toraja, few of my villager friends were interested in accompanying me to Makassar. One friend once told me, "It's not just that it is hot and dusty there, but that your head aches from always being on your guard. . . ." On my 1989 visit, however, my Toraja village friends began expressing a desire to accompany me to

FIGURE 18. *Makassar Golden Hotel, with* tongkonan-*styled architecture.*

Makassar. Increasingly, carvers I knew from the village had been finding themselves "called" to Makassar to carve *tongkonan* motifs on new public buildings and hotels. In addition, Toraja migrants residing in Makassar were now erecting carved rice barns in front of their urban homes. While some migrant Torajas had long ago installed such tributes to their homeland, in the late 1980s and 1990s there was a great surge in the number of Makassar homes embellished with these structures. By the early 1990s the sprinkling of Toraja artistic motifs in Makassar appeared to be symbolically transforming what was once dangerous alien territory into something akin to a Toraja outpost. In a sense, the Toraja artistic motifs in Makassar were renegotiating the traditional relationship between Bugis and Torajas—that of raider and prey—into one where a Toraja artistic army was now invading the Bugis homeland.

While I do not wish to propagate the false impression that in the mid-1990s every street post in Makassar had been embellished with Toraja motifs, I do believe that the presence of Toraja art in this Bugis-Makassarese city encouraged changing ethnic sensibilities. Some Torajas consciously reacted to the growing presence of their motifs in the city as a minor ethnic triumph, symbolizing a long-hoped-for shift in the balance of power among the South Sulawesi ethnic groups. One Toraja friend triumphantly declared when we drove past a newly erected Toraja-styled building in Makassar, "They can ignore us no longer." Toraja carvers I know boast about the carvings they made for various Makassar offices and hotels, proudly proclaiming that these are the first things tourists and dignitaries see when they come to Sulawesi. My Toraja friends chuckled with delight in 1991 when they learned that a newly arrived Western tourist had asked me if Makassar was part of Torajaland.

Although I have not systematically interviewed Bugis and Makassarese concerning their reactions to the outcroppings of Toraja architecture in their city, there is some evidence that these motifs have prompted vague ethnic malaise. For instance, when I was meeting with Bugis and Makassarese friends at a Makassar hotel in 1989, one Bugis friend studied the Toraja motifs decorating the lobby and commented that he could not understand why there were no hotels built in the style of Bugis palaces. A few Bugis have also expressed their misgivings about the remodeled Makassar airport, complaining that it looked more like Toraja than the airport of a major Bugis-Makassarese city. And, significantly, by 1995 the Makassar airport had been remodeled once again, this time to resemble a grand Bugis

or Makassarese platform house.[4] With this remodeling, the remaining Toraja motifs were subsumed by the preponderance of Bugis-Makassarese themes. Likewise, on the highway from the airport into the city of Makassar, one is now welcomed by a gateway arch topped by an enormous stylized Bugis-Makassarese house facade. Framing the archway on either side, clearly dwarfed by the magnitude of the Bugis-Makassarese house, are two diminutive-looking decorative *tongkonan*s. In a sense, with these new constructions, we can see an architectural battle being waged for symbolic preeminence.

THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OVER TORAJA ARTISTIC IMAGES

Not every Toraja takes such delight in the growing presence of Toraja motifs in Makassar. During my initial fieldwork one Toraja tourate who made her living selling carvings in her natal highland village expressed her concern that the more of "Toraja" tourists could see in Makassar, the weaker their incentive to travel the eight hours to the highlands to spend their

FIGURE 19. *"Dueling" Toraja and Bugis-Makassarese architectures on the road into Makassar from the Makassar airport.*

money. "Those Bugis," she lamented, "the next thing you know, they'll be making Toraja carvings and dancing our traditional dances for the tourists." In fact, her predictions were not so far off the mark. In the 1980s Makassar tourist shops added a new line of Bugis-made wall plaques decorated with *tongkonan*s. In addition, Bugis silversmiths began making fine silver filigree miniature *tongkonan*s and *tongkonan* necklaces. Not only are these necklaces sold in Makassar shops, but they are also being marketed in tourist shops in Tana Toraja. So, ironically, the Bugis artistic army, masked in Toraja garb, is now invading Tana Toraja Regency once again. For many Toraja carvers, however, the most distressing incident occurred in 1995, when a Chinese resident of Makassar reportedly obtained a preliminary patent on Toraja carving patterns. As one Toraja carver told me with indignation, "He wanted us to pay him royalties each time we carved our own carvings!" Outraged Torajas rallied, circulated a petition and delivered it to the Makassar judge who had granted the preliminary patent. According to my Toraja carving mentors, the court eventually ordered the entrepreneur to withdraw his patent request and apologize.

By 1996 tourist shops in Rantepao not only sold Bugis-made Toraja trinkets, but souvenirs with Toraja motifs produced by foreigners or manufactured in Javanese factories. T-shirt lines had vastly expanded and now included sophisticated composites of *tongkonan* motifs and paleolithic-looking stick-figure warriors inspired by designs from heirloom Toraja *sarita* cloth. Often bearing phrases such as "Toraja Primitive," many of these T-shirts were produced in the silk-screening ateliers of foreign graphic artists residing in the province. These "foreign-made," icon-embedded clothes prompt various reactions in Tana Toraja. While some young Torajas wear them proudly, unconcerned by their origins, others are more reluctant to embrace them.

As a case in point, when Mama Lina, a lively middle-aged midwife and relative of my Toraja family, joined us one night at the house to watch the televised Saturday night movie, she was wearing eye-catching cargo pants fashioned from green cotton cloth covered with small, traditionally colored Toraja designs. I enthusiastically admired the pants and Mama Lina explained that a Javanese doctor who had been working in Tana Toraja for six years had "invented" the new line of Toraja pants. Now manufactured at a factory on Java, the pants are transported back to Sulawesi and sold in Mama Lina's parents' souvenir stall at another Toraja tourist site and in Rantepao tourist shops. Mama Lina stood in front of me playfully model-

ing the pants, while I read the words on the large pocket tag out loud, "Bayu [clothing] Collection TORAJA." Joining us, my younger brother Kila (who doubled as my research assistant) smirked and dismissively declared, "Those are made by a person from Java, Katlin, *not* Toraja!" Turning to Mama Lina, he began ridiculing her for being so "dumb" as to buy a Javanese-manufactured product masquerading as something Toraja. Mama Lina shot back, "Would you rather I wore *seppa tallu buku* (traditional, tightly fitting Toraja men's knee-length pants)? When we Toraja start making women's pants with Toraja motifs, then I'll buy them!" Everyone in the room laughed, and I thought the little exchange would be quickly forgotten. But a month later, when it came time for me to return to the United States, Mama Lina tucked a similar pair of the pants into my arms as a farewell present. With a sly smile, she noted that in the United States no one would give me a hard time for wearing these pants. Kila, who was present, remained silent. A few days later, however, Kila and his sister presented me with a striking batik dress shirt, a gift for my husband. The shirt featured carefully executed traditional Toraja *pa' tedong* (water buffalo) designs drawn from house carvings. "The Javanese will be mad when they see that shirt," Kila quipped. "Now we Toraja are making batik shirts like the Javanese, but replacing their patterns with our own! Soon we'll be selling them in Jakarta!"

When I left Tana Toraja a few days later, my encounters with cultural pastiches and appropriations of cultural iconography and designs had not ended. While waiting in the Makassar airport, I wandered over to a souvenir shopping island topped with a Bugis-styled roof. As I scanned the small portable gifts intended for the last-minute shopper, my eyes settled on a glass case filled with what looked, on first glance, like the tiny Peruvian worry dolls sold to tourists in Latin America. Arranged in neat clusters were barrettes and pins of various sizes, each adorned with rows of squinty-faced dolls. Their miniscule heads were crafted of balsa wood, each wearing a small, triangular dark cotton headdress. The dolls were clad in brightly colored Bugis silk. I called the young Bugis attendant over for assistance and asked her about these new creations. "Oh those," she said distractedly, "They are from Toraja and have to do with dead people."

I asked for more clarification, and she elaborated, "You see, in Toraja they put the dead in cliffs. These are those things they make that look like the dead people . . ."

"You mean *tau-tau?*" I prompted.

"*Ya!* They have those big funerals and they put these things in front of their graves."

"But why are they dressed in Bugis silk and not Toraja ikat? Who makes them?" I queried.

"Oh, people from here. But it is supposed to show *tau-tau.*" She replied, as she handed me my purchases.

Sitting on a stiff seat at the departure gate, I opened my neatly wrapped packet. The pins were a triumph in hybridity, using a Peruvian souvenir form and classic Bugis materials to showcase *tau-tau,* a Toraja icon. In recent years a number of scholars have explored the concept of hybridity (which can be defined as the mixture produced when several dissimilar elements are fused). Edward Said, among others, has developed the concept in his book *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), which underscores the role of colonialism, and more recently migration, in fostering hybrid identities.[5] For Said, the contemporary conduits of hybridity are often migrants. I suggest that a slightly different form of temporary migrants—international tourists—are often the conduits of artistic/trinket hybridity, along with print and electronic media. Indonesian international travelers, both actual tourists and those who surf the Web, draw inspiration for new tourist art forms from visits to foreign tourist destinations and exotic Web pages; the entrepreneurs among them reinterpret and "localize" these foreign products, crafting indigenized versions of the trinkets they have seen.[6]

This chain of invention, manufacture, and sale—spanning islands, cultures, and nations—signals the power relations of modernity.[7] That is, objects such as these hybrid *tau-tau* pins, Javanese-manufactured pants with Toraja motifs, and Bugis-made filigree *tongkonan* necklaces are worthy of our attention, as they reveal an ironic dimension of the role of art in renegotiating hierarchical relations. In achieving touristic preeminence, Toraja art has become increasingly vulnerable to appropriation and manipulation by other groups.[8]

Occasionally these chains of appropriation invite interventions and attempts at what I term "image restitution." To illustrate this concept, consider a 1995 booklet entitled *Peet's Coffee: Descriptions and Recommendations* (Peet's Coffee and Tea, 1995), issued by a coffee house chain headquartered in Berkeley, California. The cover of the informational booklet features heirloom Toraja *sarita* cloth designs.[9] The booklet itself offers cof-

fee-brewing instructions and descriptions of the company's various blends, including New Guinea, Sumatra, Java, and Sulawesi. The paragraph on "Sulawesi" beans reads:

> We've learned a lot about Indonesia's Sulawesi coffee in the last couple years. A trip to the island (its colonial name was Celebes) and its coffee centers was a first step. It's always educational to see the way coffee is grown, processed, and exported. Then we met Dr. Eric Crystal, a U.C. Berkeley anthropologist who has studied the Sulawesi people in Torajaland, where the best Sulawesi coffee grows. (Eric wants us to change the name from Sulawesi Kalosi to Sulawesi Toraja, but Kalosi is the small [non-Toraja—author's addition] town in Central Sulawesi which serves as the collection point for the coffee, and the Kalosi name has traditionally been used to signify the origin.) He showed us what the coffee means to the indigenous Toraja and how they tend to it with loving care. The result is a coffee with unusual depth and complexity. . . ." (1995:3)

Eric Crystal was clearly attempting to get the Toraja recognition for their premiere export product (recognition which has tended to elude them outside Indonesia), and in making these efforts, Crystal is an agent for Toraja "image restitution." Here it was an outsider acting to reforge the link between Torajas and their products. In other cases it is Sa'dan Toraja individuals who attempt to repatriate their images from outsiders who have appropriated them.

Prompted by touristic interest in Toraja, not only are Chinese, Bugis, European, and American entrepreneurs using Toraja imagery for their own aims, but so is the Indonesian government. This pattern of state cannibalism is not unique to Indonesia—it flourishes throughout the world. The Mexican government has appropriated images of a majestic Aztec past to advance their own legitimation project, just as the Australian government has embraced aboriginal images on its postage stamps, currency, and institutional seals.[10] Similarly, the Indonesian government has drawn upon Toraja carvings and *tongkonan*s in part to demonstrate that its authority is rooted in a multiplicity of ancient traditions. For the 1990 Pasadena Rose Bowl Parade, for example, the Indonesian government entered a rose-embedded float depicting a carved Toraja funeral bier embellished with Toraja motifs.[11] In addition, the Indonesian government issued *tongkonan*-embellished postage stamps, and for much of the 1980s the 5,000-rupiah

note featured three majestically carved *tongkonan*s.[12] The association of money and power was not lost on Torajas. While they still tended to feel they ranked lower than the Javanese in the Indonesian hierarchy of ethnic groups, for some Torajas the appearance of their carvings on national currency represented a newly achieved level of ethnic legitimacy. Perhaps somewhat ironically, the Indonesian appropriation of Toraja ethnic symbols also serves to integrate them still further into the nation.

One should note that while many Torajas viewed the presence of their carvings on Indonesian currency as a tribute to their rich heritage, other Indonesians had different interpretations. In 1983, when I first arrived in Java and expressed my delight at discovering *tongkonan*s on an Indonesian bill, my Javanese companion commented, "Oh yeah, that's there because it's a tourist area." This was said in the same unreflective fashion that an American might dismiss presence of the Treasury Building on a ten-dollar bill. Because of the ambiguous quality of material culture, these carved ethnic symbols may be simultaneously potent for some Torajas and neutral for other Indonesian ethnic groups. But because of their multivalent quality, the arts are well positioned to help people negotiate identities and relationships. By their very ability to maintain ambiguity, the arts may surreptitiously effect changes in intergroup perceptions. As I have attempted to demonstrate, in South Sulawesi, the arts, working in tandem with tourism, have provided an arena for subtly shifting historical perceptions of ethnic hegemony and local hierarchy.

FIGURE 20. *Indonesian 5,000-rupiah note with* tongkonan*s.*

PROMOTING IDENTITY ON THE INTERNET

By the 1990s a new means for projecting identity imagery, reclaiming appropriated icons as "Toraja images," and marketing culture beyond the local emerged in the form of the Internet. Javanese and foreign-run Web sites, and even eBay on occasion, began marketing incised Toraja furniture and carved handicrafts such as trays and bamboo containers. During the same period tourist blogs describing adventures in the Toraja highlands began to mushroom on the Web, complete with snapshots of *tongkonan*s, graves, and funeral rituals. By the late 1990s, as Internet access became more readily available in Tana Toraja, numerous travel-related Toraja businesses were developing their own Web sites, with the hope of bypassing Bugis and Makassarese middlemen and directly securing customers from far-off nations.

One Toraja-run Web site in particular stood out. In early 2000, in time for the new millennium, Toraja Online (http://www.torajaonline.com) was born (Pasaka 2000). Created by a Toraja involved in cultural promotion and various enterprises, the Web site could be downloaded in English or Indonesian and featured a site map that offered general background about Toraja, outlines of Toraja carving symbolism, a market page selling Toraja handicrafts, and a discussion board. Postings on the discussion board appeared to be predominantly by Torajas—some nostalgic students living on Java or studying abroad and some local residents—but a number of Indonesian and foreign tourists asked questions about travel plans as well. An early topic of discussion was the site's logo, a carved Toraja rice barn superimposed on a bold red circle. Two contributors, both Toraja, asked about the background color choice, one musing that perhaps it was selected deliberately "to resemble the official red color of the Democratic Indonesian Party (PDI), as many Torajas are PDI party members." Others used the discussion board to send Christmas and New Year's greetings to their "beloved Toraja," to discuss the upcoming Tana Toraja *bupati* (Regency head) elections, to inquire about current prices for *tedong bonga* (the locally treasured spotted water buffaloes, considered the most prized funeral offering), or to invite discussion board members to participate in a Community Forum for Torajas and non-Torajas. Within months several hundred people had visited the discussion board, and the site appeared poised to become a locus for constructing, projecting, and negotiating Toraja social identities in the

twenty-first century, and particularly for linking overseas Torajas to their homeland.[13] For unknown reasons, however, by 2004 the site had ceased to exist.

Another Web site—http://nonongan.8m.com/index.html—was launched on December 25, 1999, by the "Youth Torajans Community in Jakarta and South Sulawesi" [sic]. Named after Tongkonan Nonongan, a celebrated Toraja ancestral house, this English-language site was "created . . . for Toraja People (esp. young generation), who seek information about their culture and also for public information."[14] Framed by images of a carved *tongkonan* and an incised *pa' tedong* motif, the site offers general information about Toraja culture, ancestral beliefs, funerals, water buffalo symbolism, and several tourist sites. Interestingly, despite entitling the page Tongkonan Nonongan, the hamlet of Nonongan is not promoted on this site. The site's Toraja Web master, Askar Kidingallo, has also posted a small virtual tour of Tana Toraja, offering viewers shots of funeral rituals, graves, a carved *tongkonan,* and even an image of himself apparently scaling a Toraja peak. The site closes with the directive, "If you are ready, go visit it. Happy travelling. And have fun." Not only does this site convey information and images of Tana Toraja, but via its title, it also lends Tongkonan Nonongan potential celebrity on the global stage.

While the Tongkonan Nonongan Web site does not offer viewers the chance to post their own messages (other than via the guest book, which cannot be read online), other sites created by Torajas offer more possibilities for interaction. Almost entirely in Torajan, Pong Sean's Toraja on the Net site (http://toraja.solata.net/index.php?option=comfrontpage&Itemid=1) caters to a Toraja audience. Not only does the site post articles about Tana Toraja originally published in Indonesian newspapers, but it also invites readers to leave commentary and offer opinions. While much of the discussion on Toraja on the Net pertains to local government politics, postings on the site reveal that it is also attracting Toraja expatriates and even second-generation Torajas whose parents or grandparents left the highland years ago. For these overseas Torajas, the site represents an opportunity to dialogue with people in their ancestral homeland and, potentially, to craft new links to their family heritage.

Another intriguing Web site that has done much to promote Toraja culture is entitled Toraja Photo Gallery (http://www.batusura.de). Developed several years ago by Gerard Bergman, a retired German married to a Sa'dan Toraja woman, the extensive site is a tribute to his devotion to

Sa'dan Toraja culture. The opening page of the site features *keroncong*[15] music from the Indonesian song "Tanah Airku Indonesia" (BI; my Indonesian homeland), as well as a carved water buffalo image *(pa' tedong),* and a snapshot of several Toraja women photographing each other in front of a simple, uncarved Toraja rice barn. A site map offers ninety-five subdirectories, each highlighting a different locale in Tana Toraja Regency. Not all are tourist sites: included are the leper colony near Rantepao, an orphanage in Tagari, and the joint-venture Indonesian-Japanese coffee plantation (all of which are located in Tana Toraja Regency, but rarely touted as tourist attractions). Some of the entries simply present a few photographic images, while others offer a wealth of historical and cultural information culled from academic articles as well as the Web master's personal knowledge (based on his yearly visits to Tana Toraja Regency and his close ties to his Toraja wife's family). Toraja music clips, as well as links to academic and popular accounts of Tana Toraja, are also provided. The Web site receives a lot of interest: as of August 2004 daily visitor figures ranged between 50 and 90. Since its inception, the site has received over 30,000 hits. As the site's creator tells me:

> The site was originally intended for the world, but the Torajas themselves constitute the largest visitor segment, in particular the ladies who married tourists and are now living all over the world, even in Brazil, and are getting very homesick when seeing pictures of their native land.

Indeed, Toraja friends residing abroad tell me that they periodically visit the site to gaze at images of their homeland, as do nostalgic anthropologists, historians, and tourists who have spent time in the Sulawesi highlands. The site is not a blog: it does not chronicle the Web master's experiences in Tana Toraja, but instead offers visually compelling images and information about Tana Toraja Regency.

Finally, the Tana Toraja Regency government has recently developed its own Web presence. In 2002 the *bupati* (Regency head) launched www.toraja.go.id/ (PDE Pemkab Toraja 2002). The home page features a collage of Toraja carving motifs, as well as a swirling red-hued image of *tongkonan* facades, megaliths, and the Regency's official crest. This Indonesian-language site offers subdirectories featuring the Regency's history, city maps, local news, information on tourism, a guest book, and a chat room (still under construction). As one navigates through the site, one discovers

brief reports on the economic potential of the Regency, local statistics, social conditions, politics, and religion. Much of the site appears to be oriented toward promoting Tana Toraja to a broader Indonesian audience and towards fostering a Toraja Web community via the chat room. If one is to judge by the tracking data offered, the site is fairly popular: in the month of July 2004 alone, it received 37,544 hits and 911 visits.

Ironically, as Toraja imagery grew increasingly prominent on the international stage and on the Web in the late 1990s and early 2000s, actual tourist visits to the Toraja highland plummeted. The international media's coverage of the growing economic, political, and religious unrest in various parts of Indonesia prompted many foreign tourists to avoid the country (see Chapter Seven for Toraja response to current-day uncertainties).

"ART"ICULATING TORAJA IDENTITY BEYOND THE HOMELAND

This chapter has traced a number of themes and issues pertaining to Toraja artistic symbols, cultural appropriation, and the negotiation of Toraja identity in ever-widening spheres. I have argued here and elsewhere in this book that Toraja art is more than a passive ethnic marker. Carved Toraja embellishments are sites for the assertion, articulation, and renegotiation of a variety of identities and relationships, among them Toraja/Bugis/Makassarese, tourist/artisan/artist, and GOLKAR politician/Indonesian villager. When viewed in this light, affixing miniature *tongkonan*s to car windshields or incorporating Toraja architectural motifs in urban Toraja homes throughout the archipelago can be seen as more than decorative: these become claims to ethnic group power. Still, it should be stressed that Toraja symbolic dominance does not necessarily translate into political power. While some Toraja may read outcroppings of their cultural iconography as assertions of their right to political power, such images are not read this way by all Indonesians and outsiders. Returning to James Scott's (1985) terminology, some Toraja arts can best be understood as "weapons of the weak"; indeed, that was the role Ambe' Landang envisioned for his new carved paintings. Because of art's capacity for embodying multiple messages, the very efflorescence of Toraja carvings may stealthily challenge Torajas' traditional position as underdogs. But the weapons of the weak are

sometimes weak weapons. As we have seen, the multivalent quality of artistic emblems of identity makes them vulnerable to appropriation by other groups for other purposes. On some level the potentially controversial political messages embodied in Toraja arts become domesticated by their inclusion in the national repertoire of "Indonesian" icons. However, Toraja cultural activists and tourates are hardly passive in these processes. Creative Torajas have sought new ways to work globalization to their advantage by, among other things, embracing new art forms (Toraja carved paintings) and going on the Internet to assert themselves on the national and global stage.

7 Carving New Conceptions of Community in an Era of Religious and Ethnic Violence

On a brisk morning in 1997, some time after the anti-Chinese rioting, a convoy of trucks rumbled into Rantepao. The trucks screeched to a halt at the town's dusty main intersection, where villagers awaited public transport to the buffalo market and unemployed Toraja guides lingered alongside snoozing Makassarese *becak* drivers. The ordinariness of the morning was abruptly shattered, as fierce-looking "young men in sturdy shoes"[1] poured out of the trucks in front of the Chinese-owned businesses lining the main street. The Toraja souvenir vendors in adjacent shops, bank tellers at the imposing People's Bank of Indonesia, and the cluster of people catching up with friends in front of the post office all snapped to attention. All had heard radio reports or seen televised images of violent anti-Chinese outbursts on Java and in their provincial capital of Makassar, and all had a framework for imagining what appeared to be on the verge of happening in their own homeland. Hurling anti-Chinese curses, these strangers began to move menacingly towards the largest Chinese-owned business, as frightened Chinese shopowners snatched up their outdoor displays and frantically yanked down heavy metal security doors. However, the sequence of events that unfolded next did not follow the same path of violence and destruction that had seemed so inevitable and uncontrollable elsewhere in Indonesia.

This chapter explores the ramifications of growing violence, ethnic, and religious tensions in Indonesia on Toraja lives and arts. In considering the political backdrop to this chapter, it is important to underscore the complexity of discussing "identities" in Indonesia. Although Christianity and Islam have become increasingly salient definers of identity in Indonesia in recent years, and are often reported to be prime motivators in current situations of conflict, it pays to remember the myriad, constructed nature of identity (as discussed in Chapter One). By this, I mean not only that each

Indonesian has a variety of entwining and sometimes competing religious, ethnic, political, and regional residential identities that must be considered in any discussion of ethno-religious strife, but also that these identities are not inert, primordial, or formed in isolation. Rather, as many social scientists have established, religious and ethnic identities are dynamic: they are shaped in particular historical and political circumstances (see Clifford 1988; Keesing 1989; and Handler 1988, 1994).

As John Sidel (2001:48) recently cautioned, far too many popular commentators on Indonesian riots and church-burnings have pointed to essentialist categories as explanations for the violence. That is, they have based their explanations on relatively simplistic stereotypes. Such media commentators have painted Indonesia as a volcanic hotbed of ethnic and religious resentments, or as a nation composed of cultures programmed to run amok, or as land of devout Muslims rebelling against the forces of globalization and Westernization.[2] Sidel suggests such explanations are erroneous. Instead, he traces the ways in which historical processes of capitalist development, class relations, and religious sociology in Indonesia underlie the recent eruptions of violence.[3] In a similar vein, in discussing the religious conflicts in Maluku (eastern Indonesia), Nils Bubandt (2001:228) also raises the question of how we can look at violence without essentializing or culturalizing it. Drawing on observations made by Mary Steedly (1999), Bubandt argues that we can accomplish this by localizing it.[4] That is, we need to address how violence is locally produced, deployed, represented, and imagined (see Steedly 1999:445 and Bubandt 2001:228).[5] In this chapter I examine the ramifications of the threat of violence for Toraja arts and Toraja ideas about themselves and their community. Before I discuss these issues in more detail, however, we need to return to the arrival of menacing anti-Chinese agitators in downtown Rantepao, the Toraja response, and its aftermath.

ASSORTED TALES OF NARROWLY AVERTED CONFLICT IN THE HIGHLANDS

As the strangers made their way towards one of the largest Chinese-owned businesses in Rantepao, dozens of Toraja men quickly locked arms, forming a human barricade between the invaders and the Chinese businesses. As I was later told by various Toraja friends and acquaintances, these

Toraja were unfazed by the rocks and sticks the men were brandishing. Instead, they resolutely declared, "You cannot harm the Chinese in Tana Toraja, for these are our brothers (*saudara,* BI). You have to go through us to get to them. Go home, and leave our brothers alone." After a tense standoff, the men grudgingly returned to their trucks and drove away.

When I returned to Tana Toraja, in May 1998, during a period of violent clashes throughout Indonesia, many people in the community recounted this story to me. Two of my Toraja siblings in Ke'te' Kesu' enthusiastically shared detailed, riveting accounts of this narrowly averted conflict, knowing that it would pique my curiosity. Chinese merchant friends in Rantepao told the tale more soberly, some trembling and others with watery eyes. Many conveyed their fears for the future, and some were even considering abandoning their lifelong homes in Tana Toraja to flee to the safety of Singapore. Despite the rampant inflation at the time, several were deeply discounting their merchandise, even selling key items such as infant milk formula at cost in the hopes of garnering goodwill from their Toraja neighbors.

The reverberations of the averted clash became all the more apparent to me when I visited Pak Budi, a Chinese merchant who had befriended me during my initial fieldwork in the 1980s. I was stunned by the change in his appearance. In all the years I had known him, he had always been a plump, jovial man, with a grin and sparkling eyes. In Rantepao he was known for his fairness as well as his friendliness, and his small store was always buzzing with customers shopping for everything—bolts of fabric, soccer balls, Dolly Parton cassettes, packaged foods, kerosene, and even tin roofing material. I had become acquainted with Pak Budi because of his shop's inexpensive photocopying services. Thanks to his Xerox machine, he knew many anthropologists who had worked in the area, and he often regaled me with tales of their adventures. In my years in Tana Toraja, I looked forward to my monthly photocopying trips to his crowded shop. In addition to lively updates from Pak Budi about the latest international news, or, on rare slower days, more leisurely chats, we would sip the chilled Cokes offered by his wife as I balanced their plump toddler on my lap. In 1998, however, Pak Budi was no longer the tubby, cheerful man I remembered. His face was gaunt, his once-thick hair was thinning, and he had deep shadows under his eyes. My visit fell on a bustling market day morning, so we could only catch up in between customers. Worried, I asked about his family, confiding that I had heard the story about the outside

agitators. Was his family safe and well? Had his shop been threatened? How were they faring? Lowering his voice, he murmured softly:

> Fortunately, this time around we were protected, but will the ending be similar next time? Will our Toraja neighbors be able to defend us when these outside agitators return with knives or guns?

As he spoke, it seemed telling to me that, unlike my Toraja friends, Pak Budi opted to use the term "neighbors" (*tetangga,* BI) rather than "brothers" (*saudara,* BI) when speaking of the local Torajas as possible defenders. His sense of vulnerability became all the more palpable when he recounted that his children had been unable to sleep soundly since the incident. Their nightmares triggered his own fears, and he was spending his evenings making costly long-distance calls to relatives throughout Indonesia and Southeast Asia, attempting to lay plans for an emergency escape, should one be needed. In the meantime he was trying his best to smile and be charitable when the occasional testy customer grumbled angrily or hurled invectives at him because of the spiraling prices of his merchandise, prices driven up not by his desire for gain but by the seemingly out-of-control inflation that was sweeping Indonesia at the time. For Pak Budi, Torajas' 1997 defense of their Chinese "brothers" generated relief and gratitude, but he did not feel that he could rely upon it in the future.

A Muslim family I knew, who had migrated two decades earlier from the impoverished adjacent region of Duri, also recounted the story of the averted clash to me, conveying their own fears. On my first visit to their home after a two-year absence, Bu Hasan, her soft-spoken teenaged daughter, and I sat together on a woven plastic mat on the dirt floor of their modest plywood Rantepao home, catching up over sweet tea and fried bananas as the television hummed in the background. Bu Hasan, a plump, warm-hearted widow in her fifties, told me how, since the incident, business had fallen off in her small noodle soup kiosk that she ran out of the crammed front room of her home. Previously, Bu Hasan spent her afternoons scurrying between the caldron of aromatic soup simmering outside her back door and the front-room noodle shop, where benches were filled with animated Toraja high school students and neighbors on break from their chores. On my visits in the 1980s and mid-1990s, Bu Hasan was always dashing about, juggling heaping trays of *lemper* (banana-leaf-wrapped rice bundles) and steaming bowls of the mouth-watering noodle soup for which she was

locally famous. On this day, however, she was idle, the wobbly wooden benches were jarringly empty, and the front room was disturbingly silent.

Bu Hasan smoothed a wrinkle in her vibrantly colored batik housedress in a distracted way, as she described her recent economic and personal hardships. Sighing softly, she confided that she was ready to give up on the noodle soup kiosk and turn all of her efforts to reselling the used charity clothing she acquired from Muslim relations on the coast. I stole a second, closer look out towards her front room and now noticed that the two long tabletops, where Christians and Muslims once sat slurping noodles elbow to elbow, were spotlessly scrubbed, without the usual splashes of soup and abandoned banana-leaf wrappers. I also observed that the glass jars of savory snacks and the tin containers of carefully folded, kite-shaped paper napkins were filled to their brims. I imagined Bu Hasan and her daughter patiently cutting and folding endless colorful paper napkins and baking heaping mounds of sweets in hopes of luring back their customers. However, their efforts appeared to be in vain: the faded portrait of President Suharto and the tattered posters of Indonesian pop stars presided over a silent, empty room.

Bu Hasan quietly conveyed her fears that, as Muslim outsiders, her family members were now being lumped with the anti-Chinese agitators. I knew that Bu Hasan and her daughter were shocked by the anti-Chinese violence erupting throughout Indonesia; during one of my visits news reports of interethnic violence had appeared on their staticky television screen, prompting pitying tongue clicks and murmurs of *"kasihan"* (an Indonesian exclamation of compassion). But Bu Hasan and her family were also increasingly wary of their Christian Toraja and Chinese neighbors. No doubt, the televised images of burned and looted Chinese stores elsewhere in Indonesia not only sparked their pity for these fellow "outsiders," but also prompted their fears about what might befall them. I feebly tried to offer comfort by noting that, despite differences, no one wanted to see Tana Toraja erupt in that kind of violence. But Bu Hasan was quick to remind me that, as Muslims, they did not share the same kind of "brotherhood" with most Toraja. Several weeks later, on my farewell visit to her home, Bu Hasan confided that she and her family were contemplating a permanent return to their Duri homeland.

For my Toraja friends and acquaintances, however, the story of the local defense of Chinese merchants was largely one of victory, courage, and soli-

darity. With pride, one Rantepao tourist shopowner, an active Toraja woman in her sixties, told me how these ordinary Toraja men, in nothing but T-shirts, old sarongs, and rubber sandals, had faced off the truckloads of muscular agitators, blocking them before they could do anything more than hurl stones through a few Chinese shop windows. Another Toraja villager declared, "They'll think twice before they bother us again."

Although tales of the incident varied in detail, all stressed the theme of Toraja-Chinese-Christian "brotherhood" (*saudara,* BI), and all suggested that the muscular men were outside agitators, either military, Muslim, Makassarese, or Bugis. All accounts stressed that an explosion of violence had been narrowly averted. I was alternately moved, alarmed, and intrigued by the story. When I consider the world of the Toraja, it seems to me that the story embodies several themes concerning identity imagery, ethnic/religious clashes, and accommodations.

The first theme is that of the production of peace and pan-identities. The story celebrates an instance where violence was averted and ethnic cleavages between Chinese and Torajas were at least momentarily erased, due largely, perhaps, to shared Christian identities, but also due to shared residential or Regency identities. Although many commentators on Indonesia have concentrated on documenting and analyzing the violence, my focus is on the ways in which peace was produced, however tenuously. That is, I twist Steedly's directive somewhat to examine not so much how violence is localized but how peace (or at least religious accommodation) is "locally produced, deployed, represented and imagined" (Steedly 1999: 445). I believe that studying instances where violence is averted can be instructive and potentially lead to insights about possible avenues for constructing pan-group identities. Just as it is important to ask why some places have recently been torn by religious, ethnic, and class violence, it is equally important to ask why many places in the same nation seem to remain, at least for the present time, relatively peaceful, despite economic and employment woes. While I don't claim to have the definitive answer, I believe that raising such questions can lead to new insights.

The second theme, and the central focus of this chapter, is that of the ways in which stories and material objects can become resources for ethical responses to conflict and the threat of violence. In the many times I heard the story of the Torajas' 1997 resistance to invading provocateurs, it was clear that the tale was becoming imbued with meaning as a model for Toraja conceptions of identity and ethical behavior. The repeated empha-

sis on the declaration of Chinese as *saudara* (brother) is telling. While technically the term translates as "brother" or "sibling," the expression has far broader significance. *Saudara* conveys a sense of mutual respect, as well as a notion of community. It is also a term laden with Christian connotations. When my Toraja friends emphasized that their Chinese neighbors were *"saudara,"* they were engaging in rhetorical practices that help produce and underscore emergent kinds of "we" identities, uniting certain ethnic communities under a single religious umbrella.

In the remainder of this chapter I will explore the role of certain expressive and artistic practices in fostering reflections on ethical behavior in changing contexts. Here I am building on work by Erik Mueggler (2001), who examined a Chinese minority community's tales of wild ghosts during the violence of the Cultural Revolution as ways in which the community created ethical responses to past violence and the threat of its return. Specifically, I am interested in exploring how recent Toraja material creations have become vehicles for imagining ways in which to engage with other groups, as well as with the broader processes and events transpiring locally, nationally, and internationally.

EMERGENCE OF CARVED ALLUSIONS TO WORLD RELIGIONS

When I first began research in Tana Toraja in 1984, Toraja elders were fond of telling me and other anthropologists that all of Toraja philosophy, values, and worldview could be "read" in the carved motifs of traditional Toraja houses, or *tongkonan.* At that time most of the carvings, whether produced for locals or tourists, depicted traditional houses, funeral scenes, parading water buffaloes and other domesticated animals, or compilations of geometric Toraja motifs (each with its own name and meaning). When I returned in the mid-1990s, however, I found that a new genre of Christianized Toraja carved motifs had emerged.

While Toraja iconography has a long history of appearing in churches[6] —with mini *tongkonan*s incorporated into steeples and church walls and Toraja motifs embellishing pulpits and even wooden collection boxes— until the 1990s it was rare to find Christianized Toraja household carvings.[7] During my initial fieldwork, I knew of only one Kesu' area tourist carver who routinely infused his works with Christian imagery. Not surprisingly, this carver, Ambe' Rura, was the son of a pastor. Ambe' Rura was especially

gifted at crafting trays depicting *tongkonan*s. These were not ordinary *tongkonan*s, however, but traditional structures that had been reconceptualized to showcase symbolic dimensions of Christian spirituality. Ambe' Rura's trays were easily identified: all highlighted the cross-shaped front support beams of the *tongkonan,* and many included gleaming, halo-like sunburst motifs (a Christianization of the *pa' barre allo* motif) above these traditional houses. Ambe' Rura's trays had a spiritual feel and could regularly be found among the items offered at Ke'te' Kesu' souvenir stands, as they sold well to Toraja tourists from Makassar and Jakarta. Otherwise, however, Christianity was a relatively rare theme in the Toraja handicrafts of the 1980s.

But by the mid-1990s, as Indonesia's public terrain grew more Islamicized,[8] a new genre of Christianized Toraja carvings began to appear both in Toraja homes and in local tourist kiosks. Many were in the form of carved pictorial works. In some, the Christian elements, such as crucifixes or Christ's head, are cleverly worked into larger traditional landscapes. A carved pastoral scene, for instance, depicting *tongkonan*s, rice barns, and traditionally clad villagers may highlight pathways that form Christian cross shapes. In others, Torajanized Christianity is not tangential to the subject depicted, but rather the central theme. By the 1990s several of my more devout Toraja acquaintances displayed in their living rooms traditionally embellished carved wall plaques depicting Christ figures and large Christian crosses.

One particularly eye-catching image depicted a benevolent-faced Jesus cloaked in a flowing brown robe (see Plate 12). His arms were extended, as if preparing to embrace the viewer. An enormous Bible lay open at his feet, alongside a carved wooden pedestal bowl *(dulang)* of the sort traditionally used for making ritual offerings to the gods. Three gleaming white candles glowed in the bowl. In the background the carver had depicted a tidy modern church. Most striking, however, was the way in which the carver had framed the head of Jesus with the image of a whitened *tongkonan* facade, evoking a halo effect. Behind this, the carver had depicted the profile of yet another large *tongkonan* rooftop, further enhancing the halo imagery and presumably alluding to the common Toraja description of the Christian Church as the "big *tongkonan.*" Here we see an array of traditional motifs being employed to project Christianized messages about community and spirituality.

Another carving portrayed an emaciated, crucified Christ flanked by two *pa' barre allo* sunburst motifs, all floating on a circular background

etched with the traditional motifs (see Plate 13). The sunburst motif is associated with greatness: the sun calls us to awaken to life and therefore the *pa' barre allo* sunburst motif is often linked with the powers of the gods, a fitting selection for inclusion in a portrait of Christ. Part of the background was embellished with the *pa' barana'* design, a motif associated with the banyan tree. As a sheltering tree that can grow in any kind of terrain, whether rocky or fertile, banyan trees are much treasured in Tana Toraja. The banyan also has traditional ritual significance in the Kesu' area: in former times it was planted by *aluk to dolo* adherents in preparation for the great ritual feast known as the *bua' kasalle.* This was a ritual of the highest order, which took years of preparation—the banyan would be full grown by the time the feast was actually celebrated (Nooy-Palm 1979:219). Only those with great power, wealth, and status could launch such rituals. Hence, it is not surprising that in Tana Toraja the banyan is also associated with leadership.[9] For the Ke'te' Kesu' area carvers I interviewed, the *pa' barana'* motif symbolized the emergence of a strong and protective community leader, and in this context, the carving could be read as underscoring Christ's role as the enduring Christian leader.

Also etched in the background of this Christ carving was the *pa' sekong kandaure* motif. This design alludes to a much-treasured ritual object: a conically shaped, fringed decoration made of intricately braided antique beads known as *kandaure.*[10] *Kandaure* are often proudly displayed during rituals, fluttering in the breezes adjacent to family *tongkonan*s. *Kandaure* also adorn the shoulders and backs of ritual dancers, the glistening, bobbing beads mesmerizing onlookers. In the past, certain *kandaure* were rumored to have special powers (Nooy-Palm 1979:255), but by the 1980s this dimension of *kandaure* was little discussed. Toraja carvers in Ke'te' Kesu' generally described the *pa' sekong kandaure* motif as conveying radiant happiness and fulfillment, akin to the sparkle of the *kandaure* beads. Taken in the context of this Christ image, one may speculate that the artist wished to convey the spiritual fulfillment offered by Christianity.

Finally, the foreground of the wall plaque (depicting the earth in which Christ's crucifix was implanted) was boldly embellished with a meandering curvilinear motif traditionally known as *pa' erong. Erong* is the Toraja term for the carved wooden caskets (some in the form of simple coffins, others shaped like buffalo or pigs, and still others like boats) that traditionally house the bones of the deceased. Sculpting this motif on a sarcophagus is said to help whisk the soul of the deceased on to the next world,

from where, it is hoped, the soul will continue to bless those descendants remaining in this world. In this context it is Christ's blessings that are sought. In short, in this carving, as in that of Christ above the large Bible, Toraja traditional motifs are serving new purposes, announcing Christian identities and conveying Christianized aspirations for blessings and spiritual fulfillment.

Taken together with the increased Islamicization of Indonesia's urban landscape in the 1990s, these carvings and other Torajanized church embellishments appeared to be further Christianizing Tana Toraja's landscape, a fact not missed by Muslim Torajas, who constitute roughly 10 percent of the population. (Most reside in the southern area of Tana Toraja Regency as well as in Rantepao and Makale.) By my return visit in 1998, some Muslim Toraja in Rantepao were drawing on traditional Toraja carving motifs and infusing them with Islamic symbols to signal that they, too, are Toraja, For instance, the exterior roof and rafters of the Islamic school building in Rantepao now featured carvings of the Islamic star and crescent, bordered by a small fringe of geometric motifs drawn from *tongkonan*s. Instead of adhering to the classic Toraja carving colors of red, yellow, white, and black, however, the white crescent and yellow stars floated on a background of vibrant green, the emblematic color of the Muslim faith. In a sense, a symbolic interfaith dialogue about the nature of Toraja identity was transpiring in these public outcroppings of religiously infused Toraja carvings.

ETHICAL CARVINGS: REFRAMING LOCAL, INTERETHNIC, AND INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

It was in this context of increasing religious self-consciousness and burgeoning religious, economic, and political tensions in Indonesia that I became aware of how some Toraja were using their carvings as vehicles for ethical responses to conflict and turmoil, both locally and nationally. The day after my arrival in 1998 I stopped by the home and workshop of my elder brother Ambe' Landang. Ambe' Landang was now in his fifties and with each passing decade he seemed to become increasingly reflective and political, pouring more and more of his energies into sculpting a better world. Always a charismatic man with a deep concern for issues of ethnic equality, as well as for ethical behavior, by 1998 Ambe' Landang was finally gaining full recognition as an intelligent local leader.

On this visit Ambe' Landang wasted no time with formalities. As his wife disappeared to prepare refreshments, he suggested I take out my tape recorder so that he could begin speaking about his recent carving activities. Reminding me of his new approach to sculpting carved "paintings that converse," Ambe' Landang took me over to a recently executed piece hanging in a prominent spot on the wall. This simply framed, mahogany-hued painting portrayed a traditionally dressed, elderly Toraja couple seated facing one another on a woven mat (see Plate 14). Both their faces were deeply etched and carved with intensity, emphasizing the seriousness of their expressions. A cigarette dangled from the man's mouth and in his arms he cradled a rooster. The woman balanced a large bowl of rice grains on her knees. A large plaited bamboo basket stood behind her. The space between the couple was dominated by an enormous sunburst *(pa' barre allo)* motif.

"Take a photo of this one, Katlin." Ambe' Landang instructed, as he lit up a cigarette, "You'll need documentation for your work." After a few camera clicks, Ambe' Landang explained the painting:

> This is a Toraja husband and wife in the old days. Although they are already elderly, they are communicating in a leisurely way while doing their respective work. They are contemplating how things will be in the future, when problems arise. The rooster, here, is an animal that is used as, eh, a proposition of friendship between different groups in the surrounding environment. While the wife is doing her daily tasks, solving problems, attending to the kitchen and the family economics—she is shown there with her cooking tools and with her *baka.* You'll be able to explain *baka* in English, right, Katlin?

I assured him that I would convey the fact that *baka*s were the large plaited bamboo baskets that women hauled on their backs, bearing the weight on their foreheads with a woven fiber tumpline. *Baka* are for transporting provisions and are used in many settings—to cart freshly picked sweet potato greens from the fields, to transport kindling home from wooded areas, and to take food, plates, and other items to ritual settings. Satisfied that I understood *baka*'s close association with family provisions, Ambe' Landang continued.

> Nah, here they [the couple] are communicating. What about the continuation of our family, what about the continuation of the community, what about the continuation of the generation that has been born from the womb of this woman [in the painting],

> such that they will still adhere to their convictions and practices? The *pa' barre allo* (the sunburst motif) here in the center is a reference to the substance of this discussion. See the *pa' tangke lumu* (algae branch) motif over here near the wife? *Pa' tangke lumu* is a plant that lives in water in the wet rice fields and also in mud—it can adapt itself to its environment. So, here in the painting, it means that we can live in all sorts of conditions. And over here, all around the husband, is *pa' sekong* (the curving, bending, or circular motif). *Pa' sekong* means "let's not struggle, may our direction have the same goal, the same objective." That's what its about.

Summing up, he declared the painting a "lesson for us all." While visually, Ambe' Landang's carved painting seemed rooted in the Toraja world, it was his verbal decoding that linked it to the ongoing ethno-religious conflicts besieging Indonesia. Without his narrative, many of the Toraja symbols he incorporated could be taken to allude more narrowly to themes of harmony within a marriage or family. His commentary, however, underscored his desire to encrypt a far broader call for unity in the face of challenges.

As I was reflecting on the multiple layers of meaning in the carved painting, Ambe' Landang pulled a large, meticulously executed piece off the wall. Wiping off the dust with his palm, he placed it in front of me for closer inspection. "Take a look at this one, Katlin," he instructed.

Carefully, I studied the images on the painting. Dominating the center was the facade of a *tongkonan,* overlaid with a sculpted image of a structure known as a *bate manurun. Bate manurun* are ladder-like sacred objects constructed of bamboo and cloth banners that are erected during great *maro* rituals, rituals which were traditionally held to restore order following a disturbance (Nooy-Palm 1979:221). *Bate manurun* translates as "the flag which descended from heaven": for *aluk to dolo* adherents, this massive structure was lowered by the gods from the heavens to protect humans from various dangers. Hetty Nooy-Palm interprets this ritual architectural structure as a "helping hand extended by heaven to mankind on earth" (1979:222). Above the *bate manurun,* at the apex of the house, a large cockerel *(pa' manuk londong)* stood poised atop a sunburst motif *(pa' barre allo).* Menacing the cock, on the upper left side of the painting, was a fork-tongued serpent. To the cock's right (behind its tail feathers), Ambe' Landang had sculpted a pair of animals—the *kabonga* (a water buffalo head)

and the *katik* (usually described as a mythical long-necked crested bird).[11] The background of this upper portion of the painting was filled in with the betel nut leaf motif *(pa' daun bolu),* a motif Kesu' area carvers had told me was associated with offerings to the gods and spirituality. At the base of the painting, under the *bate manurun* structure, a roughly hewn naked man stood with arms extended, grasping two enormous, sinuous serpents. Each appeared poised to swallow a small frog. Although unpainted, the scene was set in a colorful frame embellished with traditional Toraja iconography (see Plate 15).

After giving me a moment to survey the painting, Ambe' Landang launched into his exegesis. Tapping his finger on area around the apex of the *bate manurun* structure and the *tongkonan* (which Kesu' elite associate with the power of the gods and ancestors), he explained, "See *here?* Power resides *here,* at the top. But next to it, there is *Setan* (BI; Satan)—the powers of *Setan."* He gently tapped the forked-tongued serpent to underscore his point. Then pointing to the rooster, he continued, "The rooster is our symbol of law and justice.[12] See here, next to it, *Setan* [in the form of the serpent] is trying to lure it into temptation. But the rooster is saying, 'There is power behind me.'"

Ambe' Landang paused to point to the mythical *katik* bird, the buffalo head, and the betel nut leaf motif, reminding me of their associations with the power of the gods and ancestors. As I reflected on the various sorts of powers to which these motifs alluded, Ambe' Landang continued. "Here, in the bottom part, humankind is always in motion . . . and temptation is always hovering, trying to goad humans' desires." I squinted at the painting, initially perplexed, until I realized that the *tongkonan* dominating the center of the painting, as well as the man clutching the serpents at the bottom of the picture, indexed human activities and temptations. Pointing to the small frogs, Ambe' Landang continued:

> See the frogs? Man is giving the frogs to the snakes. He is telling the snakes, "Just eat these frogs—don't make me your target." Nah, beginning at that moment, Toraja people started wanting to be as good as they possibly could.[13]

Gesturing to a pair of roosters embedded in the center of the painting that I had previously overlooked, Ambe' Landang elaborated:

> You remember, Katlin, how usually at the top of *tongkonan* there is a pair of carved roosters? Those roosters are continually crowing to each other, delivering messages for us all to remember.

> These roosters here are crowing reminders of this story to all, crowing to everyone that we are *one* community and that we must treasure each other, and celebrate our community. So the picture is giving us a lesson about how to live.

He paused for a moment to puff on his cigarette while I reflected on the overall message of the carved painting. Although he hadn't directly addressed the *bate manurun* dominating the center of the painting, I now thought I understood the reason for its presence. Indonesia had fallen into a period of violence and disruption, and the *bate manurun* was a structure erected at traditional rituals to restore order to the community. In essence Ambe' Landang was invoking this traditional "helping hand" from the Heavens to restore order to the broader community. Ambe' Landang was invoking a pantheon of traditional images to sculpt a message about living harmoniously in today's world.

Turning more directly to the context of South Sulawesi, Ambe' Landang resumed:

> I started this sort of carving to help poor people here make a living. But now I'm seeing that we need to do this to support ourselves in other ways. If our carvings are liked by others, people [from other groups] will automatically respect us. We don't want what happened back in the 1950s to repeat itself—when Torajas made shoes for people in Makassar and those people [Muslim Bugis and Makassarese] used those shoes to stomp on us. Right?

Ambe' Landang's eyes lit up as he went on to tell me about the next part of his vision, which he hoped would carve a new path for Toraja relations with their lowland rivals.

> My plans are to start carving tables to give to people in Makassar. Soon, they'll be sitting before *our* tables. If they enjoy eating and drinking from our carved tables, when we Toraja appear, they'll be saying "*silahkan* . . ." (BI; please come sit and join us). Nah, that's what I'm doing next!

I realized that for Ambe' Landang this furniture carving project constituted an avenue for reimagining and reframing histories of past ethnic and religious tensions. His plans for producing carved tables embodied an attempt to manufacture more harmonious relations between Muslim Makassarese and Christian Toraja, relations that would bring them together over shared food and drink.

The new genre carvings by Ambe' Landang's group were not simply decorations, but also articulated messages about ethical behavior in challenging times. Just as the tale of Toraja defense of their Chinese "siblings" celebrated an instance where local-level cultural differences were bridged and violence averted, these new carvings offer embedded lessons about how to live with dignity in a world increasingly filled with conflict. Of course, there is another dimension to Ambe' Landang's endeavors. Questions might arise as to whether these Toraja carvers are simply trying to build interethnic bridges via their carvings or whether they are trying to best their lowland rivals. In furnishing lowland Muslims' homes, Torajas would be making themselves ever-present in their rivals' daily lives.

CARVING A BETTER FUTURE?

Some might reasonably argue that the symbolically embedded messages Ambe' Landang and his atelier workers sculpt have an extremely limited audience, given that few people are sufficiently intimate with Toraja iconography to "read" the messages. However, Ambe' Landang would probably retort that he and the carvers in his workshop are always ready to explain the messages to those who come to the studio. Moreover, those who purchase and display their pieces will further amplify the messages about harmonious living to all who visit their homes and casually inquire about the wall decorations. When I (yet again) raised the question of audiences for his messages, Ambe' Landang reminded me, "You'll write about this in your articles, and others will, too, in other languages. And people will read those books and articles and get the messages that way too." I had to laugh, realizing that once again a Toraja was ingeniously conscripting an anthropologist to promote his vision for the world.

In this chapter I have tried to chronicle some of the ways in which people in Tana Toraja have drawn upon artistic symbolism and language to proffer ethical approaches to coexistence and even "brotherhood" with other groups. It would be an exaggeration to suggest that that these bond-forging moves have been entirely successful: in the years since 1998, some fights have broken out in Tana Toraja, though at present none have erupted into riots. People in Tana Toraja remain anxious and fearful as they watch religious and ethnic conflict in nearby cities and regions. Nonetheless, in the rhetorical and artistic strategies chronicled here, we can see how some

local people attempt to develop ways of speaking to, connecting with, and redefining potential enemies. In these modest efforts lie lessons for us all.

Several weeks after my discussion with Ambe' Landang, I was sitting on the verandah of my Toraja family's house, surrounded by my pile of suitcases, laptop computer, and gifts. It was my last morning in Tana Toraja, and I was feeling melancholy as I sat there waiting for the *kijang* truck that would take me on the first leg of my journey home. I had not yet left, and I was missing Toraja already. Watching the mist rise and melt away on the rice fields and savoring my last rich Toraja coffee, I wondered how much would have changed, which elders would be gone, and if local efforts to maintain harmony would still be working on my next return to Ke'te' Kesu'. As I sat chatting with Indo' Rampo and several of my Toraja siblings, watching the new generation of toddlers play with marbles on the worn verandah floor, a few village friends stopped by to say their farewells, tucking small sculpted mementos or bags of red rice grains into my arms.

Honks and the roar of an engine echoed across the fields as a *kijang* truck careened down the road to fetch me. My Toraja family and friends suddenly burst into activity, grabbing bags to heave into the truck and offering final, rushed embraces and handshakes. Just as I was climbing into the truck, I heard the familiar voice of Ambe' Landang calling, "Katlin! Katlin! Wait! I have something for you." He was striding down the trail from his house, with a large, newspaper-wrapped object in his arms. Handing the heavy bundle to me through the door of the truck, he apologized,

> We put another layer of shellac on it the other day and it wasn't dry enough to wrap up until now. . . . Hang this in your house when you get home, and when you look at it, you'll be here with us. And when your friends and family there see it, they will know what Toraja is. . . .

It wasn't until late that night, when I arrived at a friend's house in Makassar, that I was finally able to unwrap Ambe' Landang's bundle. Inside the padded layers of old newspapers, glowing with a new layer of shellac, was Ambe' Landang's carved painting of the *bate manurun* and the man deflecting the menacing serpents with the frog decoys. Now that I am home, the carving adorns the wall of my office and, just as Ambe' Landang foretold, when my Chicago guests ask about the artwork, I launch into an abbreviated explanation of the carving's hopeful plea for community harmony.

8 From Toraja Heritage to World Heritage?

Throughout this book I have illustrated how art can serve as an active ingredient in identity politics. In this regard this book contributes to a growing literature that critiques traditional perspectives on art and material creations as passive mirrors of the social relations in the creator culture. Through analyzing specific local struggles concerning the meaning of artistically embellished art objects such as carved ancestral houses and effigies of the dead, I have tried to develop a more vibrant vision of the arts as a particularly fruitful mode for recrafting local identities in times of change. I have argued that art, as an "affecting presence" imbued with emotional force, provides an apt arena for articulating, reframing, and challenging unequal social relations. As we saw in the chapter on *tongkonan*s, for example, fully carved *tongkonan*s were linked to the nobility until tourism and other new sources of income opened up an avenue for nonelites to embrace this aristocratic identity symbol as their own. Today we find nonnoble Torajas crafting new meanings and associations for carved *tongkonan*s and embracing them as symbols of religious or ethnic affiliations. Likewise, we have seen how the carved wooden effigy of the dead (also traditionally associated with the elite) has become a highly charged symbol in times of eroding rank distinctions, so much so that the Toraja Church has made numerous attempts to eradicate their presence at Toraja funerals. We have also seen how various Torajas have used these effigies to express different allegiances and identities sometimes reaching beyond the highlands.

I have also tried to chronicle how artistic forms can play a role in challenging unequal ethnic and regional relations. The ability of artistic displays to carry multiple meanings and maintain ambiguity lends them the potential to surreptitiously effect changes in intergroup perceptions. As we have seen, artistically embellished Toraja and Bugis architectural outcroppings in Makassar have waged silent symbolic ethnic battles. And in look-

ing at newer genre identity displays such as nationalist commemorative landmarks and local museums, we have seen how tensions between local, regional, and national conceptions of identity are embodied and negotiated. Through these examples and others, I have pushed for an understanding of Toraja arts (and by extension many other ethnic-art forms) as a complex arena encompassing contending discourses concerning identity and hierarchies of authority and power.

A second, complementary thread running through the later chapters in this book relates to how, in tumultuous times, material culture can serve as a resource for imagining ways to harmoniously engage with other groups. Through the creations of Ambe' Landang and his workshop carvers, we observe how some artists have drawn on traditional Toraja symbolic motifs to project new pleas for compassion and community-building in troubled times. In a similar vein, stories, such as that of Torajas defending their Chinese "brothers" against attack, offer embedded ethical roadmaps for Toraja listeners. Though such "ethical arts" have their limits (as evidenced in the Chinese and Muslim versions of the narrative), we can, nevertheless, discover valuable lessons in them.

Finally, I have sought to advance a more nuanced understanding of the interrelations between tourism and local agency. As Stronza (2001:274) recently lamented, the trend in the literature on "ethnic tourism" has been to assume that tourism is imposed on passive and powerless people and invariably brings a loss of agency to those who are the focus of the tourist gaze. While tourism has certainly transformed and challenged the lives of people in many locales, such global assumptions about the passivity of indigenous people vis-à-vis "globalizing forces" are problematic. As the artistic examples in this book illustrate, in the face of touristic and anthropological celebrity, a number of Torajas continue to be active strategists and ingenious cultural politicians. Some have cleverly used their tourist art to launch symbolically coded messages against the corrupt Jakarta politicians of the 1990s who neglected the "little people" (*masyarakat,* BI); other Torajas have drawn on touristic imagery to enhance their ethnic prestige vis-à-vis their lowland rivals (as we have seen with Torajas' embracing the invented touristic imagery of themselves as "heavenly kings"). Likewise, we have seen how some intellectual Torajas have cited anthropologists' writings to promote respect for their cultural traditions. For these Torajas, the anthropologists and tourists attracted to their homeland sometimes serve as political symbols that can be drawn upon to enhance Toraja economic,

political, and symbolic power against local or more distant adversaries. Today's Sa'dan Torajas live in a world shaped by transnational flows of people, objects, and media. Savvy Torajas, such as Ambe' Landang, are adept at lassoing those forces and adopting them to help shape their own visions for their families and communities. As this book illustrates, no longer can anthropologists and tourists imagine themselves as peripheral to local constructions of identity, community, and power.

I close with an account of recent events in Ke'te' Kesu', as the story behind these recent developments touches on a number of the themes central to this book: the linkage between art/material culture and identity politics, Torajas' role as active strategists in their encounters with the forces of globalization, and the ways in which tourists (and also anthropologists) have intersected with the lives of some Torajas, sometimes altering them indelibly.

In late April 2001 Ke'te' Kesu' had cause for jubilation. Residents had just learned that their rural hamlet was poised to achieve international fame and reverence, making it the equal of Java's ancient Buddhist monument of Borobudur, the city of Cuzco in Peru, and the paleolithic caves of Lascaux. Ke'te' Kesu' had just been nominated for consideration as a World Heritage Site by the Southeast Asian members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Over the previous week Southeast Asian delegates and UNESCO representatives had gathered in an upscale Tana Toraja hotel for a meeting devoted to reporting on and nominating Southeast Asian World Heritage Sites. As I learned from Ambe' Landang, the selection of Tana Toraja Regency as the venue for this regional UNESCO meeting was far from haphazard: it was the culmination of years of lobbying by local Toraja tourates and cultural activists, as well as Toraja politicians in Jakarta. While in Tana Toraja Regency, UNESCO delegates spent their leisure hours touring the highlands' scenic villages, valleys, and graves. As their Toraja host and guides had hoped, the UNESCO delegates were soon enchanted by the cultural richness and natural beauty of the region. Ultimately, a UNESCO team toured Ke'te' Kesu', assessed its traditional houses and graves, as well as its natural setting, and determined that it satisfied many of UNESCO's criteria for World Heritage Sites. According to Indonesian news reports, Sulawesi government officials and locals were optimistic that Ke'te' Kesu' would soon join the ranks of official Southeast Asian World Heritage Sites (Hamid 2001).[1]

Not surprisingly, Toraja material culture played a central role in Ke'te' Kesu''s nomination as a World Heritage Site. Heralding the traditional ancestral *tongkonan*s nestled in the heart of Ke'te' Kesu', one UNESCO delegate declared:

> The *tongkonan*s of Tana Toraja are living heritage in the true sense. They go beyond the sense of "home," being regarded as living symbols of local families who insist on maintaining their religious, cultural, and environmental traditions. The *tongkonan* does not exist in isolation in the Tana Toraja landscape. The vista of Tana Toraja villages—sweeping roofs of parallel rows of *tongkonan* built at the foot of a hill where ancestors are buried and surrounded by communal rice fields—shows the long interaction of the local population and their environment. The landscape demonstrates a deep relationship with nature that has existed for generations. Preserving the genius loci of Tana Toraja villages goes beyond protecting the unique architecture of the dwellings. It means preserving a total lifestyle while attempting to make the traditional lifestyle, severely threatened by 21st century influences, continue to be relevant. (Villalon 2001:3)

As this commentary underscores, "preservation" is a key dimension of UNESCO World Heritage Site designation. While UNESCO delegates celebrate Ke'te' Kesu' as a utopian ancestral "home" where people are imagined to live in timeless harmony with nature, the UNESCO narrative also emphasizes the endangered nature of this seemingly idyllic Eden. Ironically, the very forces that prompted Ke'te' Kesu''s discovery by UNESCO —forces such as international tourism, enhanced infrastructure, and accelerated discourse with the outside world—are vilified by these officials as threats to the village's "genius loci."[2]

As I read this quote on my computer in Chicago, I couldn't help but wonder how my friends and surrogate family in Ke'te' Kesu' would respond to UNESCO's apparent desire to "protect" the village from twenty-first-century influences. Several days later I received a telephone call from Mathius, a young man from Ke'te' Kesu' who had been a boy when I began my dissertation research. The son of a school teacher, Mathius had been an intelligent, studious youth with an unusual flair for languages. Although his family lived in a Bugis-styled house on a hilltop down the road from the village, Mathius passed many afternoons of his early adolescence at the bottom of the hill, lingering on a crumbling cement rice-paddy bridge at the entrance to Ke'te' Kesu'. Whenever foreign tourists alighted from the

local *bemo*s (public transport trucks) that periodically stopped there, Mathius would rush forward and attempt to engage them in conversation. I admired the dedication with which he seized every possible opportunity to expand his French, English, and Japanese vocabularies, although I often felt badly when tourists, suspicious of his motives, shooed him away or marched swiftly past him, pretending not to hear his politely stilted greetings, "Where you from, Mister? *Vous êtes française, Madame?*" Still, his enthusiasm was relentless: often, I saw him trotting into the village plaza behind Australian or European couples who had ignored him earlier, calling out, "You want see graves? Please I can show you, okay?" When American tourists arrived, he offered other conversation bait: "You want make acquaintance with American anthropologist? Please I can show you, okay?" On occasion, the tourists would finally pause and converse with him. Those who did were invariably astonished by his self-taught language skills. On slower days, when tourists were scarce, he often sat in the shade of my Toraja family's verandah, studying his tattered pocket English-Indonesian dictionary and peppering me with pronunciation questions.

Mathius's singular dedication to language acquisition eventually paid off: when he reached his mid-teens he began picking up extra cash guiding French and English-speaking tourists through the region. By the time he was a young adult, his language skills helped him secure a coveted job working for an international cruise ship line based in the United States. His income from this job had enabled him to erect a spacious new electrified home for his mother on the hilltop above the village. Moreover, his cruise ship employment afforded him periodic opportunities to visit other tourist destinations and celebrated World Heritage Sites.

When he was in port in the United States, Mathius often phoned to pass on news from Ke'te' Kesu'. Usually it was news of deaths and funerals, although once in a while it was news of marriages. This time, however, I was the one to relay the news of Ke'te' Kesu''s candidacy as a World Heritage Site. Mathius chuckled with delight when he heard the news, declaring that this would be a "big help" in revitalizing lagging tourist visits. We talked about how the recent political violence and economic instability in Indonesia had eroded tourism to Tana Toraja and resulted in economic difficulties for the carvers and souvenir sellers in Ke'te' Kesu'. Mathius observed that, with World Heritage Site status, the people of Ke'te' Kesu' could "pay off debts, have cash for funerals that had been postponed, modernize their homes." The more we talked, the more apparent became the

disjuncture between his conception of Ke'te' Kesu' as a World Heritage Site and that of UNESCO. Whereas Mathius stressed the affluence and possibilities for home modernization that this new status would bring, UNESCO was emphasizing preservation of a "traditional lifestyle" and staving off modernizing influences.

Over the next few weeks I emailed and talked with other Toraja friends living overseas. While their reactions to the candidacy of Ke'te' Kesu' echoed some of the themes in Mathius's response, several surmised that if the village were to achieve World Heritage Site status, it would affirm to the world that the Toraja could no longer be dismissed as a backward hill people: now they would become world stars. For these Toraja, it seemed that the status of Ke'te' Kesu' as a World Heritage Site was not so much about the reinvigoration and amplification of Kesu' traditions and values but more the amplification of Toraja identity and prestige.

I itched to return to the Toraja highlands and learn what others in Ke'te' Kesu' thought about possibly becoming a World Heritage Site, but my new baby daughter kept me anchored in Chicago. Some months later an anthropologist friend who had recently visited Tana Toraja delivered a cassette tape to me with a message from Ambe' Landang. Excitedly I thrust the cassette into my tape deck and the familiar voice of Ambe' Landang, weathered from years of smoking, filled the room, along with a background chorus of crickets and roosters. Poetically, Ambe' Landang welcomed my husband and infant daughter to "our Ke'te' family, our *tongkonan*"; then, at my friend's bidding, he recounted the tale of Ke'te' Kesu''s trajectory to World Heritage Site candidacy. Recapping how, in the late 1990s, he was disturbed to see that the new generation was paying less heed to Kesu' and Toraja traditions, Ambe' Landang solemnly underscored his concerns about "cultural slippage." Soon, he feared, Kesu' and Tana Toraja would be lost to new buildings and new people—immigrants drawn by the potential of tapping into the tourist economy—with tradition and heritage paved over and forgotten. He reflected on how best to convey to his own people as well as to the world that "the Kesu' and Toraja way of life should be preserved" and that "Toraja cultural heritage is a form of wealth that cannot be measured in rupiah." Eventually he concluded that the most promising avenue for promoting his message was to draw on a more powerful authority. He recounted how he lobbied various ambassadors and politicians, people he had met on their tours of his village, eventually gaining support from the Indonesian Directorate of Culture and the Japanese Cultural Centre.

His efforts converged with those of other Toraja tourates and the growing chorus finally reached the ear of Indonesia's minister of tourism. As a result, Indonesia's minister of tourism invited the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Region Group to convene their conference in Tana Toraja Regency. Ultimately, as Ambe' Landang declared triumphantly, "Ke'te' Kesu' was registered for candidacy as a World Heritage Site, Registration Number 1038." As the tape whirled, I could envision Ambe' Landang proudly standing in his studio, gesturing to a framed copy of the UNESCO registration certificate. No doubt, he would have displayed it on his studio's plywood wall, alongside his carved ethical paintings "that speak."

NOTES

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATIONS

1. The Sa'dan Toraja homeland is in Tana Toraja Regency and its environs (the Sa'dan River is the main river with its source in Tana Toraja, hence the name). In this book, I frequently refer to the Sa'dan Toraja people as the "Toraja." However, it is important to note that Sa'dan Toraja is their official name. A variety of Sulawesi groups bear the name Toraja, and my decision to use this term in the book is not meant to create further confusion. Rather, I opted to use the shortened term for two reasons: first, the Sa'dan Toraja refer to themselves as "Toraja," and second, the shortened term is less cumbersome for the reader. Where it is necessary to distinguish the Sa'dan Toraja from less-well-known neighboring groups (such as the Mamasa Toraja), I utilize the full names.

2. Indonesia's population is currently 201,092,238 million (Suryadinata, Arifin, and Anata 2003).

3. At the time this city was known as Ujung Pandang. To avoid confusion, I refer to this city by its current name, Makassar.

4. An Indonesian brand of vehicle.

5. Batik shirts are considered formal business attire in Indonesia.

6. For an older description of the Toraja population in Makassar, see Nooy-Palm et al. (1979). I Gede Wiguna Suratha (1977) has also written a descriptive study of a Toraja handicraft family in Makassar. For a brief discussion of Toraja domestic helpers in Makassar, see K. M. Adams (2000).

7. In Toraja there are two terms for house, *tongkonan* (an ancestral house) and *banua* (an everyday house). It is the *tongkonan* that is entwined with ancestry, identity, and personhood. An ordinary house, or *banua,* can be transformed into a *tongkonan* if the proper rituals are performed. To become a *tongkonan*, a *banua* need not resemble traditional *tongkonan*s architecturally (although most of the time they do), it is essential only that the descendants of the founder of the house stage the proper rituals. In everyday parlance, however, a number of my Toraja acquaintances used the terms *banua* and *tongkonan* interchangeably.

8. Estrada was the star of an American television show *CHiPs,* which highlighted the California Highway Patrol and was very popular in Indonesia in the 1980s.

9. More precisely, the Protestant Church in the Netherlands Indies (Protestantse Kerk in Nederlands-Indië) began mission work circa 1911 in Toraja and other upland areas of Sulawesi. However, they had to surrender that work to the Gereformeerde Zendingsbond (GZB) by 1913, as the Protestant

Church's status as an "established church" precluded them from doing missionary work. For more information on the work of the GZB in Tana Toraja and elsewhere in Indonesia, see van den End (1997a, 1997b, 2001, 2002).

10. Bigalke (1981).

11. Today over 83 percent of Toraja are Christians (Kantor Statistik and BAPPEDA 1993). A small minority of Toraja, roughly 5 percent, have embraced Islam as their faith.

12. The Toraja share their status as a predominantly Christian minority with a few other Indonesian groups, including the Toba Bataks in Sumatra, some Dayak groups in Kalimantan, and other groups in northern Sulawesi, eastern Indonesia, and the Moluccas.

13. For a fuller discussion of the transformations wrought by these land shortages, see Volkman (1985).

14. The theme of *merantau* has been discussed in numerous works, including H. Geertz (1963); Siegel (1969); Peacock (1979); M. Rosaldo (1980); Atkinson (1990); S. Errington (1990); Tsing (1993); and Forshee (2001). Elsewhere in Sulawesi, *merantau* has a longer history than in Tana Toraja: coastal Bugis, for instance, are celebrated for their exploits as long distance seafaring traders (Pelras 1996; Lineton 1975). In contrast, for the Toraja, migration is a relatively recent development. As Volkman observed, Toraja highlanders traditionally avoided unnecessary displacement and their house-based rituals "reinforced the centripetal tendencies of Toraja life by periodically reconcentrating dispersed family members at the center; the *tongkonan* . . . and kinship ideally did the same, as preferred marriage, 'returned to the house'" *(sulle langan banua)* (ibid.: 132–133). Another reason Torajas migrated less is that they were often taken as slaves by coastal peoples. However, as Bigalke (1981) observed, some Toraja leaders collaborated with coastal people in the slave trade, providing generally low-rank Torajas for these external markets. It was not until the late 1960s, when population pressures made it harder to earn a livelihood in the highlands, political upheaval in South Sulawesi abated, and opportunities to work for the new multinational companies away from the homeland emerged, that young Toraja men and women began to leave the region (ibid.:135).

15. Volkman (1985:132).

16. The constitution guarantees Indonesians the right to six years of elementary education, although when I began research in the 1980s many rural Toraja children were completing only a few years of schooling. This was largely because the fees and uniform and books costs at the time were prohibitive for poorer families. In 1994 Indonesia launched a nine-year compulsory education program. However, since the economic crisis of the late 1990s, growing numbers of Indonesian families have not been able to afford the costs of schooling and have been forced to withdraw their children from school, obliging the country to delay full implementation of the program. Nevertheless, overall

education statistics for the country have been on the rise in the 1980s and 1990s: The enrollment rate for elementary schools went from 92.3 percent in 1990 to 95 percent in 1997 (before dropping to 93.75 percent in 1998, following the advent of the economic crisis). For junior high school, the enrollment rate was 34.29 percent in 1990 and climbed to 56.03 percent in 1997, dropping to 53 percent in 1998. For further details, see Dursin (2001).

17. For an examination of the role of schooling in fostering a sense of national identity, see Keyes (1991).

18. See http://n2zgu.50megs.com/INDO.htm (accessed June 14, 2005).

19. In this regard, this book is situated in a family of works that approach arts and material objects as social forms ripe for contesting, asserting, or celebrating relationships and identities. For related anthropological works, see Miller (1987); McCracken (1990); Morphy (1991); Marcus and Myers (1995); Hoskins (1998); Phillips and Steiner (1999); and Forshee (2001).

20. Several bodies of quantitative data supplemented these qualitative materials. While I do not draw directly from these quantitative materials in this book, this data reinforced the insights culled from participant observation and informal interviews. During my initial research trip, I conducted a socioeconomic survey that entailed extensive interviews with a representative from every household in a Sanggalangi subdistrict (*kecamatan,* BI) tourist-carving village and in an adjacent predominantly rice-farming village. To assist with this survey, I employed two Toraja field assistants. I also surveyed 150 Indonesian and international tourists on their impressions and expenditures while in Tana Toraja. Finally, I surveyed 450 Toraja high school students, collecting information on their religious and economic backgrounds, attitudes towards other ethnic groups, knowledge of and interest in Toraja culture, conceptions of self, and general life aspirations.

21. This language is also known as Tae'.

22. This is in recognition of the fact that not all Toraja have extended contact with tourists or the tourism industry.

23. Other researchers have offered richly detailed, encyclopedic accounts of "traditional" Sa'dan Toraja culture (cf.: Nooy-Palm 1975a, 1979, 1986; Koubi 1982; Tangdilintin 1980), chronicled the historic role of the Christian church in the development of Toraja ethnic consciousness (Bigalke 1981), offered insightful examinations of Toraja ritual activity (Coville 1988, 1989; Crystal 1970, 1974; Volkman 1985; Yamashita 1988; Sandarupa 2004); addressed gender, kinship, and economics (Waterson 1981), detailed Sa'dan Toraja linguistics (Salombe' 1982), or investigated dimensions of Toraja psychology and life cycle (Hollan and Wellenkamp 1994, 1996). In terms of writings on the artistic realm, the impressive volume by Kis-Jovak et al.(1988) on Toraja architecture offers a wealth of photographs and architectural details, but is oriented towards the general reader. Several articles by Waterson (1988, 1989) and myself (K. M. Adams 1998a) present shorter discussions of Toraja architecture

and explore dimensions of the politics of certain design motifs, but, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first book devoted to exploring the politics of Toraja art.

24. I am grateful to Umar Kayam's wife for planting this imagery in my head when I visited their Jakarta household in 1984 while en route to Sulawesi.

25. The term *adat* is ubiquitous in the Malay world and carries complex multiple meanings. Generally translated as "custom," "customary law," "tradition," or "behavior," numerous writers have explored the nuances of this concept. C. van Vollenhoven (1918) published one of the early texts on *adat* in the Netherlands Indies in 1918, establishing the foundation for subsequent works on the topic. Drawing on ethnographic research, he created classifications for various *adat* or customary law regions in the Netherlands Indies. Contemporary scholars have turned their attention to examining subjective dimensions of the concept of *adat* and to chronicling the political manipulations of this concept. Zainal Kling, for instance, defines *adat* as the "indigenous body of knowledge and law of the Malay world" (1997:45) and discusses *adat* as the folk-model whereby Malay self-identity is maintained. Ultimately, he suggests that *adat* is most aptly understood as "the subjective understanding of the Malay society of their cultural formations and cultural constructs" (1997:46).

26. See Crick (1995); Bruner (1995); and Errington and Gewertz (1989) for discussions of the parallels between tourists and anthropologists.

27. For more on this tumultuous period, see Bigalke (1981); and Harvey (1974, 1977).

28. These claims about the early stereotypes fostered by Bugis and Makassarese drivers were made by older Toraja residents in the villages first visited by these early tourists.

29. For insightful analyses of the touristic transformation of Bali, see Picard (1990a, 1990b, 1996); McKean (1973, 1989); and Vickers (1989, 1994, 1996).

30. See Anon. (1972); Crystal (1977); Maurer (1978).

31. See Volkman (1985:165) for details.

32. Joop Ave's selection of the word *primadona* to describe Tana Toraja is intriguing. While it is not listed in older Indonesian-English dictionaries, the word does appear in a dictionary of contemporary terms as the Indonesian spelling of "prima donna" (Schmidgall-Tellings and Stevens 1981). As a borrowing from the Italian expression, the precise shifts in meaning in translation can only be imagined. What is clear is that the director general of tourism wished to convey a sense of the Toraja as the premiere belle of Sulawesi. I was present on the occasion when Joop Ave made this declaration to a banquet room filled with South Sulawesi tourism officials and Toraja politicians. He

had just completed his first tour of Tana Toraja Regency and at dinner waxed poetic about the allure of Tana Toraja. Within days, even Toraja villagers far off the beaten tourist track were repeating his declaration. Some clearly had no idea what a *primadona* was, though they had divined that it was something positive. When Joop Ave returned to Jakarta, he repeated his declaration at a widely publicized event, and the term rapidly became a part of tourism parlance in 1980s and 1990s Indonesia. For a fuller discussion of how touting Tana Toraja as a touristic *primadona* had reverberating implications for regional ethnic relations and national integration, see K. M. Adams (1997a). Also consult the writings of Robert E. Wood (1984, 1997) for valuable insights into how tourism and ethnicity are mediated by state institutions.

33. As of the late 1990s, this image is no longer on the 5,000-rupiah banknote.

34. See Causey (2003) for a rich examination of how Toba Batak of Sumatra formulate conceptions of tourists and craft ways to engage with them. Also see Forshee (2001) and Hoskins (2002) for explorations of similar themes on Sumba, and Erb (1997, 1998) for a discussion of related themes on Flores.

35. The Sa'dan is the main river flowing through the Rantepao valley and the source of the name, "Sa'dan Toraja."

36. For further discussions of tourism and Toraja ethnic self-consciousness, see K. M. Adams (1984, 1995); Volkman (1990).

37. Over three-fourths of these tourists were domestic. These tourism statistics derive from the Badan Pusat Statistik in Tana Toraja Regency. Government tourism officials calculate these figures by comparing the number of tourist ticket sales at the most popular tourist sites with occupancy rates and guest logs at local hotels, inns, and home stays (Rombelayuk, personal communication, August 15, 1995). It is probable that the number of domestic tourists is slightly inflated, as many Toraja residing outside the homeland regularly return for family visits and funeral rituals. While in Tana Toraja Regency, they often visit the more celebrated tourist villages to purchase trinkets for friends back home. Some of these returning family members also prefer to stay at local hotels. For an exploration of the factors and dynamics underlying domestic tourists visits to Tana Toraja, see K. M. Adams (1998b).

38. See Simamora and Nurbianto (2003).

39. For instance, a number of former tour bus drivers now steer rumbling trucks across Sulawesi, transporting building materials mined from the Toraja highlands, sand from the Maulu River, and stones cut out of the cliffs.

40. In June 2005, when I was making my final edits of this book, I received an email from a European man who married a Toraja woman. They were preparing to make their annual trip to the highlands, and he reported, "Tourism seems to recover; we were told about a recent funeral in Lempo where twenty tourist buses drew up. Well, we'll wait and see."

41. In a more recent version of this article appearing in the 1989 edition of Smith's *Hosts and Guests,* Greenwood has added that in light of subsequent developments he has rethought his position.

42. Cf. Crick (1989); Wood (1997); Ness (2003); Yamashita (2003).

43. For path-breaking discussions of these issues see Wood (1980); and Picard (1987).

44. For more on this rebellion, consult Harvey (1974, 1977).

45. Edward Bruner (2005:200–201) offers an excellent example of this anthropologist-tourist-"native" dynamic. As he relates, Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, like other scholars and artists living in Bali at the time, were particularly fascinated by the Balinese *barong* and *rangda* dance. Working with local Balinese, they commissioned a new version of it for their film *Trance and Dance in Bali.* Ultimately, the fascination of these anthropologists with this particular trance dance resulted in its becoming one of the most prominent dance forms in Bali, ubiquitous in tourist venues, and heartily embraced by the Balinese (also see Vickers 1989). As Bruner summarizes, "To overstate . . . for emphasis, the Balinese became what ethnographers studied in that Western interest in the *barong* led the Balinese to modify their culture so that the *barong* became more prominent in their performances" (ibid.:201).

46. As Fischer (1986:208) surmised, the emergence of ethnographic knowledge is not unlike the creation of an ethnic identity. In a similar vein, Clifford (1986:7) famously observed, "Even the best ethnographic texts—serious, true fictions—are systems, or economies of truth. Power and history work through them, in ways their authors cannot fully control. Ethnographic truths are thus inherently *partial*—committed and incomplete." It is these "partial truths" that form the basis of the images we craft.

47. Known as a *dulang,* the base of this statue prompted memories of the elevated carved wooden dishes I had seen at museums, dishes reputed to have been used by Toraja elite at ritual events.

48. Eric Crystal's book (1970) is actually his dissertation. In the 1980s several copies of it were in Toraja households.

49. In recent years several people have made complementary points about local agency. Schiller (2001), for instance offers a fascinating chronicle of how an elite group of Ngaju Dayak religious leaders' invitation to a National Geographic crew to film their death rituals entailed a political attempt to structure and reframe Dayak imagery abroad.

50. For previous explorations of dimensions of this theme, see K. M. Adams (1995) and Silverman (2001). For examples of the ways in which cultural creativity and play figure in people's efforts to reshape local hierarchies and relationships, see Lavie, Narayan, and Rosaldo (1993).

51. While there are other categories of identity that are important to people in the Toraja highlands, such as gender identities and work-oriented iden-

tities, these are only addressed tangentially in this book. Gender in Toraja is a topic worthy of its own book.

52. For examples of such "primordialist" theories of ethnicity, see Shils (1957); and van den Berghe (1978).

53. For examples of such "situationalist" or "instrumentalist" perspectives on ethnicity, see Barth (1969); and Southhall (1976).

54. For a discussion of parallels among the Karo Batak of Sumatra, see Kipp (1993:68).

55. Moreover, as Kipp observes, since anthropologists writing about Indonesia tend to embrace locally articulated categories of identity, class has been a relatively infrequent theme in our writings (1993:261).

56. Occasionally, however, I heard poorer Toraja villagers speak of themselves in contrast to "rich people" *(to sugi).* An examination of my field notes, however, suggests this expression was frequently being used as a gloss for local nobles.

57. For examples of studies that have highlighted the dynamics of what I would term identity negotiation, see Clifford (1988); Keesing (1989); Linnekin (1983, 1990, 1992); Nagata (1981); and White (1991).

58. My use of the term *icon* is best clarified by Michael Silverstein's definition: "*Icons* are those signs where the perceivable properties of the sign vehicle itself have isomorphism to (up to identity with) those of the entity signaled. That is, the identities are 'likenesses' in some sense" (Silverstein 1976:27; see also Houser and Kloesel 1992:226).

59. Cf: Armstrong (1971); Czentimihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981).

60. Cf: Hoskins (1998); Keane (1997); Thomas (1991); Forshee (2001).

61. The concept of human agency has been deployed in diverse ways by social scientists, and there have been several recent calls for us to further refine our thinking on this topic (Dobres and Robb 2000:3; Ahearn 2000:112).

62. To become a legal licensed guide, an individual must pay not only guide training school costs but also guide license fees every three years. In 1995 this fee was 800,000 rupiah, equivalent to a six-month salary for a junior high school teacher. This fee was prohibitive for these young Toraja males. In 1990 a local organization was founded by several established Toraja guides to train and otherwise assist the wild guides who could not afford these fees. After training, these aspiring young guides worked under an umbrella license held by the founders of the organization until they got well enough established to apply for their own licenses.

63. For discussions of guiding and romance elsewhere in Indonesia, see Bras and Dahles (1999); and Dahles (1998).

64. This is where Volkman, Hollan and Wellenkamp based their research (see Volkman 1985; Hollan and Wellenkamp 1994, 1996).

65. This is where Eric Crystal and Shinji Yamashita based their research, and where Toraja anthropologist Stanislaus Sandarupa' is currently basing his research (see Crystal 1970; Yamashita 1988).

66. "Helper" is a translation of the Indonesian term for servant, *pembantu.* This helper was a woman in her teens, and my adoptive Toraja sister was a year older than I.

67. This is also known as Benteng Ujung Pandang. It was once a Dutch fort, but now serves as the home of South Sulawesi's provincial museum (focused on cultural diversity), various research centers, and academic offices. See Chapter Five for a more detailed discussion of the museum at this site.

68. A traditional Toraja dish consisting of meat roasted with blood or leaf vegetables in a bamboo tube.

CHAPTER 2: COMPETING TORAJA IMAGES OF IDENTITY

1. The concept of authenticity has played a recurrent role in tourism research dating back to the early work of Boorstin (1961), who maintained that tourist sites were inauthentic "pseudo-events." The pioneering tourism researcher, Dean MacCannell, argued that tourists were driven by a desire for authenticity and tourist sites often entailed "staged authenticity" (1976). These early writers implied that an "authentic" culture lurked behind the touristic facades (although MacCannell has more recently reframed his position: see MacCannell 1992). As Edward Bruner (2001) notes, contemporary anthropologists now recognize the fallacy of such assumptions, as a single "authentic" culture does not exist. Malcolm Crick (1989:336) summed up the issue when he raised the question ". . . what in a culture is not staged? What does cultural authenticity consist of?" and cited Greenwood's (1982:27) observation that "all cultures are in the process of 'making themselves up' all the time. In a general sense, all culture is 'staged authenticity.'" Other researchers (such as Handler 1984, 1986; Hanson 1989; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Linnekin 1983, 1990, 1991; Handler and Linnekin 1984; Keesing 1989) have likewise underscored that "tradition" and "authenticity" are problematic concepts, as cultures are fluid and people routinely invent culture as they go along. For additional recent sociological and anthropological explorations of this concept, see Redfoot (1984); Cohen (1988); Bruner (1993, 1994, 2001); and Wang (1999).

2. Dr. H. van der Veen was a linguist employed by the Netherlands Bible Society. This religious organization sent van der Veen and his wife to Tana Toraja, where they lived from 1916–1942. Van der Veen's linguistic work with the Sa'dan Toraja resulted in a number of significant publications (cf. 1965, 1966), including the preparation of a Toraja-Dutch dictionary (1940) and a Toraja-Indonesian dictionary (Tammu and van der Veen 1972). Tammu, the coauthor of the Toraja-Indonesian dictionary, was van der Veen's primary

research assistant until 1942, when the Japanese interned van der Veen and his family in concentration camps elsewhere in Indonesia.

3. Cf: Crystal (1970); Volkman (1985).

4. I follow the convention established by Nooy-Palm et al. (1979:44) and others and translate *to kaunan* as "slave." As I was later to learn from my Toraja host and mentor, this hierarchical rank system coexists in Tana Toraja with a second, less-discussed ranking system (see below).

5. This derivation is supported by Adrianai and Kruyt (1914:1–2); Priyanti Pakan (1977:30–36); Bigalke (1981:13–14); and Tammu and van der Veen (1972:660–661). Nooy-Palm and Tangdilintin also chronicle yet another derivation that suggests the name Toraja came from *rajang,* the Bugis term for "West," suggesting that the Toraja are the "people of the West" in contrast to the Luwu, who are the "people of the East" (Tangdilintin 1975; also cited in Nooy-Palm 1979:6).

6. Before Dutch annexation, the Sa'dan Toraja area was composed of many small *bua'* communities, areas whose residents came together for ritual activities such as the *bua'* feast. There were also several larger *lembang* (prow) territories composed of various *bua'* communities, three of which were ruled by *puang* (lord, prince) who had ritual preeminence. However, with the exception of one period in the seventeenth century when various chiefs unified to repel the invading troops of Bugis Prince Palakka, these Toraja highlanders never formed a fully unified political entity, nor did they share a common sense of ethnic identity (see Bigalke 1981).

7. For a parallel discussion of the role of missionization in generating new identities elsewhere in Sulawesi, see Schrauwers (2000).

8. These gurus functioned as assistants to the Dutch missionaries and were trained in both education and evangelization (Plaisier 1993:657).

9. According to Th. van den End, who researched the backgrounds of these initial gurus, gurus of higher descent were overrepresented, while gurus of slave descent were few (van den End 1994 and personal email communication, June 22, 2005). In light of Plaisier's reports that Toraja gurus of the lowest class of slaves were not tolerated in some villages, it is surprising that gurus of lowly descent were selected (Plaisier 1993:656–657). Van den End speculates that this may have been due to the background of J. Belksma, the GZB missionary who, from 1916–1942, was responsible for selecting candidate gurus and evangelists in the Toraja highlands. Like the vast majority of GZB missionaries at the time, Belksma was of "lowly descent." The son of a farm laborer who, through the efforts of his mother and schoolmaster, escaped the fate of farm toil by becoming a missionary and marrying well, Belksma would have been highly attuned to issues of class (particularly as class consciousness was pervasive in the Netherlands at the time) (van den End, personal email communication, June 22, 2005).

10. See K. M. Adams (1984, 1988); Volkman (1990).

11. Traditionally, only the elite were allowed to wear golden jewelry, although this has changed in contemporary times, with the erosion of traditional rank-based taboos prompted, in part, by the new economic opportunities presented by tourism and outmigration.

12. The *to parengnge'* is a formal ritual office, and this officeholder is responsible for the rites and ceremonies celebrated by the titled *tongkonan* with which the office is associated. As Nooy-Palm observes (1979:48–49), the term derives from *rengnge',* which refers to the way in which a woman totes a load on her back using a woven rattan tump line strapped around her forehead to distribute the load. Thus, the title refers to the person (male or female) who bears the responsibility for the rites of a *tongkonan.* Some suggest that the term *parengnge'* alludes to a high rank or class of people (Matandung 1973:26–34), but others claim it is simply a title. What is clear is that this office can be held only by members of a high class.

13. *Tedong pasilaga* (water buffalo fight) is a children's game in which two children crouch down on all fours and repeatedly ram heads into each other, mimicking the water buffalo fights that take place at funerals.

14. I later learned that a number of her sons had different perspectives, reflective of the new era in which they had been raised. As one son told me, his mother's "feudal" viewpoints were "more appropriate for Holland, where there are still kings and queens, than for today's Indonesia."

15. Ne' Duma's figure of twenty-five generations contrasts with Nooy-Palm (1986:320), who writes that Kesu' nobility trace their ancestry back some thirty-five generations.

16. In subsequent years, following Ne' Duma's death, several of his sons became interested in familial history and Toraja cultural traditions. These sons devoured their father's manuscripts, as well as the scholarly publications on the Sa'dan Toraja, and consulted with other local elders, combining this knowledge with what they remembered of their father's accounts. Today, researchers and other visitors routinely seek out Ne' Duma's sons for their cultural expertise.

17. Tongkonan Kesu' was moved from the peak of Mount Kesu' to the valley hamlet of Ke'te' Kesu' in Bonoran in 1919 by Pong Panimba. The move was completed in 1927. For a further discussion of the history and significance of this move, see Chapter Eight.

18. Waterson observes that one can look at house sites as a sort of network, offering both geographical and historical accounts of the settlement of the Toraja highlands, as people spread out to farm new lands (1997:66).

19. The term *aluk* generally translates as "ritual mandates" or "Toraja religion." However, in this case, these abstract concepts take on a concrete form.

20. Nooy-Palm (1979:24, 160, 315) translates this as "the Cock from

Heaven." She also notes that the suffix *langi'* (heaven, sky) indicates that "supermundane beings who descended to Earth are involved"(1979:24). The names of these legendary ancestors also convey the close association between men and roosters in Tana Toraja, calling to mind Clifford Geertz's classic article on the Balinese cockfight (Geertz 1973a). While *londong* translates as "rooster" or "cock," the term is also used poetically to refer to men (see Tammu and van der Veen 1972:327).

21. For additional explorations of differing sensibilities of place, see Feld and Basso (1996) and K. Stewart (1996).

22. Recent studies by researchers elsewhere in Southeast Asia and the Pacific indicate that the importance of the concept of place in the elaboration of identity is not unique to Toraja (cf. M. J. Adams 1979; Traube 1986; Forth 1991; Kahn 1996; J. Fox 1997; Forshee 2001; Causey 2003).

23. Contrast this version of the Londong diLangi' legend with that collected in Lempo (northeastern Tana Toraja) by Koubi (1982:331–335). In the Lempo version both the whole areca nut and the halved nut rot in the ground, indicating that both marriages between siblings and marriages between first cousins are taboo.

24. Her name translates as "The Morning Mist of Kesu'."

25. Her name translates as "The Water Goddess."

26. In precolonial times in the Toraja highlands, time was often reckoned in terms of market cycles. Markets in this region operate on a six-day cycle. Twelve markets would thus correspond to seventy-two days.

27. Nooy-Palm specifies that these rituals include "joyous feasts such as *bua' kasalle, bua' padang,* and the *merok* feast, but also the rice ritual, rituals of exorcism to heal the sick *(maro),* transitional rites in relation to birth, a first haircut, circumcision, the filing of teeth and body decoration with tattoos" (1986:3). She further observes that there are several types of exceptional death rituals included in this category that generally pertain to the life-sphere. These are the death rituals held for a *to burake* (the priest who presides at ceremonies pertaining to the heavens), a *to minaa sando,* or a *to menani* (the priest officiating at agricultural rites).

28. Nooy-Palm points out that the nomenclature "smoke-rising" and "smoke descending" indicates that "during rites of the former kind one is addressing heaven, during rites of the latter kind the earth and the underworld; in both, smoke issuing from the sacrifice is considered to act as a medium" (1986:4).

29. For instance, as Waterson reports, following the birth of a child, "the father buries the afterbirth on the east side of the house, so that over time, the house becomes the place where 'many placentae are buried', and thus should never be moved" (1997:66). Also see Sandarupa (2004) for a discussion of the salience of directionality to Toraja ritual and architecture.

30. The Toraja term for the actual fine is *"kapa'." Kapa'* literally translates

as "cotton." Nooy-Palm (1979:34) reports two varying metaphoric meanings for this term: citing a thesis by Bulo (1970), she relates his explanation that *rampanan kapa'* (the laying down of the *kapa'*) alludes to the "binding element," the cotton thread, of the marriage pact. Nooy-Palm also cites a contrasting thesis by Matandung (1973) suggesting that cotton *(kapa')* is viewed by Torajas as a symbol of purity and the "laying down of the cotton" alludes to the rules which are to "guard the sanctity of a marriage against disturbance (= pollution)" (Nooy-Palm 1979:34). As Nooy-Palm surmises, *kapa'* fines ultimately make divorce so costly that inheritance remains undivided (ibid.:35).

31. Van der Veen (1965:105–143) provides a Toraja account of the origins of slaves, as recounted in *Passomba Tedong,* the all-night litany for the water buffalo sacrificed at a *merok* ritual. According to the story, Puang Matua (the "Old Lord" in heaven) had six children, who emerged from the leaves of a tree sprouted in the cinders of his bellows. One of these children, Pande Nunu, ate his siblings' leftovers and wed a woman from Illin who adorned herself with a clay bracelet and an alloy anklet (ornaments traditionally associated with slaves). When the first glorious *merok* feast was held, the community asked Pande Nunu's offspring, Dattu Bakka' and Pong Malaileong, to chop bamboo roasting sticks and to implant palm fronds in the ground for shade. They balked, grumbling that they shouldn't be treated like water buffaloes tilling the fields. They demanded respectful treatment and the right to marry women of their own group. The community refused, arguing that although their lordly father had indeed sprung from Puang Matua's forge, he chose his destiny when he wed a woman from Illin who wore a clay bracelet. Still, Pande Nunu's sons refused to labor like water buffaloes. To settle the conflict, the brothers partook in a lengthy contest with community members. The contest entailed diving into deep pools, submerging their hands in boiling water, and other trials. Although the brothers repeatedly lost to their adversaries, they refused to acknowledge defeat. The dispute was finally settled with a cockfight, the traditional means of conveying divine judgment. Pande Nunu's sons lost, bowed their heads, and were thereafter treated like water buffaloes. As no woman in the community would wed these brothers, Puang Matua molded them a lifeless wife of clay named Potto Kalembang. Then Puang Matua captured the Prince of Wind in a casting net and coaxed him to bring life into the clay woman. And thus began the division of slaves and nobles.

32. However, a number of the museum officials I had met in Makassar tended to use these labels.

33. Indeed, some years later, in 1995, I sat on the verandah of my Toraja family's house conversing with Stanis Sandarupa, a man whom I had first met in 1984 as a young guide. Stanis had gone on to receive a Fulbright Fellowship and was pursuing a PhD in linguistic anthropology at the University of

Chicago at the time. We were discussing Toraja mythic history, and Stanis had lamented that it was terribly difficult to "do" history in Toraja because of all the different versions of which ancestors had first settled Toraja, where they had gone, and so forth. My Toraja brother, Ambe' Landang, was sitting with us and quickly picked up on this comment, declaring that it was an important task of the anthropologist to discover "objectively" which settlement order was correct, which *tongkonan* was oldest, Tongkonan Kesu', Tongkonan Nonongan, or Tongkonan Kaero (the parent house of the prince of Sangalla'). Ambe' Landang declared that this had to be done objectively, to put a rest to these arguments about preeminence. As he told us, "I've been trying to bring all the leaders of these different *adat* areas together for a meeting to pool our knowledge and compare these different versions of history, but there are always obstacles to having this meeting. So now it is up to the anthropologists to find out which is the oldest. I'm even willing to face the fact that Tongkonan Kesu' isn't the oldest, if that is what you anthropologists objectively determine." Ambe' Landang's willingness to accept the possibility that his ancestral *tongkonan* was not the oldest was a major bow to "objectivity," as this would mean less prestige for his kin group. He was quick to add, however, that he was certain that one of his *tongkonan*'s founding ancestors, Tangdilino', was the first architect. As he affirmed, beaming proudly, "No one else can make that claim."

34. After the meeting, as Ne' Duma and I bounced toward Rantepao on the *bemo* (BI; a minivan that serves as public transport), our conversation turned to the disappointed aristocrats at the meeting. Not surprisingly, Ne' Duma did not see a particular need for their sites to be recognized. He pointed out that these elites were hoping to use tourism development to elevate their standing, which was not right. The main thing, as far as he was concerned, was that Ke'te' Kesu' continue to be recognized and respected as the oldest tourist object, one of the first sites to be officially recognized. Of more concern to Ne' Duma was the consultant's proposal to create a tradition-free zone for tourists. "Those Bugis have no understanding," he lamented, ". . . you cannot simply declare a place "free" of *adat* and start mixing rituals that are taboo to mix." Later that day when we returned to the village, this was the main topic of discussion.

35. For related observations, see Erb (1997) and Vickers (1996).

36. Mount Sesean is the peak that dominates the northern horizon of the Rantepao valley.

37. This relationship between class and the relative appeal of different forms of Christianity parallels Rita Kipp's findings for the Karo Batak of Sumatra (1993:213). Kipp speculates that religions such as Pentecostalism may appeal more to members of the underclass because "religious ecstacy [sic] offers a momentary escape from weekday lives made difficult by poverty and illness, and it promises a greater happiness in the Hereafter. People who are

almost totally powerless gain a momentary feeling of power and importance, having been a vessel for the very Spirit of God" (ibid.:208).

38. For discussions of similar patterns elsewhere in rural Indonesia, see Hoskins (1987b) and other chapters in Kipp and Rodgers (1987).

39. As C. Geertz (1980), S. Errington (1989, 1983a), and others note, power in indigenous Indonesian societies is reinforced and conveyed via show, pageantry, and display.

40. For larger funerals, guest reception pavilions are specially constructed for the event, out of plaited wood and bamboo. At smaller funerals the reception area may simply be the host's living room or a tarp-covered clearing shaded by palm fronds inserted in the ground.

41. As growing numbers of tourists come to witness Toraja rituals, these foreign visitors become frequent violators of the symbolics of rice-barn space. Since the front end of the rice barns offers the best views of the ritual action, tourists often settle there, opening the door for conflict and confusion when the elite occupants of those spaces arrive. On one occasion, in the mid-1990s (at the peak of tourism in Tana Toraja), I overheard a group of four Spanish tourists in their twenties in a Rantepao restaurant discussing their experiences at a funeral with a young Toraja guide. As the oldest male in the group recounted, he had seated himself at the front of a rice barn. It soon became clear to him that the spot was reserved for older, important people. As this tourist recounted, when these important individuals arrived, he refused to budge. Eventually, after shooting some good pictures, he left the rice barn. "Perhaps it was not nice of me . . . ," he shrugged, his voice and body language betraying his sense of entitlement, nevertheless. According to this tourist, there were only two other tourists present at the ritual, a pair of German women who had arrived late and did not initially have good seats. But they too had pushed their way forward until they'd secured themselves ample space on the platform of a rice barn. In the late 1980s and 1990s, in an effort to prevent such space violations, a number of Toraja families took to erecting "tourist pavilions" at funeral rituals. Tourists, however, generally did not take well to being corralled in these designated spaces and often fled them.

42. In Tana Toraja, the water buffalo is not only a financial asset, but a key symbol. Water buffaloes are, as a Toraja friend explained, "like money in the bank." Torajas divide water buffalo into different types, with differing values based on horn size, coloration, and other features. Land and pay for various tasks (such as *tongkonan* construction) are valued in terms of water buffalo. They are also considered part of the collective wealth *(mana')* of the *tongkonan,* and brought to funerals by individuals and family groups (sacrificing a water buffalo at a funeral can often render one eligible to inherit paddy fields from the deceased). Most significantly for this tale, the prestige of the deceased, and the community's respect for him or her, is measured in part by the number and quality of water buffalo sacrificed at the funeral. For comprehensive arti-

cles on water buffaloes in Tana Toraja, see Thompson (2000) and Nooy-Palm (2003).

43. See Koubi (1982) for an alternative version of this tale.

44. The two men who ran these restaurants were once partners, but they quarreled. One departed and opened a restaurant with the same name two blocks from the original restaurant.

45. For more on this seminar, see Chapter Three.

46. The narratives of Japanese and domestic Indonesian tourists tended to differ from those of European, Australian, New Zealand, and American tourists. For a detailed discussion of these contrasts, see K. M. Adams (1998b).

CHAPTER 3: THE CARVED *TONGKONAN*

1. Mini Indonesia Park (Taman Mini Indonesia Indah) is one of Jakarta's most popular recreational spots, crowded with families and groups of teenagers on weekends. Opened in 1975 by Ibu Tien Suharto (Indonesia's first lady at the time), the park recreates Indonesia's ethnic panoply on a miniature scale. At heart, the park carries the message that being Indonesian means not only having a specific ethnic heritage, but appreciating the nation's many ethnic groups. For further discussion of the park, see Anderson (1990); Pemberton (1994a); K. M. Adams (1998b); Hitchcock (1998); and S. Errington (1998).

2. Limestone powder from the cliffs behind the village provides the white pigment. Red and yellow are traditionally made from earthen ochre brought from the Western Toraja realms by traders. Black derives from soot scraped from cooking pots (and sometimes motor oil). Many carvers traditionally preferred to mix these powders with palm wine *(tuak),* rather than water, as they claimed palm wine made the paint more enduring. By the time I began my fieldwork, though, carvers were turning to commercially made black and yellow paints.

3. However, when asked by tourists if he had made all of the carvings in his kiosk, Ne' Lindo always acknowledged that many had been made by his *anak buah* (assistants, apprentices).

4. This was an allusion to the government's ubiquitous family planning motto ("Two children are enough").

5. The Madurese are the third largest ethnic group in Indonesia. Their homeland is the island of Madura and the Kangean Islands.

6. By the late 1990s, growing numbers of women were carving ashtrays, key chains, and even wall plaques for the tourist market. See Morrell (2000) for a description of one woman carver and a discussion of the economic dimensions of this work. While tourism had opened up a new space for women to become more economically independent, in broad terms rural Toraja women have generally had more fiscal authority than women in many traditional European agrarian societies. In many of the rural Toraja households with which I was familiar, men routinely turned their earnings over to their wives. Should

they later want *uang rokok* (spending money, BI), they were obliged to approach their wives. Fiscal authority, however, should not be confused with ritual authority.

7. See Causey (2003) for similar observations.

8. See K. M. Adams (1991) for an examination of politics behind the shifting historical images of the Toraja. Also see Hoskins (1996) for a discussion of the tropes of the headhunter and the cannibal in the Western imagination pertaining to Southeast Asia.

9. The old spelling of Toraja.

10. Not all early visitors spoke of Torajas as "wild artists." The Sarasin cousins, natural scientists who made expeditions through the central regions of Sulawesi in the late 1800s and early 1900s, published extensive descriptions and photographs of the region. Their respectful imagery of Toraja architectural creations contrasts somewhat with Brown's imagery (Sarasin and Sarasin 1905).

11. Kis-Jovak et al. (1988:34) as well as countless tourist writers and local guides make this claim. However, Domenig (1990:315) argues that this interpretation is mistaken, drawn from an erroneous translation of the *Passomba Tedong* (Water Buffalo Litany). According to Domenig, rather than linking the shape of the *tongkonan*'s roof to the shape of a ship, the *Passomba Tedong* metaphorically likens the four supporting beams of the *tongkonan* to a woman's neck chain. However, it is clear that the prow metaphor has currency in contemporary Toraja society, as I heard countless Toraja tourates make this claim while I lived in Ke'te' Kesu'.

12. These three stones that support the cooking pot are highly symbolic, and in myth and ritual chants such as the *Passomba Tedong,* three of the important gods (Tulakpadang, Gauntikembong, and Banggairante) are likened to these three cooking stones.

13. Other Indonesianists have observed parallel fashions in which indigenous houses serve as metaphors for the cosmos or for ideas about social order (see Cunningham 1964; S. Errington 1979, 1983b, 1989; Feldman 1979; Kana 1980).

14. See Kis-Jovak et al. (1988) for a fuller description of the ways in which the *tongkonan* serves as a microcosm of the Toraja universe.

15. See Domenig (1990:315) for a discussion of this reference in the *Passomba Tedong* consecration invocation.

16. For a discussion of the Toraja house in ritual, see Nooy-Palm (1990).

17. See van der Veen (1965).

18. As Coville (1983) observes, the rice barn plays a key intermediary role in rice's transition from growing in the fields to being consumed.

19. Since the time of my initial fieldwork, a fifth traditionally shaped structure has been added to this row of *tongkonan*s. This structure serves as a museum and will be discussed later in this book.

20. In his popular book *White Stranger: Six Moons in Celebes,* Harry Wilcox (1949:286) describes a similar jest played on him, noting that the Toraja call this kind of jest, "usually played by old men on children or guileless strangers," *karume'.* In contrast, Tammu and van der Veen (1972:221) define the term *karume'* as a kind of riddle, enigma, or puzzle. In this instance, my field assistant used the expression *maningo-ningo bang* (just playing around), and alluded to the Toraja love for this kind of playful jesting.

21. Some report that *tongkonan*s can even "marry" in a ritual that entails mutual gifting between *tongkonan*s. The bond is considered eternal (see Kis-Jovak et al. 1988:36).

22. Results of a 1985 two-village survey I conducted with two Toraja field assistants in the Kesu' area indicate that aristocrats tend to count membership in more *tongkonan*s than do Torajas of lower rank. This is not surprising, given the financial costs involved in maintaining ritual ties to *tongkonan*s. Waterson makes similar observations for the Rembon area of Tana Toraja Regency. As she notes, "Whereas the aristocracy are able to trace back their genealogies many generations, maintaining links with distant houses of origin through participation in ceremonies, ordinary people are able to name at most only their great-grandparents and had not the means to indulge in an elaborate ceremonial life" (1981:31). In general, people make more efforts to preserve their affiliation with the more prestigious, glorious *tongkonan*s said to have been established by celestial ancestors.

23. The idea of the house as a specific form of social organization is not new. Levi-Strauss was an early proponent of this proposition, and it has subsequently captured the attention of many Austronesianists. For further explorations of this concept, see Levi-Strauss (1983, 1987); Waterson (1990, 1995); Fox (1987, 1993); Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995); and Erb (1999).

24. Also see Tangdilintin (1983:59).

25. Cf. Sandarupa (1998).

26. Some years after my initial fieldwork, the family moved to the Ke'te' Kesu' to be closer to the rest of the family.

27. See Kennedy (1953).

28. I later heard two conflicting stories about this. Mama Landang originally reported that one of her father's older brothers had argued that this was not a real *tongkonan* and that in the 1960s he rebuilt Tongkonan Rantepulung elsewhere, so now their house in Rantepao is just considered a single *tongkonan,* Tongkonan Pangalloan. Another version of the story holds that no one questioned the legitimacy of this hybrid *tongkonan;* the merging of the two *tongkonan*s was seen as a temporary measure and, when the climate became safer, it was agreed that it was time to return the two *tongkonan*s to their original separate states.

29. The *tongkonan* had been restored at least four times (with accompanying consecration rituals) and had burned down once.

30. His comments on the function of the ritual are noteworthy. The function of house consecration ritual, he said, is to "enable members of the family to know each other." Such rituals, he pointed out, are important places for mate-hunting. Young people attending the ritual are all kin: in discovering potential mates at such rituals, they can fulfill the Toraja ideal of "returning to the house" *(sule lako banua),* that is, marrying back into one's own *tongkonan,* thus bringing the splintered edges of the family back together.

31. This role, known as *to ma'nobo,* is reserved for a special person, determined by descent and religion (the person must be a practitioner of *aluk to dolo*). Nowadays, with the popularity of corrugated tin roofs in the place of layered bamboo, people are increasingly reluctant to take on this role, as these roofs are more slippery and dangerous. Many *to ma'nobo* simply run around the bottom of the house.

32. In 1984 and 1985 when I surveyed elementary, junior high, and high school students concerning their knowledge of the different carved motifs, few knew the names of more than one or two motifs. Several of the teachers who were present when I conducted these surveys subsequently chided their students for their lack of knowledge, instructing them to go back to their grandparents' villages on the weekends to learn more about their "carving heritage" or they would be put to shame by the anthropologists and tourists who knew more than they did. Ten years later, in the mid-1990s, schools had started incorporating into their curricula lessons on the most celebrated carved motifs. Many of the students and teachers I spoke with reported that such lessons were important, given the touristic context in which they were living. As one student confided, "Before I had lessons about the carvings, I'd feel stupid that I couldn't answer the tourists' questions about the carvings. Now I can tell them what I know."

33. In this way, we can see some Torajas using their carvings as an arena for renegotiating a variety of contemporary and historical hierarchical relationships.

34. See Hollan and Wellenkamp (1996).

35. It is significant that the taboos on the use of architectural carvings by nonnobles meant that slaves could not overtly carve out such scenes of resistance to external forces such as those described here. Only the aristocrats (via their hired carvers) could give full rein to the artistic rearticulation of their relationships with threatening members of external cultures. Even as these images surreptitiously opposed colonial and Muslim powers, the structures they embellished reinforced indigenous rank hierarchies. Here it is perhaps appropriate to underscore the observations of Foucault (1978:95–96) and Abu-Lughod (1990:42–43) concerning the complicated and often conflicting structures of power: rather than romanticizing resistance, it pays to recognize that where there is resistance there is also power.

36. Darul Islam roughly translates as "Abode of Islam," from the Arabic

dar-al-Islam. The Darul Islam movement in South Sulawesi lasted from 1952–1965, when Kahar Muzakkar, the leader of the Sulawesi rebellions, was shot by Republican forces.

37. Eric Crystal, personal communication, May 8, 1986.

38. Th. van den End, who has conducted extensive research on the history of the Toraja Church, notes that while some Dutch missionaries may have "grumbled about unsanitary houses," GZB missionaries never made efforts to remove Torajas from them. In fact, some of the missionaries even erected *tongkonan*-styled churches in the Toraja highlands (van den End, personal communication by email, June 22, 2005).

39. A photograph of this church, built in the 1920s, can be found in van den End (1995). In 1974 Toraja leaders had the church demolished and erected a larger concrete church in its place (personal communication by email, van den End, June 22, 2005).

40. I thank Peter van der Veen for pointing this out to me (personal communication by email, July 5, 2005).

41. Although published accounts by certain earlier writers such as Kadang (1960) and Pakan (1973) unintentionally foster the impression that the Toraja repertoire of carved motifs is finite and unchanging, there is, in fact, some degree of flexibility about what may be incorporated onto the face of a *tongkonan,* as these new motifs illustrate.

42. Possibly the families that replaced the rooster and sunburst motifs did so out of fear that they would be construed as pagan elements, given that, of all the prominently situated motifs, they are the least geometric.

43. When the Indonesian government reorganized political parties in 1973, the PDI replaced PARKINDO and several other such parties. In recent years, following the demise of Suharto's New Order, parties have been further reorganized.

44. See Acciaioli (1985) and Bruner (1979).

45. Keane's comment meshes with Rita Kipp's observation (1993) that the Indonesian cultural policy of encouraging ethnic pride serves to mask the imbalances of wealth and power in Indonesia, imbalances that pose a threat to national integration.

46. Significantly, these chips are not manufactured in Tana Toraja.

47. For more detailed discussions of this period, see Crystal (1970) and Volkman (1985).

CHAPTER 4: MORTUARY EFFIGIES AND IDENTITY POLITICS

1. Today this meadow has been filled in with several more enormous tombs, and the footpath has been paved in cement, as part of a late 1980s tourism development project.

2. Noting that doubling of a noun in Austronesian languages often conveys a diminutive sense, Karl Hutterer suggests that the term *tau-tau* may also

imply a sense of endearment or affection for the deceased individual it represents (personal communication, April 1987).

3. In some more distant areas of Toraja, such as the Saluputti district, commoners of means could have *tau-tau*s of kapok wood. However, they were barred from the jackfruit-wood effigies, which were strictly for those of higher social status.

4. Others report that the practice of carving *tau-tau*s began some fourteen generations ago.

5. Traditionally, the role of *tau-tau* carver was inherited. Young men learned their skills from their fathers or grandfathers. Furthermore, according to Koubi (1979:164), in the past *tau-tau* carvers tended to be of noble rank. Many contemporary *tau-tau* carvers, however, lament that their sons are not always interested in following suit, while others actively encourage their children to pursue other livelihoods, noting that the financial opportunities for *tau-tau* carvers are limited. Their replacements, therefore, tend to be recruited from local youths with some background in tourist carving and house carving.

6. My interviews with carvers as well as field observations suggest that most *tau-tau* carvers require four to six weeks to carve a *tau-tau.*

7. In 1985 that was 250,000 rupiah, or US $125. Another carver I knew told me he usually commanded the price of a "water buffalo with three-quarter-foot-long horns," approximately US $150 at the time.

8. An abridged version of this invocation is provided below. For the full translation and a detailed description of the rites associated with this invocation, see Koubi (1982).

> Oh! Spirit guardians of the West,
> Protective spirits of the setting sun,
>
> Beloved gods who guard the vast ricefields,
> For those gods,
> The jackfruit tree was felled with a single blow.
>
> That which was deeply rooted in the earth was swiftly felled
> So that a statue of jackfruit might be made.
>
> The sculptor has shaped this jackfruit effigy,
> He has given it a human form,
> He has created a human allure.
>
> But the effigy does not possess the breath of life,
> Its lungs are not filled with air,
> And its lips do not shape words that are audible and clear.

For this is the ritual model,
Linked to one who has met his destiny,

One who possessed the leaves of richness,
We follow, then,
The rules of those who embrace the branches of well-being.

9. In nearby Gowa, Rossler (1990:323) notes how authority is legitimated by sacred heirlooms. Also see Hitchcock (1996) and Barbier (2000).

10. Ne' Duma did not delineate the roles of these other two individuals, although others later told me that in former times one was a slave. For a comparative outline of this traditional funeral ritual procession in the Kesu' area, see Nooy-Palm's (1986:247–248) more richly detailed delineation.

11. This is a quote from a *ma'badong* song recorded by Nooy-Palm (1986:263).

12. Ne' Duma told me that the last time such a ritual had been held in Ke'te' Kesu' was when he was ten years old (he was seventy-three at the time of our interview in 1985), but he had traveled throughout Tana Toraja to witness *bua'* feasts in other villages. While in Tana Toraja, I attended only one *bua'* ritual (in an area neighboring the Kesu' district). For detailed descriptions of great *bua'* feasts from various districts within Tana Toraja, see Nooy-Palm (1986, Chap. II).

13. It should be noted that for Catholic Torajas, *tau-tau* usage does not constitute a problem because the Catholic Church has historically been more accepting of Toraja customs. However, Catholic missionaries did not arrive in the Toraja highlands until 1937, and Catholics today remain a minority in Tana Toraja, constituting approximately only 13.7 percent of the population. Significantly, according to church officials, the Catholic Church tended to draw commoners, whereas a larger proportion of the nobility embraced the Protestant Church.

14. The situation was reminiscent of the Javanese funeral described by C. Geertz (1973b).

15. Nooy-Palm (1986:170) reports a similar 1983 conflict between rich Toraja Christians and Toraja Church leaders. In this conflict the wealthy Torajas argued that their use of the effigy was not animistic, for they did not believe it housed a soul. Rather, they contended, they should be allowed to continue using the *tau-tau* as a status symbol. It was, they claimed, "the communists" who wished to eradicate this symbol. When I was in the field, I also heard similar claims made about lower-ranking people who attempted to abandon traditional practices that underscored rank hierarchies. As I was told by an aristocratic Toraja on one occasion, "Communists are against traditions; they want to destroy culture. This cannot be allowed." For a fuller discussion of these

strategies for eradicating challenges to the social hierarchy, see K. M. Adams (1997b).

16. A special traditional burial tomb or casket. The shape and sculpting of the lid often echoes the roof of a *tongkonan.*

17. While I heard of a few nonaristocratic Torajas who had *tau-tau*s commissioned for their funerals, as best I could ascertain, most of these individuals had marriage ties that enabled them to lay claims to a status befitting *tau-tau* usage. Though some local elites may have questioned such claims in hushed conversations with one another, the topic of rank and effigy-use rights was far too charged for me to be able to pursue the subject with the families that had commissioned the effigies.

18. For a rich analysis of tourists' pursuit of "real" souvenirs of their travels and the ambivalences conjured up by fakes, see Causey (2003).

19. See Crystal (1994) for a complementary discussion.

20. Indonesia's famed Buddhist monument, Borobudur, was bombed by Muslim militants in January 1985. The bomb destroyed a portion of the monument's upper terraces. According to Pinault (2003), who interviewed Javanese about the incident, the bombing was in defiance of the national government. The portrait painted by the interviewees suggested that, for the Muslim militants involved in the bombing, Borobudur was a "pagan site." The government's renovations of this site (largely for tourism) were perceived as emblematic of the nation's refusal to embrace Islamic law for its populace. Hence, Borobudur was selected as a target.

21. Many of the villagers whose ancestral *tau-tau* were replaced by the government with these sorts of roughly hewn "fake" effigies were far from pleased. As they pointed out, these effigies could never be considered true replacements. However, as my Toraja brother Solle' summed up, "What do you say to the government? At least it is better than just having empty cliffs." However, at the much-visited tourist grave site of Lemo, the government's tourist-oriented effigy installations were not the only problem. Tourism had prompted advertisers to target their burial cliffs, often with controversial props. On one occasion in 1989 a team of Australian photographers arrived at Lemo to photograph a magazine advertisement for Garuda Airlines (Indonesia's national airline). Via the national government's Office of Tourism they had sent $75 to the village to cover the cost of a sacrificial pig, which they had assumed would allow them to photograph the installation of two effigies they had purchased at a Rantepao art shop. I accompanied them on their initial drive to the Lemo cliffs: their minivan was crammed with camera bags and a fog-making machine. The people at Lemo, however, were in serious disagreement about whether this team of outsiders could be allowed to put their own effigies into these cliffside graves, and the photographers were sent back to their hotel without having taken a single shot. Eventually the photographers prevailed, however, and magazines across the archipelago carried a Garuda

Airlines advertisement featuring an effigy-bearing villager scaling the misty Lemo burial cliffs.

22. *Ma'nene'* rituals vary from region to region within Tana Toraja. For an insightful discussion of *ma'nene'* and a description and interpretation of one *ma'nene'* ritual conducted in a northwestern village in Tana Toraja in the 1980s, see Coville (2002).

23. For a cogent discussion of the appeal of "primitive art" to Western collectors, see Price (1989). Halle (1993) also offers a useful analysis of class and ethnic themes in the collection and display of tribal art in American homes. Finally, for a discussion of the repatriation of exotic culture to home use, see di Leonardo (1998).

24. Indonesian government laws decree that objects more than fifty years old be banned from export, unless they have been evaluated for their cultural and historical criticality (see Directorat Perlindungan dan Pembinaan Peninggalan Sejarah dan Purbakaal 1993).

25. For a discussion of parallel trends elsewhere in Indonesia, see Taylor (1994).

26. Save for close relations of the deceased, most Toraja attend such funerals for just a few days, sometimes coming and going between their own homes. Most package tourists generally visit funerals for only a few hours as part of a day's tour and are bussed back to their hotels in town to eat and sleep.

27. Not only do Torajas pride themselves as welcoming hosts, but the more guests attend a funeral, the more prestige is amassed by the family sponsoring the ritual. Hence, tourists are generally welcomed at Toraja funerals, although their unfamiliarity with Toraja etiquette has prompted some frustrations, as noted elsewhere.

CHAPTER 5: CEREMONIALS, MONUMENTAL DISPLAYS, AND MUSEUMIFICATION

1. See Handler (1988); Bhabha (1990); R. G. Fox (1990); and Foster (1995).

2. Toraja hands both literally and figuratively played a role in the short, as it was hailed by Torajas as having been "made by a Toraja." Whether or not Torajas actually served in a leadership capacity in the film is unimportant; what is significant is that Torajas perceived it as a Toraja production.

3. While Armstrong (1971) originally used this expression to discuss art, it is equally applicable to cultural displays.

4. In addition, Acciaioli notes that Indonesian nation-building entails a process of de*doxa*fication of local peoples' traditions. See Bordieu (1977:164), cited in Acciaioli (1979:152) for a discussion of *doxa.*

5. Also see K. M. Adams (1984, 1990,1993, 1995); Crystal (1977, 1994); Volkman (1984, 1990).

6. Other studies that have explored these sorts of dynamics elsewhere

include White (1995) and Yoneyama (1995). White has addressed these themes at the transnational level in the Pacific. Yoneyama's work has focused on the politics of ethnicity at the Hiroshima Korean atom bomb memorial.

7. See Panitia Peringatan Wafatnja Pahlawan Pongtiku (1968); and Tangdilintin (1976).

8. Bigalke cautions us that although today's history has celebrated the resistance of Pong Tiku and two other Toraja big men (Bombing and Ua Situru), the dominant response of highland leaders was not to resist the Dutch colonial forces. He suggests that the heightened importance today of Pong Tiku and others is because their stories "served the uses of a rising Christian elite beginning in the 1930s, the Japanese during the occupation of 1942–1945 and Indonesian nationalist historians up to the present" (1981:114). In a similar vein, Janet Hoskins (1987a) has also explored some of the reinterpretation inherent in the Indonesian appropriation of local figures as national heroes. Her discussion focuses on a Sumbanese headhunter who was given the title of national hero because he raided Dutch colonialists at the turn of the twentieth century. Hoskins shows how this rebel has not only been made into a symbol of an entire nation's resistance, but has "been used as a tool of a new kind of ideological control: the integration of distant regions into the nation state through assertions of a shared past" (1987a: 619). Given Hoskins's observations and Bigalke's cautions, Pong Tiku's elevation to "national hero" may well be seen as having similar political implications.

9. Several researchers attending Independence Day celebrations in other outer island locales confirmed that these ceremonies in places like Medan, Samosir Island, and Makassar much resembled what I witnessed in Tana Toraja (personal communication, Andrew Causey, Aug. 1995; personal communication, Andrew Sutton, Aug. 1995). For a discussion of the polysemic aspects of the dance component of the 1995 Indonesian Independence Ceremony in Makassar (then known as Ujung Pandang), see Sutton (2002).

10. My experience at the state-sponsored commemoration events was evocative of LiPuma and Meltzoff's (1990:90) comments about independence celebrations on the Solomon Islands. As LiPuma and Meltzoff note, in the Solomons "the production of public culture and a unified national voice, in contrast to the numerous separate cultures and multiplicity of voices that characterized traditional Solomons, involves not only unification but the simultaneous transcendence and reconstruction of the past. So an implicit leitmotif of the celebration was the preservation of indigenous customs by creating a special time and space (i.e., ritual ceremonies) where they may be displayed. The contextualization of cultural production on one level, in concert with its decontextualized presentation on another . . . is both a celebration of local cultures and recognition that they have been replaced and redefined by civilization" (1990:90).

11. The *bupati* originated from Sinjai, a Muslim-dominated region of South Sulawesi with a long history of ambivalent relations with Toraja highlanders.

12. As Bigalke notes (1981:28), although *tondok* "roughly translates 'village,' [it] is closer to the Indonesian diminutive 'kampung' or 'hamlet.'" Bigalke further observes that in precolonial times, "Torajans had a concept of territorial organization implicit in the idea of *tondok. . . .*" Tammu and van der Veen's (1972:656) dictionary translates *tondok* as village, area, or country (*negeri,* BI).

13. See J. Errington (1994) for a similar case of localizing the state via official public use of local speech on Java.

14. Several individuals directed me to the signposts spelling out the acronym in front of government offices. According to these signs, BANGKIT stands for:

B = *Budaya Lestari* (everlasting culture)
A = *Asri Bersih* (cleanliness)
N = *Nyaman Segar* (healthy freshness)
G = *Gerakan Bersih Sehat* (clean, healthy movement)
K = *Keterpaduan Kebersamaan Kekeluargaan* (family unity and togetherness)
I = *Inovatif Kreatif* (innovative creative)
T = *Tenteram Tertib* (peaceful orderly)

15. These arches are annually repainted and updated with the current year.

16. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the title of this volume helped to propagate a series of ideas about Toraja identity and the pristine quality of Toraja culture.

17. For analyses of physical memorials that act in similar fashions, see White (1997) and Connerton (1989).

18. Also see David Lowenthal (1985), who has made similar observations.

19. See White's (1997) related discussion of the blurred lines of distinction between memorials and museums.

20. This is the same fort mentioned in Chapter One.

21. See Taylor (1995:116). Also see Adams (1999) for a discussion of the often unexpected ways in which the nation-building agendas play out in the galleries of Indonesia's museums. Finally, the essays in Kaplan (1994) and Steiner (1995) offer further comparative explorations of the role of museums in cementing national identity.

22. For a fascinating exploration of Indonesian conceptions of the role of provincial museums, see Kreps (1994, 1996).

23. This seemingly semiconscious transformation of a place of Makassarese resistance into a sacred site embodying the (presumably unified) greatness

and pride of all South Sulawesi peoples aptly exemplifies Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) classic ideas about the "invention of tradition."

24. I have termed such houses "Bugis-styled" elsewhere in this book, as in Tana Toraja these houses are associated with lowland Muslim groups such as the Bugis and many Torajas use this expression to refer to them.

25. Stanislaus Sandarupa (personal communication, May 28, 1994). It is noteworthy that although the park showcases the different cultural traditions of South Sulawesi, in the name of the park, "culture" is singular and not plural.

26. Robinson (1993:230). For a fuller discussion of the establishment of this park, see Sutton (2002).

27. A number of Makassar Torajas worked as consultants on the Toraja section of the park. Moreover, a ritual specialist from the highlands officiated at the consecration of the park's *tongkonan* (Stanislaus Sandarupa, personal communication, May 28, 1994).

28. This is the same type of ritual staged for the new-genre *tongkonan* described in Chapter Three.

29. For a fuller discussion of the opening Culture Week festivities at Miniature Sulawesi Park, see Sutton (2002).

30. Anon (1991:10).

31. This name has not been changed, as it is inseparable from the museum and its history.

32. Such heirloom objects, known as *pusaka* in Indonesia, are both prestige items underscoring family status and ceremonial objects used in traditional religious rites. Families throughout Indonesia have long collected and safeguarded their *pusaka,* carefully storing and protecting them when they are not in ritual use. As Christina Kreps (1997, 2003, in press) has argued, such practices should be recognized as forms of indigenous curation. In creating a museum to house their *pusaka,* this aristocratic Toraja family was, in effect, fitting their own cultural traditions into the rubric of modern museum culture.

33. Her name has not been changed, as it is inseparable from the museum and its history.

34. In a Christianized version of the house consecration ritual described in Chapter Three.

35. Boyarin, for instance, notes that focusing on embodied memories promises to reveal "some of the hidden ways in which states appeal to organic experience and common sense dimensionality to legitimate themselves" (1994: 25). Likewise, in an article on spirit possession, Stoller (1994) proposes that we delve further into the relationship between the sentient body in possession and cultural memory, and the political power that devolves from embodiment. Stoller eloquently argues that by "considering spirit possession sensuously as embodied practice . . . we are likely to sense it as a phenomenological arena

in which cultural memory is fashioned to produce and reproduce power" (ibid.:637).

CHAPTER 6: TORAJA ICONS ON THE NATIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL STAGE

1. I believe he was referring to the fact that when gifts of water buffaloes are offered and accepted at funeral rituals, this constitutes a public testimony of a kinship connection.

2. Both these areas are renowned in Indonesia as centers for skillfully executed three-dimensional carvings.

3. Megawati Sukarnoputri went on to become the fifth president of Indonesia, assuming office in 2001.

4. For a discussion of the platform house as an expression of a regional South Sulawesi identity (one that excludes the Toraja), see Robinson (1993).

5. Homi Bhabha's writings also discuss hybridity, although his emphasis is on hybrid identities rather than art forms. His work underscores how hybridity is an area of tension produced by splits between two cultures in colonial contexts, as well as "the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities" (1994:112).

6. This process is also an apt example of "glocalization," pioneered by Robertson (1995), among others. Robertson draws the term from Japanese business practice, where it is used to refer to the production of products for specific markets. In social science parlance, there are varied meanings, although for many it has come to refer to the process through which local communities forge cultural and economic translocal linkages to the global system (through the World Wide Web, the Internet, and other informal means). Wayne Gabardi has described the process of glocalization as "representing a shift from a more territorialized learning process bound up with the nation-state society to one more fluid and translocal. Culture has become much more mobile, human software employed to mix elements from diverse contexts . . . [C]ultural forms and practices [are] more separate from geographic, institutional, and ascriptive embeddedness" (2000:33–34). Likewise, a number of anthropologists have embraced this concept in their analyses of tourism dynamics (cf. Raz 1999; Ness 2003).

7. For a fascinating chronicling of a similar process in Mexico, see Chibnik (2003). Chibnik's book details the origins of the colorful Oaxacan carved wood figures, chronicling how this distinctive folk art is not actually a Zapotec Indian product (despite claims that it is), but rather was invented by non-Indian Mexican artisans for the tourist market. Likewise, Cohen (1993) has chronicled how Dan Kwien tourist pottery in Thailand was not only initiated by outsiders, but also how outsiders were the "principal initiators of innovation and diversification" (1993:138). In Indonesia, Causey (1999) chronicles

how a Batak carver invented a new-genre tourist carving drawn directly from a classic Balinese tourist art form. With great insight his article highlights the role of foreign tourists' presumptions about what "primitive art" should look like in cementing such borrowings.

8. In a related vein, paralleling the tourist processes I have outlined here, Thomas notes the paradoxical effects when a colonial government embraces indigenous cultural reference points, noting that "while indigenous people's claims to the land are being denied or forgotten, elements of their culture are being prominently displayed and affirmed. The 'native' status of the new settler nation is proclaimed in a fashion that perforce draws attention to real natives who are excluded" (1999:12).

9. This cover image was one of the only images in the booklet that was not a map.

10. Nelson Graburn's pioneering book *Ethnic and Tourist Arts* offers numerous examples of cases where the objects of one group have been so effectively appropriated that they become "part of the public identity of the borrowing group" (1976:28).

11. This prize-winning entry was a favorite topic of discussion in Tana Toraja Regency. Eventually, the local government erected a cement statue of the float in the main square of Makale (the capital of Tana Toraja Regency). On my 1997 visit, Toraja friends proudly took me on a detour so that I could admire the statue.

12. In the 1990s the *tongkonan* image was replaced with images of Danau Kelimutu (a three-colored set of crater lakes on Flores) and the Rotinese traditional musical instrument known as the *sasando.*

13. For a discussion of the role of cyber communication in articulating and negotiating group identity, see Hill and Wilson (2002:3–4). While it is beyond the scope of this book to analyze Torajaonline.com in these terms, for an example of an ethnographic analysis of how one Southeast Asian diasporic group has used the Net to explore and articulate identity issues, see Ignacio (2005).

14. http://nonongan.8m.com/index.html, accessed July 1, 2005.

15. A type of popular Indonesian music.

CHAPTER 7: IMAGES OF PEACEMAKING

1. They were described in this way by a number of my Toraja acquaintances. Several said that the age of the men and their "sturdy shoes" suggested that they were outsiders, possibly military, as most Toraja villagers tend to wear flip-flops, even in Rantepao.

2. See, for example, Barber (1996).

3. As Sidel and others have noted, the historic pattern begun with the Dutch practice of "segregating and stigmatizing" Chinese immigrants, ultimately resulting in the creation of a business class that was dominated by peo-

ple of Chinese descent, people perceived as "problematically" foreign (Sidel 2001:51). As a result of this process, the Chinese minority gained early exposure to the cash economy. Sidel also recounts how early Portuguese and subsequent Dutch activities throughout the archipelago produced "sizeable pockets" of Protestants and Catholics, who gained early access to Western education and served in the colonial army and other arms of the state bureaucracy. By the beginning of the twentieth century these colonially produced Christians, along with the ethnic Chinese were "conspicuously overrepresented in the ranks of the small but growing urban middle class of traders, professionals, and civil servants" (ibid.: 53–54). This pattern continued under the Suharto regime in the mid-to-late 1960s. Suharto's religious policies and anti-PKI (anticommunist/anti-"atheist") activities stimulated a strengthening of religious identities, not only cementing religious boundaries but transforming religion into a more public identity. As Indonesia's education system expanded dramatically from the 1970s to the 1990s, more "aspiring urban-middle class Moslems" graduated and established themselves in politics and business and the public terrain became much more Islamicized (ibid.:55). By the 1990s, when unemployment rates soared for educated yet unemployed or underemployed urban Muslims, the grand Christian Churches and Chinese-run businesses became visible reminders of unrealized dreams (ibid.: 55–56). These observations highlight how colonialism's legacy set the stage for the current religious and class tensions in Indonesia that have resulted in the violence so often assumed to be endemic to the country or to specific cultural groups (also see Wessel 2001).

4. Bubandt engages in what he calls an "epidemiology of violence," examining how media reports and rumors trigger more violence. Interestingly, in this chapter's opening Toraja vignette, the media reports and rumors fostered a readiness of response and enabled swift action that resulted in the avoidance of violence. For insightful "epidemiologies of violence" along the lines suggested by Bubandt, see Aragon (2001, 2001).

5. For a microlevel analysis of this sort in the nearby Sulawesi region of Pitu Ulunna Salu, see George (1996).

6. Particularly Catholic churches, as the Catholic faith was traditionally more accepting of indigenous themes.

7. There seems to be a longer history of decorating burial sites with Christianized Toraja motifs. For instance, the doors of a number of older cliffside tombs as well as the doors of some of the newer cement mausoleums are embellished with Toraja-styled carved Christian crosses.

8. Sidel (2001:55).

9. Waterson (1988:50) observed that in western Sa'dan Toraja, mortuary chants for Toraja elites sometimes used the expression *"barana' lan tondok"* (the hamlet banyan tree) to describe the deceased, an allusion to that individual's leadership and protective qualities.

10. See Nooy-Palm (1975b).

11. This pair of animals could traditionally adorn only those *tongkonan* that had held the highest-level rituals The *katik* was traditionally affixed to the facade of a house after it had hosted the *bua' kasalle* ritual, considered the highest-level "smoke-rising" (or life-oriented) ritual. The *kabonga* (a three-dimensional buffalo head) was attached to a *tongkonan* only after it had hosted the highest-level smoke-descending (or death-oriented) ritual. Today, however, these symbols are increasingly found on *tongkonan* that have never hosted these rituals. For instance, a little over a decade ago, the Toraja Church in Rantepao erected a *tongkonan* on their grounds; this *tongkonan* prominently displays these symbols, even though their original association is with *aluk to dolo* rituals that have never and will never be celebrated in this Protestant building.

12. A number of Kesu'-area carvers told me that the rooster motif *(pa' manuk londong)* alludes to the rooster's role as a mediator between the Heavens and Earth. And roosters are also used in cockfights to settle disputes.

13. Ambe' Landang's phrasing here is evocative of an episode in the Toraja epic tale of the mythic ancestor, Lakipadada. In this episode Lakipadada wishes to ford a river in which there is a crocodile. He offers a *tedong bulan* (a white albino-like water buffalo) to the crocodile instead of himself, so he can cross safely. Today, Torajas claim that, in recognition of this debt to the albino water buffalo, they will not sacrifice them at funeral rituals.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS

1. The politics of World Heritage Site nomination are worthy of further scholarly investigation. As of December 2000, there were 630 sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List. These are comprised of 480 cultural sites, 128 natural sites, and 22 mixed sites. The hamlet of Ke'te' Kesu' was nominated for inclusion on UNESCO's list as a "living cultural landscape" or *mixed site* (composed of natural and cultural features). As some Asian observers have noted, Asian sites are underrepresented on the list, which has 283 sites in Europe, 116 in the Americas, 70 in Arab Africa, and 124 in the combined Asia-Pacific region (Villalon 2001:1). Calling for "brotherhood despite diversity," some Southeast Asian cultural observers have urged that Southeast Asia not carry out its nomination of cultural heritage sites in isolation, but rather that Southeast Asian sites should be proposed strategically, with an emphasis on selecting sites that "identify the common cultural threat uniting Asians despite their differences" (ibid.: 2).

2. Bruner's (2001) observation that tourism has revived the major binary oppositions (such as "traditional-modern") long since discarded by anthropology appears apt for such UNESCO World Heritage projects as well.

GLOSSARY OF FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

All words are in the Sa'dan (Tae') Toraja language unless marked BI (Bahasa Indonesia or Indonesian language)

adat (BI) traditional practice, law, and values.

adi younger sibling.

alang rice barn. An elevated shed for storing rice before winnowing or husking. The lower open-air portion of the *alang* has a raised platform for sitting and entertaining household and ritual guests.

aluk to dolo lit. "the way of the ancestors." A general gloss for Sa'dan Toraja traditional religion, traditional practices, and customary law (ancestral precepts and regulations).

ambe' lit. "father." Torajas practice teknonymy, generally addressing adult males Ambe' X (father of X).

ampang bilik a wooden plank resembling a gate that is carved with anthropomorphic and geometric motifs. This piece of material culture plays a role in *aluk to dolo bua'* rituals. Traditionally, it could be found housed in a prestigious *tongkonan* that had celebrated this ritual. Today, due to the dominance of Christianity, *ampang bilik*s are rare. Their imagery persists, however, in tourist carvings.

anak buah adopted child, assistant, apprentice.

a'riri posi' the large central "navel" post of a *tongkonan.*

baju pokko a traditional tightly fitted shirt worn by Toraja women.

bangkit (BI) rise up, resurrect.

banua a house. Also used to refer to a *tongkonan* that is being fêted, as in *mangrara banua.*

bapak (BI) father.

basa to mina the high form of Toraja speech used by priests of traditional Toraja religion *(aluk to dolo)* in conducting rituals.

bate manurun ladder-like sacred objects constructed of bamboo and cloth banners that are erected during great *maro* rituals, which were traditionally held to restore order following a disturbance.

batitong part-human, part-spirit being that is greatly feared. These creatures are known to consume small livestock and devour the livers of those humans who encounter them.

bemo	a minivan that serves as public transport.
camat	(BI) head of a district *(kecamatan)* of a regency. Each Indonesian regency is comprised of several districts.
deata	a supernatural god or spirit being.
dulang	a traditional Toraja bowl sculpted from wood. *Dulang*s sculpted with pedestals were traditionally used to serve the elite, especially in the context of rituals.
erong	a carved wooden burial casket or tomb, often with a lid shaped to resemble a *tongkonan.*
guide liar	(BI) literally, "wild guide." A common expression for unlicensed local guides.
hamba	(BI) slave.
indo'	lit. "mother." Also commonly used as a term of address, as Torajas practice teknonymy. Adult women are generally referred to as Indo' X (mother of X). For the ritual meanings and symbolism of this expression, see Coville (2003:92–93).
kabupaten	(BI) Indonesian administrative district, often translated as "regency." Each Indonesian province is divided into a number of *kabupaten,* which are roughly equivalent to "counties" in the United States.
kaka	older sibling.
kandaure	a conically shaped, fringed decoration made of intricately braided antique beads. These beaded objects are displayed at rituals and worn draped over the shoulders of female dancers.
kebudayaan	(BI) culture.
kerajinan tangan	(BI) handicrafts.
keris	(BI) kris. A Malaysian or Indonesian dagger with a serpentine blade.
kesenian	(BI) art.
langi	heaven, sky.
lembang	lit. "prau." Territories comprised of various *bua'* communities.
liang	rock graves.
lino	Earth. The realm of humans.
londong	lit. "rooster," "cock." A poetic expression for "men."
losmen	(BI) small inn, tourist hotel, or home stay.
lukisan	(BI) painting.
ma'badong	an elegiac chant for the deceased, accompanied by an undulating, locked-arm dance.

ma'gellu	a type of traditional dance performed at Toraja rituals.
mangrara banua or *mangrara tongkonan*	*tongkonan* consecration ritual.
merantau	(BI) to leave one's home temporarily to seek fortune, schooling, and/or prestige in new locales.
nakal	(BI) naughty, delinquent.
nangka	(BI) jackfruit. The wood from this tree is used for sculpting funerary effigies.
ne'	lit. "grandfather." Also a common term of address for a male of grandfatherly age, Ne' X (grandfather of X).
nene'	ancestor, grandparent.
pejuang	(BI) hero.
pa' barana'	a carved motif depicting the banyan tree or banyan tree leaves.
pa' barre allo	a carved sunburst motif commonly found near the pinnacle of *tongkonan* and rice-barn facades (see Pakan 1973).
pa' daun bolu	a carved pattern depicting betel leaves.
pa' doti	a carved cross motif.
pa' manuk	a carved rooster motif.
pa' tedong	a carved motif of a water buffalo head.
Passomba Tedong	the Water Buffalo Litany, a traditional rite associated with *tongkonan* consecration rituals.
pembantu	(BI) literally, "helper" or "assistant." Also a term for servant.
pici	(BI) skull cap worn by men and generally associated with the Muslim faith.
puang	a high aristocratic title in Tana Toraja, roughly akin to "prince" or "king." Only three realms in the southern portion of Tana Toraja Regency use this designation (Sangalla', Makale, and Mengkendek). The title is given to those considered of celestial origin, of "royal" blood. With the adoption of Christianity, the term Puang Matua (the Old Lord/God) is used for "god" in the Toraja-language Bible.
pusaka	(BI) heirloom.
ramai	(BI) lively, crowded, boisterous.
rante	a clearing or open area where rituals are carried out.
rapuan	the kin group associated with a *tongkonan.*
remaja nakal	(BI) "naughty" or delinquent youth.

rombongan entourage (especially used to refer to groups making a formal entrance at a ritual).

rupiah (BI) Indonesian currency.

sarita long ancestral textiles printed with wax resist motifs resembling those carved on *tongkonan*s and graves. These textiles are used decoratively at rituals.

sarong (BI) a traditional Indonesian article of clothing consisting of a long rectangle of cloth (often sewn into a tube) worn by men and women. Usually, *sarong*s are used to cover the bottom half of the body. However, men in Tana Toraja often hike them up over their shoulders to keep warm on brisk evenings.

saudara brother/sister/sibling. Also used as a term of address for someone of the same generation.

sura' carvings.

tau-tau carved, wooden mortuary effigy.

tabang cordyline plant. This red-streaked leafy plant is frequently used in Toraja traditional rites.

tedong water buffalo.

tedong pasilaga water buffalo fight.

tetangga (BI) neighbor.

to person, people. Generally this term is followed by a descriptive noun: *to Amerika*—American; *to Balanda*—Dutch person; *to biasa*—ordinary person; *to buda*—"commoner"; *to kapua'*—big person, powerful person; *to kaunan*—bonded person, "slave" (in keeping with prior translations of this term by Nooy-Palm, et al. [1979:44]); *to minaa*—a category of traditional *aluk to dolo* priest, also used as a general term for priesthood and priests; *to parengngne'*—a) a formal ritual office associated with titled *tongkonan*s. This office holder is responsible for the rites and ceremonies celebrated by the titled *tongkonan* with which the office is associated. Some suggest that the term *parengnge'* alludes to a rank or class of important people, the nobility (Matandung 1973:26–34); others claim it is simply a title. What is clear is that this office can only be held by elites. b) a district chief or head under the colonial administration.

tokoh adat (BI) traditional leader, important local personage.

tongkonan Sa'dan Toraja ancestral home and orienting symbol of kinship groups. These houses are constructed of wood

with sweeping arched roofs of layered bamboo or corrugated tin. Some *tongkonan*s are elaborately carved with predominantly geometric motifs, the amount of carved embellishment depending on the rank for the kin group associated with the traditional home. Today, for many people, the *tongkonan* has become a key symbol of Sa'dan Toraja ethnicity.

ukiran (BI) carving.

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