



The Local Elite and the Appropriation of Modernity

A Case in East Sumba, Indonesia

This study aims at understanding the dynamics of state formation and the interaction between national states and local communities by focusing upon the agents involved in that interaction. While most studies in this field analyse the role of government bureaucracies and national policies, this book focuses on the role local communities, and in particular their protagonists, the local elite, play in this setting. For many years, it was thought that modern states, and in particular the post-colonial states, were strong enough to eradicate the political and cultural autonomy of small, often called “traditional”, communities within their national boundaries. Recent history, however, has taught us that many of these communities show a remarkable resilience against outside interference and pressures to relinquish their autonomy, not necessarily through outright opposition to the state, but ever so often through cleverly manipulating personal relationships with government officials at the regional and local levels. In some cases, modern nation-states have reinforced, rather than weakened, “traditional” local power structures as local power-holders were able to find a *modus vivendi* with regional state bureaucracies, as well as with other “modern” institutions and ideologies that arrived in the local communities in the course of time.

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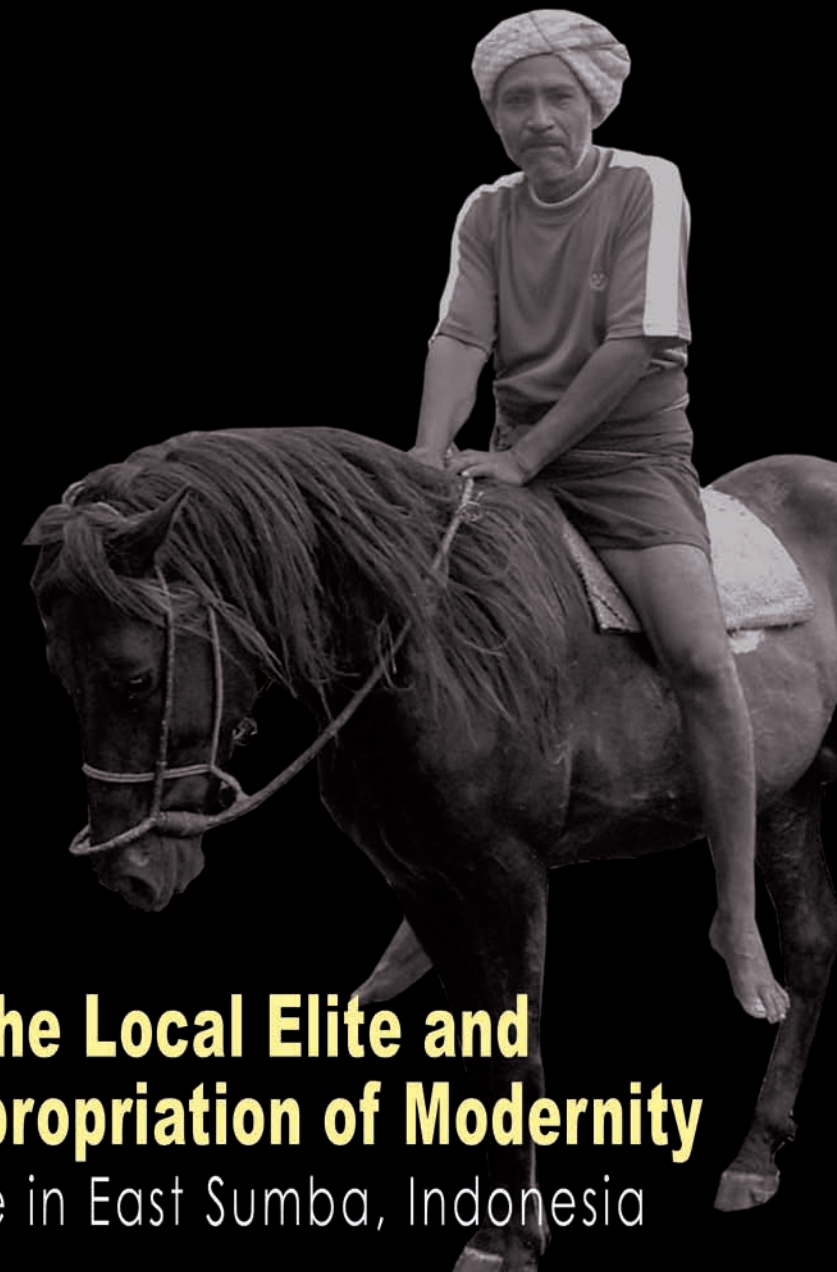


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Y. Argo Twikromo

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PREFACE

As a student from Java, I wanted to conduct research outside Java, specifically eastern Indonesia, and to focus my study on local elite strategies in the links between the local community and government policy. Upon reviewing the existing studies in the field, I decided to base my research on a village community located in the central sub-district in East Sumba.

When I first visited Kamutuk (pseudonym) in January 2002 to conduct preliminary fieldwork, government officials and adat leaders asked me, "Why did you choose Kamutuk for your study? Why did you not choose Prailiu, Umalulu, Rindi, Nggongi, Paraingu¹ Kareha, or Kapundu? If you want to study Sumbanese adat then you should choose one of these regions for your study. Kamutuk is not a representative area for studying Sumbanese adat." My study, however, did not focus on Sumbanese adat. It required a region that was relatively removed from centres of both "traditional" and "modern" power. Kamutuk is not located in the regions considered to be the centres of "traditional" power in Sumba, and it is about 106 km east of Waingapu, or far from the centre of "modern" government.

During my first visit to the easternmost tip of Sumba, I was surprised to see the presence of sophisticated technology, including satellite dishes to receive television broadcasts from Jakarta. I had imagined that this modern technology was present only in the district

¹ Paraingu is traditional settlement or kampong.

capital, Waingapu, and did not reach Kamutuk, my research area. It is, perhaps, common for those residing close to the central government on Java to construct an image of distant regions that have never been touched by sophisticated technology and to frame their "stories of traditional life on distant islands".

I stayed in the house of the former village head of Kamutuk, who still played an influential role in the community. I was invited to live in his house during my initial visit to the village. A sub-district level government official supported this invitation, as did several neighbours, because he was considered the "proper patron" for my fieldwork. I did not have any other choice at that time except to accept his invitation.

I clearly benefited from living in the house of an influential local leader in a region I had never previously visited. I was received as a "guest" and, later, accepted as a classificatory "son." This position facilitated my approach to other local leaders and opened opportunities for observation in my early fieldwork. However, it also represented a constraint on my activities as a researcher. For approximately two months, I was constantly accompanied by a grandchild or one of the ata ("slaves") of my host. My position as a classificatory "son" not only identified me as a member of the noble class, but also a member of the clan of my host. In my early fieldwork, this position created a barrier for building relationships with other social groups. This was just one of the problems I encountered during my research.

This story from my early fieldwork touches on only a brief portion of the long journey of my research. Step-by-step, each layer of the process unfolded, revealed itself, was addressed, and followed by another layer. I was entirely consumed with my research in Kamutuk over the period of one year. During this time, I met with the villagers, participated in their lives, and learned many new things. At times I was discouraged and at times, exhausted, but I was committed to complete this challenging intellectual, physical, and emotional journey.

Many people have supported me in this process. My deepest honor, respect and gratitude are for Frans Hüsken, PM Laksono, and Jacqueline Vel. You have patiently coached me, examined my drafts carefully, helped to formulate questions and focus on ideas. You motivated me

when I was discouraged and encouraged me to concentrate on the tasks at hand. Your surprise messages always succeeded in inspiring me to finish this dissertation. Thank you for everything.

To the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (NWO-WOTRO), thank you for funding this project with a scholarship. I am also grateful to Atma Jaya University, Yogyakarta, for granting a leave of absence and allowing me to study in Nijmegen.

I will never forget the kindness and generosity of my friends in Nijmegen and Amsterdam – Pujo Semedi, Made Kutanegara and Erwan. Their friendship and support sustained me during the time away from home and family. My heartfelt thanks to you.

My friends and colleagues in the charming city of Nijmegen generously gave of their time to contribute critical comments on earlier drafts this paper. For their friendship and insightful comments, I thank Sukamdi, Iqbal Djajadi, Agus Indiyanto, Gerben, and Edwin. Thank you, also, to Mevrouw Ricky Breedveld for administrative support during my stay in Nijmegen, and to Mas Dion and his family, Gus, Dick, Sonya, Betty, Reinallda, Monica and her family for their camaraderie.

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Finally, my family. To Christina Sri Wardani, my lovely wife and my ‘hero’: Life with you and our four children, in sad times and happy moments, is perfection. To my beloved children – Daniel Lintang Adhi Argoputra, Christopher Wintang Aji Argoputra, Hugo Candraditya Adrindranaya and Gisela Malya Asoka Anindita – words cannot describe

the depth of my love for each of you. To my father, A. Pandoyo, and the Suhardi family, thank you for understanding me and praying for me.

I also dedicate this work to my beloved brother, Lambang Babar Purnomo (12 August 1951 - 9 February 2008), an archaeologist-cum-civil servant. His official duty of re-inventorying archaeological objects in connection with a case of stealing and forgery of some items of the collection of Radya Pustaka Museum in Solo (Indonesia) brought him to the position of an expert witness and has, tragically, led to a death remaining mysterious till now. I mourned his death but am also respectfully proud of his dedication, bravery and sacrifice that will stay inspirational to me throughout my life.

I present this dissertation to the field of anthropological studies. I hope this puzzle I have presented can be accepted as a small contribution to the broader field of knowledge.

LOCAL COMMUNITY AND THE STATE

During my first visit to Kamutuk I inadvertently witnessed a dispute between the sub-district head (camat) and the village chief (lurah) of Kamutuk¹ about official discipline. This incident highlighted the interplay between the villagers, community leaders, and local government officials in the Pahunga Lodu sub-district,² East Sumba.³ Both disputants were from Mangili⁴. The cause of the dispute was the late arrival (about ten minutes) of the village chief to an official Monday morning flag-raising ceremony. The angry sub-district ordered the late arrivals to hold their own official ceremony. The village chief was offended and ashamed by this order and, disobeying the sub-district head, he immediately returned home. He felt that the sub-district head, as a Sumbanese, should display proper respect (patembi) to their fellow Sumbanese to maintain unity and prestige amongst themselves.

¹ Based on the decree issued by the Governor of East Nusa Tenggara, Number 20, 1994, concerning the Ratification of the Formation of Kalurahan in the Province of East Nusa Tenggara, the village (desa) of Kamutuk became the kalurahan of Kamutuk for official administrative purposes. This change, however, was effective for only eight years, as in May 2002, the kalurahan was returned to desa status again.

² Pahunga Lodu means tempat matahari terbit (the place where the sun rises). The Pahunga Lodu sub-district is located on the easternmost tip of Sumba, which is where the sunrise can be witnessed.

³ Sumba is one of the Lesser Sunda Islands. This island is also called Pulau Cendana, or Sandalwood Island, and belongs to the southern group of the Lesser Sunda Isles (Sumba, Savu, Roti, and Timor). The capital city of the East Sumba regency is Waingapu.

⁴ The Mangili region is located on the easternmost tip of Sumba. Based on the decree issued by the Governor of East Nusa Tenggara, Number 66/1/33, dated 5 June 1962, the swaprja (autonomous area) of Rindi-Mangili became the sub-district (kecamatan) of Pahunga Lodu for official administrative purposes.

I expected that this case of disobeying government regulations and orders would be addressed through official channels and that the village chief would be official sanctioned. However, in contrast to my expectations, the village chief demanded that this case be addressed not only through official channels, but also in accordance with the tradition (adat).⁵

Keebet von Benda-Beckmann's idea of "forum shopping" may help us to understand the village chief's request. Disputants have a choice between the different forums they reside and operate in, and they base their choice of venue for resolution of the conflict on what they hope the outcome will be, however vague or ill founded their expectations may be (see von Benda-Beckmann, 1984: 37). Individuals involved in a dispute select between alternative procedures offered by an array of institutions (i.e. traditional law/custom or adat, religious law, and state law) to protect and promote their own interests and expectations. Both parties may try to procure an agreement by choosing one or several alternative procedures. The official channels will involve only government officials and refer to government regulations, while the adat venue will involve many local community leaders, or elite, in the process of determining a resolution. According to von Benda-Beckmann, not only do individual parties shop for the most advantageous venue, but also the forums involved use these disputes to their own, mainly local, political ends (von Benda-Beckmann, 1984). These institutions and their individual officials usually have interests different from those of the parties, and they use the processing of disputes to pursue these interests or even to display their power and authority at the local level.

Why did the village chief in this case demand an adat resolution? The village chief represented not only the village, but also the status and prestige of his clan (kabihu).⁶ The roles of an intermediary and a

⁵ In many cases, conflicts or disputes between two parties will be solved according to tradition if one or both parties demand it. This means that the disputants will negotiate gift exchanges in accordance with their positions as bride givers or bride takers.

⁶ Kabihu is an exogamous patrilineal kinship group or patrilineal clan; descent is reckoned in the male line from father to son (Onvlee, [1949] 1977: 151, 1980: 205, and van Wouden, 1968: 18).

representative of the community may sometimes be used interchangeably by the village chief. In resolving this case, the village chief chose to take his position as a member of his clan to protect his interests and status in the community. Vel noted that it is not easy for local government officials to act exclusively as representatives of the state because they are usually simultaneously involved in adat positions and have kinship relationships with one or more of the parties involved in any given case (Vel, 1992: 29). As Sumbanese, the disputants cannot easily escape from their relatives or the relationships amongst their clans.

The sub-district head's reaction to the late arrivals to the official Monday morning ceremony was perceived as an insult not only to the personal self-esteem of the village chief, but also to his clan's dignity. Resolving this dispute in reference to adat customs would restore the status and prestige of the village chief and his clan. In contrast, an official resolution would demote the status and prestige of the village chief and his clan, and would publicly place the village chief in a subordinate position under the sub-district head in accordance with the hierarchy of the government bureaucratic structure. By seeking an adat resolution, the village chief attempted to reverse his relative position with the sub-district head because, according to Sumbanese custom, he was a member of the bride-giving clan (*yera*), who holds a superior position to the bride-taking clan (*laiya*), of which the sub-district head was a member. The bride-takers are also referred to as *ana kawini*, "place of the daughters" (Adams, 1969: 16). In the end, this conflict was resolved outside both official and adat forums, as the disputants appealed to and lobbied many times with Umbu⁷ Djangga, a strong, key figure in the community.⁸ He manipulated the resolution of the dispute

⁷ The terms *umbu*, referring to a male, and *rambu*, referring a female, have many meanings that depend on the context, such as preceding the name of person from the *maramba* social class. These terms are sometimes used to directly address people, although they are not from the *maramba* class.

⁸ In my understanding of Sumbanese custom, this problem should have been resolved first through the adat channel and then followed by an official decision to get "win-win solution" for the disputants. In the adat resolution, both disputants would pay fines (*denda adat*) in accordance with their respective bride-giver and bride-taker positions as a symbol of reconciliation. In this case, the sub-district head, as the bride-taker, would pay a larger adat fine than

to promote his own interests in maintaining close relationships with both of the disputants and, at the same time, to show his own power and authority. The village chief had been elected to his position because of Umbu Djangga's support, while the sub-district head's clan held a higher position in relation to Umbu Djangga's clan, i.e. the sub-district head's clan was the bride-giving clan to the latter's bride-takers.

Although the village chief did not succeed in procuring an adat resolution to the dispute, at least he did not receive any official sanction.⁹ In this sense, adat can be used as an alternative venue to express symbolic resistance to the dominant structure in daily affairs or even to pursue the interests of the forums involved. Vel pointed out that if a dispute is to be settled according to customary law (*aturan adat*), reference will be made to "what the ancestors taught us" and then the clan elders decide the settlement (Vel, 1994: 12). Adat can also be used as protection from the structural pressures and social injustice of the dominant political system. It is this interplay of local and national authority as expressed in local language or local discourse that is at the centre of this study.

The preceding story provides a glimpse into the mechanics of these relationships at the local level. The sub-district head attempted to officially sanction the village chief in accordance with the "modern" Indonesia government system. The village chief, however, successfully avoided this by appealing for an adat resolution to the dispute. In the end, the involvement of a powerful member of the local elite, resulted in a resolution that was unexpected by both disputants.

This story also illustrates the multiple facets of each involved party. As representatives of the national state, government officials implement state laws, rules, policies, and ideologies in the local community. The application of government policy becomes the foundation for interaction with other parties. However, when the local community is incorporated into the government system, the officials cannot rely

the village chief. In an official resolution, the village chief would receive an official sanction in accordance with government regulations.

⁹ The failure by the village chief to resolve this dispute through adat is entangled with the interests of the strong community figure involved in resolving this dispute.

exclusively on state authority. They must negotiate with the existing venues of authority in the community. Under these conditions, government officials at the local level may occasionally interchange their roles as representatives of the state and representatives of the local community to suit their political interests. They perceive the state as both a threat and an opportunity to strengthen their positions in the traditional society, and are able to manipulate their roles to increasing their authority in the community.

The elite in local communities protect their own interests and are strong influences in accelerating and/or delaying the process of state incorporation. By employing constructs that differ from the official state perspectives, the local elite often define the local discourse and manipulate it to enhance their own interests. The opening story illustrates not only local interactions in the context of everyday life, but also in the historical context of state control. When the state is seen as the apparatus of rule, or government, within a particular territory, then the village chief represents the state at the lowest level. However, when the state is perceived to be the overall territory and social system that is subject to a particular rule or domination, the village chief may occasionally prioritise his role as a representative of the village and the community (see Jary and Jary, 1991: 623).

For Weber, the state is an undetermined factor that successfully claims a monopoly of the legitimate use of physical and symbolic violence over a definite territory and over the totality of the corresponding population (see Bourdieu, 1994: 3). The state constitutes a field of forces and struggles oriented towards a monopoly of the legitimate manipulation of public goods (Bourdieu, 2004: 16). Since anthropology focuses on the manifestation of the state in daily life and on how the it is constructed through the cultural imagination and everyday practise of ordinary people, the state is recognised not only as a national entity, but also a local one (Yang, 2005: 489).

The people of Mangili may know of Jakarta as the capital city of Indonesia and recognise several names of the political elite there, but it is difficult for them to perceive and construct the notion of the nation state. There are, however, government officials who represent the state

at the regional and local levels, including the governor (gubernur), the district head (bupati), and also the sub-district head (camat). At the local level, these officials do not only assume roles as representatives of the state who implement government policies, but they also manoeuvre their own positions in conjunction with the existing local authority. Since the state representatives at the local level must negotiate continuously with the local elite, as well as with their supervising government officials, the state is not a monolith organisation similar to the military whose policies must be implemented immutably. Schulte-Nordholt states that the sub-district heads in Central Java do not only implement government policies, but they also negotiate their programmes with local leaders, district heads and other senior government officials (Schulte-Nordholt, 1987). Although the government policies in the long run aim towards homogenising and incorporating local communities into its system, the efforts to apply these policies at the local level are more dynamic and subject to negotiation.

Analysing the arena in which state officials and villagers interact can shed light on the processes of social transformation in recent decades and on the space local community members had and have under the former and present governments to create, recreate and negotiate their local strategies. This arena represents the intersection of powers and authority amongst the parties involved, each pursuing and protecting their own interests. Relationships of political dominance and how the local elite promote and protect themselves are the main themes of this study. There must first be, however, an account of the nature of the cultural realms that operate in the local community. These realms are shaped by traditions of knowledge that form a surfeit of cultural meanings of which certain symbols are adopted by people who come to these traditions with particular concerns (cf. Barth, 1993 and Timmer, 2000).

In the following three sections, I will discuss the government policies implemented since the colonial era, the response of the local elite in facing the changes of these policies, and the role of the local elite. These sections present a context for understanding the nature of interactions between the national Indonesian state and the local elite,

and the ways in which the local elite construct the contemporary identity of their territory in order to maintain their own power and authority within the changing national Indonesian context. In discussing similar interactions, Scott focused on the top levels of the state (Scott, 1998); I will focus on the grass-roots levels of the society.

A. Government Policy in General

Since the end of the colonial period, the government has tried, both directly and indirectly, to change the political structure of the society. Sumba submitted to direct Dutch control in the early 20th century when a Dutch government outpost was established on the island. Hoskins states that until the beginning of the 20th century, the Sumbanese lived in relative autonomy (Hoskins, 1993a: 29). They were divided into many small feuding domains without a centralised polity or a single indigenous ruler. The aim of the colonial officials was to create a local leadership that could assist the Dutch with enforcing laws, directing trade, and collecting taxes (Fowler, 1999: 120). In this context, the colonial policies were implemented through an administration based on formal organisational principles that were part of codified state regulations. The Dutch East Indies district office was the first manifestation of modern central rule in Sumba. Since then, local political organisation has been influenced by the colonial administration.

According to Hoskins, problems in communication and fierce competition among local rulers made pacification of East Sumba difficult, however, when enough prominent noble men were incorporated into the hierarchy of the colonial administration, the subordinate population followed their lead (Hoskins, 1996: 239). The presence of the colonial administration introduced a new form of social stratification by placing a new layer of civil servants at the top of the local level as representatives of the central government. However, it was primarily the members of the existing local elite who were recruited as heads of the regional administration. They were appointed largely on the basis of their power and authority in the local community rather than for any administrative competence. They were assisted by an experienced and competent staff.

This arrangement introduced the engagement of "traditional" leaders with supra-local or foreign entities. The colonial administration in East Sumba used the existing social stratification system as an entry point to enforce its laws, direct trade, and collect taxes, and, in the process, effectively strengthened the "traditional" domination of the local elite over the community.

Concurrent with the increase of government influence, Protestant missions expanded their presence on Sumba where they opened schools in several areas on the island in 1880 (Vel, 1992: 23 and 1994: 91).¹⁰ Following the Protestant missions, Catholic missions started to work on Sumba in 1889 (Luckas, n.d.: 10). The churches competed with each other in extending their areas of influence throughout the island (Haripranata, 1984: 195-199). Government policy and the Protestant and Catholic missions brought a variety of new institutions, including the state administration, schools, and churches, into the local community. This forced the community leaders, as the elite in the traditional society, to exist and compete with many new personalities, including officials of the state administration, teachers, and missionaries.

The informal community leaders in Kamutuk retained a strong influence on everyday life of the society. As the local elite, they controlled patron-client networks within the local community that expressed and perpetuated their power and influence. The lower social groups usually submitted to the leaders' advice and orders. By using divide and rule (*divide et impera*), the colonial administration initiated the formation of a more modern state. The government used the traditional leaders as intermediaries to implement their policies (power) upon the community. Many of the local elite were appointed to important positions in the local bureaucratic structure. Many rulers in Sumba were acknowledged by the Dutch East Indies administration and presented with regalia as symbols of their rule. Based on this acknowledgment, they became known as *raja tongkat* (baton king,

¹⁰ The presence of Catholic and Protestant missionaries since the colonial period has influenced many aspects of Sumbanese culture. The missionaries have also assumed positions in the social stratification system of the Sumbanese community.

maramba tokungu) if they received a gold baton and raja bintang (star king, maramba mbitangu or kandunu) if they received a silver star.¹¹ The colonial government used these kinds of symbols of indirect rule to acknowledge the existence of the local communities and their power. In this way, the state administration effectively imposed its power at the local level, while the local elite gained the economic and political benefits from this acknowledgement. In this way, the local elite could renew and reintegrate their power by using these foreign sources to strengthen their position amongst their local competitors.

The colonial administration implemented its power similarly in other regions of Indonesia by introducing political structures to local communities. Many local rulers in Java were gradually incorporated into the colonial administration. Traditional rulers in Yogyakarta and Surakarta, for instance, were positioned as representatives of the central government to enforce laws, direct trade, and collect taxes. The local leaders, assimilated into the colonial administration by indirect rule, recognised the superior authority of the colonial government. This system facilitated the effective implementation of regulations and government policies at the local level. In this way, while the local elite represented the central government, they did not lose their political roles and authority in their own communities.

After Indonesian Independence, the formation of a modern state by using the "divide and rule" strategy became problematic with the change from federal (*negara serikat*) to centralised state in 1950. In the federal system, local communities were granted more freedom to manage their local autonomy. Although they recognised the presence of the central government, they retained power to govern their own regions according to local traditions. In the centralised state, however, the local elite were forced to relinquish their power and political roles to the representatives of the central government in the regions. This

¹¹ Needham noted that in 1773 the raja of Mangili confirmed his friendship with the Dutch East Indies Company's representative by sending him, as he had done before, a slave girl (Needham, 1983:13). According to Hoskins, by 1757, Sumba was a significant source of the *ata* (slaves) sold directly to the Dutch East Indies Company and exported to Bali, Sulawesi, Java, and even South Africa, Mauritius and Madagascar (Hoskins, 2001).

change was followed by the formation of sub-districts (*kecamatan*) as new administrative structures at the local level based on Presidential Decree Number 1/1957 concerning regional governments and Presidential Decree Number 69/1958 concerning the formation of regional governments in Bali, West and East Nusa Tenggara.. *Kecamatan* were designated in Sumba in 1962.

The roles of the elite in the local polity were affected by the presence of government civil servants at the sub-district level.¹² A secretary (*juru tulis*) and staff assisted the village head in the execution of administrative functions and implementation of formal organisational principles. Eventually, village heads also became integrated into the administrative structure of the state as civil servants at the lowest level who were responsible to the sub-district head as the highest state official in the sub-district. (Although the village heads wore the uniforms of civil servants, formal recognition of their status was delayed because the expense of the combined salaries of all the village heads in the country was high.)

During the New Order era, in an effort to minimise separatist movements in local regions, the government attempted to restrict and then eliminate local autonomy by requiring identity cards (*Kartu Tanda Penduduk*, *KTP*), authorisation for travelling (*surat jalan*), authorisation for changing residence (*surat pindah*), a certificate of non-involvement in the 30th of September 1965 communist coup (*surat bebas G30S PKI*), and a certificate of good behaviour (*surat kelakuan baik*). To fulfil all of these requirements, local communities were forced to comply with the central government. The period since 1966 has witnessed an increasing emphasis on administrative coherence and discipline, which has much deeper consequences for local notions of autonomy, cultural diversity, and temporality (Hoskins, 1993a: 273-274). The government

¹² Anderson stated that "The subsequent triumph over the regional rebellion in 1958 and the consolidation of Guided Democracy were marked by a great increase in the appointment of ministerials to key military and civilian positions in the regional bureaucracy, and the absorption of the office of *Kepala Daerah* (elected regional head) into the centrally appointed administrative positions of governor and *bupati* (district chief). These ministerials were, in the old tradition, appointed largely on the basis of their loyalty to Djakarta..." (Anderson, 1972: 36-37).

also created a series of paradoxes between local communities and the central administration that are an illustration of the increasing coerced encapsulation of local communities into national political and ideological frameworks. Dichotomies such as 'uneducated' versus 'educated,' 'traditional' versus 'new,' 'underdeveloped' versus 'developed,' 'primitive' versus 'modern,' 'local' (or 'parochial') versus 'national,' etc., were used to contrast the local cultural categories with the dominant cultural categories (Heryanto, 1988: 12). Anderson also stated that Indonesian writers have developed dichotomies of their own, conceived in moral, political, and generational terms, as is evidenced by the pervasive pairing of progressive/backward (*maju/kolot*), young/old (*muda/tua*), and aware/unaware (*sadar/masih bodoh*) (Anderson, 1998: 80). In this way, local communities have been guided to participate in the development process because they are considered to be out of touch with the predominant social, cultural, religious, political, and economic changes. Persoon noted that many aspects of global culture are being incorporated into "modern" Indonesian culture (Persoon, 1998: 301). This process of modernisation often causes tension in "local" communities, as it aims to integrate them into the dominant, broader social-cultural domain.

Similar mechanisms can be observed in relation to power and the differences between the national state and local communities. Power is an aspect of the potential interaction between the state and the local community; it is a means of controlling another group. Hadiz and Dhakidae stated that power represents a hierarchical relationship between the power holder and the powerless, who is dependent on the power holder (Hadiz and Dhakidae, 2006: 3-4). When the relationship of power is asymmetrical, it may be described as a relationship of domination. This domination may occasionally incite resistance by the subordinate party. Many local communities exist under the domination of the central government that manipulates culture, ethnicity, and religion as a set of tools to maintain the "unity in diversity" policy. The subjection of local communities to the national integration policy of the New Order's regime created a series of conflicts between state ideology and local worldviews. Minorities were confronted with a

national development policy that promoted economic and cultural unity by overruling cultural diversity. Kipp commented on Indonesian government control:

The Indonesian government attempts both to control ethnicity and to use it. That it requires control almost goes without saying: ethnic or regional secession recurrently threatens modern states; short of that, ethnic animosities can flare into violence, destroying lives and property. On the other hand, indigenous cultures provide a repository of traditions and symbols that leaders can use to forge national identity and foster a sense of community (Kipp 1993: 105).

Although it is geographically remote, a "modern" Indonesian government system has clearly been established in Kamutuk village on Sumba. Flag-raising ceremonies on Monday mornings staged in front of the sub-district office and all schools are characterised by order and discipline accorded with the authority of the central government (Sekimoto, 1990). The sites for this ceremony, such as sub-district office, police office, military headquarters, public health centres (Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat, Puskesmas), and schools are typical landmarks of government policy present in every corner of Indonesia (Anderson, 2001: 259). These landmark buildings are reminders that ever since the colonial period Indonesian villages have been uniformly organised and regimented like boxes in a container.¹³ The units – citizens, villages, trees, fields, houses, or people – must be organised in a manner that permits them to be identified, observed, recorded, counted, aggregated, and monitored (see Scott, 1998: 183). Efforts are made to incorporate local communities into the "modern" administrative structures by manipulating these units. The sub-district head, who is the highest state official in the region, implements state control of the development processes in the local community.¹⁴ The state uses officials assigned to these institutions, various ideological tools, and other resources in an

¹³ The colonial notion of the village as a structural entity was reinforced by applying a policy for social regimentation within a standardised locality (Bremen, 1980: 26).

¹⁴ The sub-district represents the central state authority.

ongoing process of community maintenance and promotion (Sullivan, 1992: 11).

In general, if the presence of the central government is stronger than the local community, the political structures of the local community become weaker or more dependent upon the central government. In the New Order era, many important positions at the local "modern" administrative level, such as the district head and the sub-district head, were occupied by appointees of the central government who were, in many cases, were not members of the local elite. This appointment process reduced the possibility for the local elite to compete with each other for the highest positions in the local bureaucracy. They were domesticated in non-political positions, such as cultural leaders, adat leaders and council members, farmers' groups' leaders, and religious leaders. In contrast, the current process of decentralisation creates opportunities for members of the local elite to aspire to political positions through regional elections for the district head (Pemilihan Kepala Daerah Langsung, Pilkada). It also creates opportunities for old political rivals to use the new democratic vehicles to enhance their own political interests (see Vel, 2005). However, Hadiz and Dhakidae stated that although the central administration's power has been dismantled, the New Order's heritage is still very prominent in the social sector, particularly in government administration, bureaucracy, and the political system (Hadiz and Dhakidae, 2006: 7).

Many studies focusing on the relationship between the state and local communities in Indonesia described the struggles of local communities facing the national development policy that promoted economic and cultural unity by overruling cultural diversity during the New Order era. For example, Dove discussed concepts that challenged the hegemony of modern Western discourse on the environment in West Borneo (Dove, 1998); Tsing focused on reformulating anthropological theories of the local community in a way that challenged both romanticising and modernising narrative conventions for treating the Dayak Meratus who live in remote areas (Tsing, 1993); Schoorl provided an analysis on cultural change among Muyu tribes in West Papua and the complexity of Western impact upon them (Schoorl, 1997); Persoon described the

processes of localisation, Indonesianisation, and globalisation of indigenous people (Persoon, 1998). These and other similar studies observed that there was very little room left for local people to represent themselves as culturally distinct and to escape from the impact of the New Order development strategy. Latif and Ibrahim stated that the hegemonic position of Indonesia's political and cultural centre was evident not only by the ability of the New Order to control every public space, but also by the creation of projects of political practise in the imagination of social life and creativity, i.e. controlling all cultural discourse (Latif and Ibrahim, 1996:28).¹⁵ All Indonesian students were indoctrinated that the New Order reflected a restoration of order, or more precisely, the revival of original Indonesian cultural values that bound every Indonesian citizen, female and male, of all ethnicities, religions, and classes, into one nation (see Hadiz and Dhakidae, 2006: 19).

Efforts of the state to incorporate local communities into its system proceeded in a fixed direction. Several communities, however, did not comply with this process. Persoon provided evidence that the Baduy in West Java formed a cultural enclave in which a traditional lifestyle has been maintained in spite of being surrounded by communities that have been incorporated into the "modern" society (Persoon, 1998). The Kubu in Sumatra have been, for the most part, left alone in their traditional lifestyle because they are not considered to be a threat to the existence of the "modern" state. In Borneo, however, the Dayak were forced to change their traditional lifestyle, especially their economic activities in the forest that were considered a threat to the companies granted Forest Exploitation Rights (Hak Penguasaan Hutan, HPH) and supported by the government. In this context, the state interfered with the daily life of the indigenous society and induced conflicts within the local community while supporting the interests of outsiders.

Scott explained that state officials, by exercising state power, tended to align the facts with their presentations, claiming that the

¹⁵ "As the powerful demands for resources, land, and military control have guided state expansion to the most remote corners of the earth, the autonomy and mobility of the marginal cultural groups of once inaccessible places . . . have increasingly been threatened" (Tsing 1993: 7).

"modern" state began with extensive prescriptions for a new society and their intent to impose these prescriptions upon the developing community (Scott, 1998: 90). Bourdieu affirmed that the state used instruments of domination in exercising its power (Bourdieu, 1991).¹⁶ Local communities respond in different ways to the methods employed by the state in exercising its power. How do local communities interpret and perceive the presence of power and domination that emerges from events, as much as from underlying structures in the context of social, cultural, demographic and geographic conditions in each region? As mentioned above, ethnic groups such as the Dayak, Kubu, and Baduy struggled with or resisted the government by representing themselves as culturally distinct and attempted to escape from the impact of the New Order's development strategies, with what Scott has called "everyday forms of resistance" (Scott, 1985). In the Soeharto years, 'development' was basically a top-down effort that deliberately excluded the 'target groups' from the decision-making process. Nation building was based upon centralisation and uniformity, including village politics and administrations (the government regulation number 5/1979 concerned standardisation of villages). Present conditions allow, at least in principle, for a greater voice for local communities in decisions about their future (at least after the most recent regulations concerning regional governments, number 22/1999, and regional autonomy, number 22/2001, were issued). That this is not a smooth process has become clear over the past two years when violent regional conflicts exploded in Aceh, Papua, Central Sulawesi, and the Moluccas, not only threatening national unity, but also destroying the regional and social fabric of society.

B. Response to Difference: Homogenising Politics

The interplay between the local community and the state involves the strategies each party employs to affect the other. People respond to

¹⁶ Bourdieu also explained that "the struggle in the field of cultural production over the imposition of the legitimate mode of cultural production is inseparable from the struggle within dominant class to impose the dominant principle of domination" (Bourdieu, 1993: 41).

other parties by adopting strategies and tactics that arise from events, as well as underlying structures in the social, cultural, demographic, and geographic conditions in the region. These strategies are also natural loci for passions that underlie individuals' activities and identities. Local people who have mixed reactions in facing forces from the outside accumulate a variety of defences and accommodations. In describing various modes of resistance of peasant communities in Burma and Java prior to European colonial rule, Adas pointed out that these defences were rooted in demographic and geographic conditions, as well as in the nature of the political economies of the societies in which they emerged (Adas, 1981: 219). They also searched for space to express their experiences, both good and bad, in responding to the incoming forces.

The efforts to incorporate local communities into the "modern" state structure created a dual hierarchy. Colonial and post-colonial governments used the traditional social stratification of Sumbanese society as a vehicle to impose their power. The presence of missionaries, the colonial administration and the Indonesian government in the long run have not only strengthened the domination of formal organisational principles over unwritten custom, but has also reinforced the complexity of distinctions in terms of religion, ethnicity, and class at the local level. The variety of contingent forces, including missionaries, pre-colonial, and colonial administrations, shaped the diversity in Sumbanese society. As Barth proposed, the boundaries of an ethnic group are constituted through symbolic means, such as self-ascription, whereby people choose to utilise a few cultural attributes, such as dress, language, house-form, or general lifestyle, as the overt signs of their distinctiveness (Barth, 1969: 14 and 1981: 203).

Through passive resistance to both Islam and Christianity, the Sumbanese maintained their village traditions (see Adams, 1973: 266 and 1980: 209). When the Indonesian government incorporated Sumba into the new nation in 1950, the Sumbanese most often identified themselves as Sumbanese, rather than Indonesian, and expressed pride over their relative autonomy and cultural heritage (Fowler, 1999: 121). As in many areas of eastern Indonesia, the Sumbanese have

developed a distinctive local culture from traditions common to the region (Adams, 1980: 209). However, the complexity of patterns and institutions in Sumbanese society have also made it possible for people to accommodate a variety of contingent forces in accordance with their interests and positions in the socially stratified society. In this context, Fowler noted the Sumbanese response to their distinctiveness during the New Order era:

As Indonesia struggles to incorporate many diverse cultures into one polity, local and national identities are defined and redefined relative to one another. Sumbanese people reinforce their distinctive character and cultural autonomy by retaining their native religion and language. At the same time, they appropriate those elements—the Indonesian language, membership in Christianity, and market participation—that afford them a share in national power structures (Fowler, 1999: 73).

This response is a cultural strategy that balances between accommodation and resistance, defining the Sumbanese world in meanings given to colonial and post-colonial administrations, the mission and church organisations, and their own traditions. In this sense, the local community is the site of a struggle over cultural practice—struggles that are embedded in social networks and government institutions and whose outcomes affect the nature of village level power (see Bebbington et al, 2004: 189). Depending on their interests and expectations, Sumbanese may reinforce their distinctive character and cultural autonomy, while they also adopt supra-local elements. In several contexts, both local and imported elements are able to construct local power and authority.

C. Position of the Local Elite

Social stratification, which is rooted in tradition, is inherent in life in Kamutuk village. Residents explain that their society has several social ranks: *ratu*, pre-eminent ruler who performs priestly functions, decides questions of inheritance and relationships, sanctions all decisions by rulers, and owner of the land; *maramba*, nobility, aristocrats, rulers,

heads of clans; tau kabihu, "independent/free people";¹⁷ and ata, "slaves."¹⁸

Ratu and maramba occupied higher positions in the social system because they held the socio-economic capital to control other groups. Van Wouden noted that there were two categories of power holders in the region: the guardians of the relics of the divine ancestors (ratu) and the rulers (maramba) (van Wouden, 1968). One individual could not be both a ratu and a maramba because these ranks performed different functions. Ratu conducted the adat or religious affairs as socio-religious leaders, whereas maramba attended to social and political affairs as socio-political leaders. The maramba, as the power holders in a district, had the capacity to impose their will on others. They used patron-client networks within the local community to perpetuate their power and influence.

In Kamutuk, people are often reluctant to identify the persons who are classified as ratu and tau kabihu. Presently, the ratu no longer wield real authority, as the majority of the population no longer actively practises their original religion (see Vel, 1994: 82). Also, the classification of tau kabihu is unclear because there have not been any local rulers in this region since 1911. Many wealthy tau kabihu identified themselves as maramba, further obscuring several factors, such as marriage affiliation, oral history, and descent. Meanwhile, poor tau kabihu often lost their independent status if they married ata.

The ata are the lowest rank because it is almost impossible for them to own land and control any power to manipulate others. The ata in East Sumba are different from slaves in the Caribbean, the pre-civil war southeastern United States or other parts of the world.¹⁹ In those areas, slavery treated human beings as commodities in trade who were used as forced labour (Hoskins, 1993a: 47).

¹⁷ Kapita used the term kabihu merdeka to classify the "independent/free" people (Kapita, 1976b: 19).

¹⁸ The ameliorative expression for ata in Kamutuk is anakidang kuru uma or anak-anak dalam rumah, literally, "children of the house." The ameliorative expression for ata outside Kamutuk is tau la uma.

¹⁹ Hoskins stated that eastern Indonesian forms of slavery were not necessarily 'softer and gentler' than slavery in other regions, but it is significant that this is an area where slavery has tended to 'fade out', rather than to vanish at an easily identifiable date (Hoskins, 2004: 106).

In Sumba, however, there is a rigid hierarchical social structure in which the nobility rules over land and other resources and controls the other social classes, in particular the slave class. Even though their legal position differs from those in classic slave-owner societies, in practise, the rights of slaves are highly restricted as the nobility controls all social and economic resources. The existence of *ata* is important for *maramba*, particularly as a means of showing status, prestige, wealth, property, and power, rather than purely as a means of economic production. "The notion of *ata* persists as a social category, and transfers of *ata* still occur in gift rather than a cash economy" (Hoskins, 2004: 106). The *ata* are bonded to the masters by ties of material dependency, while the masters are bonded in turn to the *ata* by honour. "Slavery appears at one end of a gradation of forms of bondage tied to the commoditisation of the persons, and feeding into the categories of gift and sacrifice" (Hoskins, 2004: 92). Since slavery on the island of Sumba is a "closed system", with some notable exceptions, the "slaves" can be absorbed into the kinship groups of their masters as long as they remain "slaves" (see Vink, 2003: 136). While it is almost impossible to move out of the slave class, it is possible for *maramba* to lose their status. Inter-marriage between *maramba* and *ata* will result in the decline of status for their descendants, who will be considered *ata*. The *maramba-ata* relationship is one of social stratification, not hierarchy, and is instrumental for social control and organisation of a megalithic culture that needed many labourers.²⁰

According to Weber, the term 'class status' was applied when an individual or a group possess a given state of (a) provision of goods, (b) external conditions of life, and (c) subjective satisfaction or frustration (see Eldridge, 1971: 86). Referring to Sumbanese tradition,

²⁰ In discussing the pre-colonial village headmen of Java and Burma, Adas pointed out that their control over local affairs rested on the extent of their holdings, the number of labourers and artisans dependent on the use of their land and patronage, the wisdom they demonstrated in village councils, and their ability to defend the interests of their communities in dealing with supra-village official and their agents. In contrast to the often short-lived careers of courtiers and tax farmers, the village gentry's families frequently controlled local offices for generations and, in some cases, centuries (Adas, 1981: 222). Village headmen and the local gentry from whom they came were pivotal intermediaries between the state and the mass of the peasantry.

social distinction and division determined the distribution of rewards and resources, such as power and property.²¹ Weber defined power as the "probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (Weber, 1947: 152). In other words, power equals the ability to impose one's will upon the behaviour of other persons or to force people to accept one's orders. Weber showed that the basis from which such power was exercised could vary considerably according to the social context, that is, historical and structural circumstances (Coser, 1971: 230). Weber's concept of authority was the probability that a specific command will be obeyed (Truzzi, 1971: 170). Authority is that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will without resistance. In other words, authority is the probability that an order will be willingly accepted. Someone possessing power must possess a means to coerce people, however someone with authority does not need to force people because their control is willingly accepted. The main struggle for power is one of force versus authority. Force is power that can be used to get one's way, while authority is the legitimate use of power to rule. Within the struggle for power, Weber defined three forms of authority: legal authority, traditional authority, and charismatic authority.²²

During the initial months of my stay in Kamutuk, I did not understand my position in the Sumbanese social stratification system. I wondered why a person from an *ata* group accompanied me on all of my daily activities. Why did people treat me as politely as they did my host? And why did people from *ata* groups avoid any direct contact with me? Eventually, I realised that

²¹ In Sumbanese tradition, prestige is a property of status in a social system that carries over to the members of the current status.

²² Legal authority is anchored in impersonal rules that have been legally established. This type of authority has come to characterize social relations in modern societies. Traditional authority often dominates pre-modern societies. It is based on the belief in the sanctity of tradition, of the past. Unlike rational-legal authority, traditional authority is not codified in impersonal rules, but is usually invested in a hereditary line or in a particular office by a higher power. Charismatic authority rests on the appeal of leaders who claim allegiance based on the force of their extraordinary personalities (see Truzzi, 1971: 170-176).

I was a special guest of a maramba during the first period of my fieldwork and, therefore, I was considered to be a "son" of my maramba host. My initial confusion about the social system and my own position in it did not correspond with the perception of the Sumbanese, who define themselves by their descent lines, marriage affiliations, clan links, and maramba-ata positions. However, my host claimed me as his clan member by using a fictitious clan relationship and, subsequently, most people in Kamutuk adopted his declaration.

This story of my first experiences in Kamutuk is only one example of how an outsider (non-Sumbanese) is incorporated into an existing social group. My host, one of the elite in Kamutuk, exerted his influence upon other people to accept his claim.

According to Bailey, an open boundary (of community or of elite) depends upon whether roles are ascribed or achieved (Bailey, 1970: 24). In Sumba, positions in the social stratification system (maramba, tau kabihu, and ata) are ascribed to people by birth or by the group in which they are raised, regardless of willingness to assume the role or not (see Bailey, 1970: 25). Birth as a maramba is birth into the ruling class of the Sumbanese.²³ Ascribed roles in the group are often assigned and assumed by its members based on age (seniority) and sex. Maramba have more opportunities than other groups to achieve other appropriate qualifications and to control socio-economic capital, such as labour, land, networking, and contact with outsiders. Although they also compete with each other for political positions, maramba are classified as the elite. Based on their wealth, leadership, influence upon other people, and political experience, they are able to impose their will on others and to claim themselves as the group who control land, livestock, ata, and political power at the local level. Social stratification is also based on an unequal distribution of scarce resources. Weber identified three criteria for measuring levels of social inequality, i.e., wealth (accumulation of material resources), power (ability to achieve one's goals and objectives even against the will of others),

²³ Since there have not been any rulers in Kamutuk since 1911, maramba are classified as the highest rank in the existing social stratification.

and prestige (social esteem, respect or admiration) (see Coser, 1971). Wealth, power, and prestige are often interrelated, however they can operate independently. Hoskins noted that differences in the degree of stratification and the power of individual maramba emerge out of a background of shared cultural features (Hoskins, 1996: 222). In support of this system, there has been no agrarian reform in Sumba since the colonial period.

During his first visit to a village in India, Srinivas stated that there were two important factions in this village, i.e. one that was led by the village head as the formal leader and the other that was headed by two or three young people who acted as informal leaders who did not accept the authority of the village head (Srinivas, 1977: 9). It is necessary to study aspects such as leadership, factions, disputes, networking, and the links between the village and outside parties to understand the roles and actions of the local elite. The local elite sometimes determine the ways in which the state imposes its power and whether it is effective or not. They have their own interests and strong influence in accelerating and/or delaying the process of state incorporation. Spivak proposes a dynamic stratification grid describing colonial social production at large: the dominant foreign groups (at the world level), the dominant indigenous groups (at the state level), the dominant indigenous groups (at the regional and local levels), and the so-called "people" and "subalterns" (Spivak, 1998). This network indicates that there is a dominant group at every level that is a key factor in every relationship. There is very little possibility for those at the bottom of the social structure to determine the nature of the relationship between the local community and the state.

The local elite devise a variety of cultural strategies in response to the variety of contingent forces. Many aristocrats, royalty and adat leaders juggle their multiple roles in various social contexts. Although they cooperate with the local state administration for economic and political benefits, their social positions also require them to listen to the local community in the interest of fulfilling their obligations in their patron-client relationships. In this sense, they must construct creative strategies to maintain their positions by achieving and balancing power, whether

through government or local influence and support. Consequently, relationships among community members, local government officials, and informal local leaders are embedded with social conflicts. Informal local leaders have the obligation to defend the interests of their communities when dealing with officials and outsiders. However, they are also used as intermediaries by the government in promoting its influence and power upon that same local community.

The focus of this study is the role of the local elite in the relationship between the state and the local community. The local elite attempt to maintain control of both the state and community resources, and to procure the maximum benefits from both venues (see Schulte-Nordholt, 1987). This study concerns the tactics and strategies utilised by the local elite on the easternmost tip of Sumba to maintain their control of resources and achieve a balance with other actors in pursuit of their own goals.

In general, people living in regions outside Java rarely have direct contact with representatives of the national state. The state tends to be seen as distant and alien or, in James Scott's words, "light-years away" (see Scott, 1998). Located far from the centre of the national government, local communities continue their own ways of life based on their own traditions and environment, which have little to do with state ideology. They tend to avoid direct contact with the state and conduct their activities in a manner that does not challenge government regulations. For this reason, the local elite are able to develop creative strategies rooted in their traditions in engaging and sometimes resisting the presence of national government policy. The argument for this is based primarily on the understanding that the elite operate as intermediaries between the local community and the state. Placed in these positions, they have opportunities to manipulate and combine cultural patterns and symbols, and invent legitimate contemporary society. They may also reap the economic and political benefits from these positions. In addition, this study also argues that, although issues about decentralisation and autonomy are emerging, the ata still follow and obey the elite authorities and powers.

According to Bailey, each culture has its own set of rules for political manipulation, its own language of political wisdom and political action (Bailey, 1970:60). People adopt methods based on the accessible resources that support competition. The study of politics is characterised essentially by a focus on individual actors and their strategies within political arenas (see Vincent, 1978: 175). Differences in social economic background, age, gender, political ability, and education will produce different strategies and responses.²⁴ These qualifications determine whether people see their relationships with the government as beneficial or as an obstacle for their political roles. This approach provides a framework for rational decisions on whether to establish relationships or not with other parties. Therefore, analysing political competition must consider the environment and livelihoods. The environment is both a constraint upon and a resource for actors involved in competition.²⁵

In view of the preceding discussion, my general research question is: How have the local elite in Kamutuk been able to maintain or reinforce their positions, as well as augment their own interests, regardless of the pressures from other powers, changes in the society, and the presence of educational institutions, modernising agencies, and mass media?

This question covers the changes in the local community, the national and regional policies of incorporating the local body politic into its system, the strategies of the local elite in facing changes, and the responses of the local elite to the local elite rule. Aware of the importance and complexity of these factors, the sub-questions in the study are:

- How has the local community in Kamutuk changed over the last decades?
- How are regional and national policies related to local politics? Why do regional and national policies tend to give priority to the local elite?

Every political structure has rules about personnel that determine qualifications: age, sex, colour, caste, experience in politics, wealth, education, and many others (Bailey, 1970: 23).

²⁵ In discussing the Nuer political system, Evans-Pritchard (1974: 149) stated that Nuer political groups are defined, in terms of value, by the relations between their segments and their relations as segments of a larger system in an organisation of society in certain social situations, and not as parts of a kind of fixed framework within which people live.

- What are the strategies of the elite in handling pressures from other powers and in resisting changes in social structure, cultural outlook, and economic organisation in society?
- How have the ata responded to the continuation of local elite maramba rule?

D. Research Methods

Students of Indonesia have neglected Sumba (see Needham, 1983 and Goh, 1991). Of the existing studies on Sumba, much of it has concentrated on West Sumba, including van Wouden (1968, 1985), Needham (1980, 1984), Kuipers (1982, 1990, and 1998), Hoskins (1993a, 1998), Keane (1990, 1997a), Vel (1994), Fowler (1999), and Gunawan (2000). Studies on East Sumba include those by Nooteboom (1940), Adams (1969), Onvlee ([1949] 1977), Forth (1981), and Forshee (1996 and 2001).

This study is based on the village community of Kamutuk located in the central Pahunga Lodu sub-district on the eastern tip of Sumba. More specifically, this study focuses on the kampong, also called Kamutuk, which lies within Kamutuk village, to gain insight into the ways and roles of the Sumbanese elite in maintaining control of resources for their own purposes. Although this study concentrates on Kamutuk kampong, I also use information, data, cases, and social interaction from Kamutuk village because the kampong is inseparable from the village. Also, since the Savunese, Javanese, and Chinese are also a part of village community, I discuss their interactions with the Sumbanese. Although non-Sumbanese must respect Sumbanese customs, they are rarely involved in the Sumbanese social system. Kinship ties, which are based on descent and alliance principles that involve the members of clans or exogamous clans scattered throughout other kampongs within and outside Kamutuk village, play an important role in the exercise of local power and authority. Sumbanese elite and local leaders in Kamutuk kampong develop their own methods based on their own traditions to secure their political positions in the village. Given its centrality in the sub-district, Kamutuk is where interactions

between the state (through its officials) and local representatives of the community have been concentrated. It is, therefore, eminently suitable as the locality for this study.



Figure 1. Area of Study

My initial assumption was that the interplay between local and national power would happen at the frontiers or the peripheries of the state government. My fieldwork was aimed at achieving a comprehensive, detailed description and insight into the community and culture in Kamutuk during these periods of social-political change.

Data and information for this study were collected primarily through fieldwork conducted from August 2002 through July 2003. Because of the lack of up-to-date information on the Mangili region after Onvlee’s study, I used a qualitative approach in accordance with the type of data needed: the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” of the conditions, situations, events, social phenomena, and processes experienced by the local community in dealing with the government policy. Anthropological or ethnographical study requires reflection, not generalisation. Hence, my encounters with the East Sumbanese became the central point of this study. Data was collected through observation, active participation in daily life in the community, in-depth interviews, and the study of written materials (literature, statistics, documents, and archival material).

One of the main data collection techniques utilised primarily for a general overview of the Kamutuk region was observation. This revealed

the contemporary strategies the local elite employed in bridging the links between the local community and the government during the period of my fieldwork. In observing the processes of interaction I was able to gain a perspective that led to further questions. The general social stratification of the Sumbanese (between maramba and ata) was used as an entry point into an understanding of the basis of their claims and the distribution of resources as aligned to their positions in the social system. By observing the realities of the social stratification system in Kamutuk, I became familiar with the individuals involved and the different nature of each interaction. In light of the research questions, I re-examined the social stratification system, the variety of patterns of interaction, the variety of institutions present, and the distinctiveness of relationships as described by informants through other research techniques, such as informal talks, semi-structured interviews, etc.

During the initial period of my fieldwork, I lived with a maramba family in Kamutuk and was considered to be their classificatory "son." Because of this, it was difficult for me to establish close relationships with the ata. After explaining many times that I needed to form relationships with all villagers regardless of their social classification, I was able to gradually established close relationships with members of the ata class. As the people on the bottom of the social structure, the ata usually had difficulty expressing their experiences in a formal situation. For this reason, to gain insight into the experiences of the ata, I became involved in their daily activities. Active participation in the daily lives of the villagers was one of the crucial techniques I used to gather data. This exposure provided me with more opportunities to acquire substantial information on the actual living conditions of villagers in Kamutuk. I was able to capture their daily speech, both direct and symbolic, in response to others in the arena of political games. I was also able to identify their reasons, objectives, strategies, interests, and expectations in choosing creative strategies and facing "friends" or "opponents" in confrontation with the local elite, and was able to obtain information about the roles of the elite in each group within the existing social stratification system.

In-depth interviews focused on the experiences of the informants in perceiving, responding to, or interpreting the presence of government policies. Interviews were also useful in collecting information from *ata*, *adat* leaders (*tokoh adat*), local elite, government officials, and representatives of religious organisations who appeared to accept the modern government and at the same time retained their local traditions. The interviews focused on the perspectives held by government officials on the one hand and by the *ata* on the other. The government's perspective concerned the regulations and attitudes held by state officials at the village, sub-district and district levels towards villagers in Kamutuk. Also, the villagers were asked about their strategies in coping within the social and cultural spheres of their daily lives. Individuals of the *maramba* and *ata* groups were interviewed to explore how people in Kamutuk perceived how their life and culture was affected by the presence of the national government. These interviews provided a deep understanding of local historical events and experiences.

Analysis of government policies and the interviews with outsiders of the community took place predominantly at the national and regional levels.

Finally, a study of the literature provided information on government policy vis-à-vis local cultures and on national development policies. Statistical information was used to define and describe the geographic, demographic, socio-economic, and population profile of the local region.

F. Outline of the Thesis

This thesis focuses on the balancing act of the local elite. They have become agents who, while enabling the incorporation process of the state, at the same time, maintain the existence of local traditions in their society. This process is not a simple one in which the local elite can be considered as neutral agents, but rather a complex combination of processes in which many interests are at stake. These interests meet in the process of the reformulation of social-political transformation in the local society. The decisions of the local elite in manipulating

in these relationships are determined by their understanding of the potential benefits and threats to the existence of both the state and community itself. It creates a space for the local elite to develop various strategies and tactics to manipulate social and political relationships in cooperation with the government or local community, while competing amongst themselves to secure maximal benefits for themselves. The link between the local community and the state also implies that the distinctiveness of affiliations between groups may be used as a vehicle to fulfil a myriad of interests and expectations.

This thesis is organised in six chapters and follows a tripartite structure featuring state officials, the local elite, and the *ata*.

The first chapter focuses on the local elite and their relationships with the state by starting with the description of a simple case in the village of Kamutuk, East Sumba, that illustrates government policy vis-à-vis the local community. I elaborate on the dynamic process of the local community response to the homogenising politics of the state and the ways it tackles contingent political forces. I also examine how the local elite retain a strong role in determining the interaction between the local community and the state. Following this, I redefine my research questions and discuss the methods employed in the study.

In Chapter Two, I describe the historical and contemporary landscape of Kamutuk village, and discuss the emergence and characteristics of the local elite. The Sumbanese live according to traditions in which social stratification and clan relationships are still dominant in daily life. The tension between ideas of local origins and imposed authority from supra-local sources, however, has enabled the local elite to establish their base within the local system by manipulating these foreign sources of power.

Chapter Three documents the changes that have occurred in Kamutuk village over the past decades. I explore the opportunities outsiders have in interfering at the local level and how the local elite have determined the direction of changes in the local setting. The local elite have appropriated incoming institutions (state, religion, and media) to maintain existing social boundaries in contemporary

Kamutuk. They have effectively obstructed spatial and social mobility, and although many changes have occurred, the social structure has been able to resist modernisation. The social differentiation caused by the presence of supra-local institutions is examined in this chapter. In the first section, I discuss the newly arrived forces, including state administration, Christianity and Islam, mass media, and improved public transportation. This is followed by a discussion regarding the local responses to these new elements in terms of participation in socio-economic development and education. This discussion is useful in understanding that although the presence of these new elements places pressure on the traditional social structure, their influence on the society is limited because the local elite, as the village "gate keepers", hold a monopoly of the local power and authority.

Chapter Four, "Incorporating Local Polity", discusses the manner in which the centralised state entered Sumba and the consequences for local polities. A brief history of state interference in the region is offered, followed by an exploration into how the government utilises the local elite to support its interests and how, in turn, the local elite manipulate state power to protect and enhance their own interests. I will reveal the intersections of the government mechanism with the local social structures and the negotiation process between state power and local authority. This chapter also features an analysis of the general perspectives of the local elite towards the state.

In Chapter Five, "The Appropriation of National Policies by the Local Elite", I explore the local elite's tactics in transforming the threats from state interference which might weaken their control over local resources and, therefore, their political position in the community. By blocking access of other villagers to the state, the local elite have succeeded in monopolising contacts and communication with outsiders and even in appropriating education, economic modernisation, and migration for their own purposes, and thereby stay in power. The reasons why the elite appear to follow a rational course in assimilating the presence of the state and why others in a similar rational approach culturally resist state interference will also be examined in this chapter.

After discussing the local elite in all of the previous chapters, Chapter Six, "Those Left Behind", focuses on the ata group in Kamutuk. Although issues about decentralisation and autonomy have arisen, they continue to follow and obey the local elite authorities and powers. Occasionally, the ata are able to develop their own counter strategies in facing their oppression.

2

KAMUTUK IN ACTION: PLACE AND PEOPLE ON THE EASTERNMOST TIP OF SUMBA

On the trip from Waingapu to Kamutuk (about 106 kilometres), my friend spoke about the sandalwood trees (*Santalum album*)¹ that once covered the island but are now rarely found on Sumba. He speculated that if the Sumbanese had managed the sandalwood trees more wisely in the past, they would have enjoyed a more prosperous life today. Before the eighteenth century, the island of Sumba (Tana Humba) played a major role in the trading of sandalwood (cendana), horses (*Equus caballus*, njara), and slaves (see Needham, 1983: 1; Beding and Beding, 2003: 81). Traders from Europe, China, Arabia, Sumbawa, Flores, and Timor visited Sumba for sandalwood, horses, and slaves, which were bartered for valued cloth, porcelain plates, gold, or metal goods (see Soelarto, nda: 28; Hoskins, 1987a: 608 and 1989b: 221). At that time, Sumba was known as Sandalwood Island (Pulau Cendana)², while the small feisty species of horses found on the island were known as "sandalwood horses". Amongst the traders, Sumba was a synonym for sandalwood, horses, and slaves.

However, the sweet fragrance of sandalwood and the popularity of the "sandalwood horses" are only a memory now. Sandalwood trees

¹ The sandalwood tree (pohon cendana) is considered to be taboo, something that should be avoided, because it is believed that the souls of the ancestors reside in these trees (see Haripranata, 1984: 26).

² Vel (1994: 85-86) noted that "the first record of Sumba's existence is provided by the map of Pigafetta, a Portuguese sailor. It dates from the year 1522 and shows a small island called Chendan west of Timor. This name means 'sandalwood' and indicates that Sumba was known by traders only for its forest as a reservoir of valuable sandalwood, ebony wood, and fustic (kayu kuning)".

have become scarce and the trading of horses has declined because the government has imported cattle (*Bovis* sp, *hapi*) that generate more economic profit than horses,³ and the Dutch East Indies colonial administration prohibited slave trade in 1860 (see Needham, 1983: 27 and Hoskins, 2001: 7). Although the Sumbanese never used sandalwood in their daily activities or even in rituals or adat ceremonies, they often spoke of the sandalwood trade to claim prestige of past glories. Hoskins states that similar tension and discrepancies between ideas of local traditions and imposed authority from foreign sources, in fact, lies at the very heart of the contemporary Sumbanese society (Hoskins, 1993a: 29).

The land between Waingapu and Kamutuk is barren and relatively flat, especially during the dry season. The livestock (*banda la marada*),⁴ including horses, buffaloes (*Bubalus* sp, *karambua*), and cattle, graze, not in the fields (*padang*) or pastures, but in shady spots between the fields and forests in search of water and green grass. Caudri pointed out that the coral and gravel terraces belong to the latest deposits, which are not confined only to the coast, but are found far into the plateau as relics of the uppermost covering on the marl series (Caudri, 1934: 10). In general, the areas in the north are flat and less fertile because the soil consists of limestone, while the areas in the south are steep, hilly and relatively fertile, especially on the hillsides. The rainy season in East Sumba is not fixed and very short, lasting only about three or four months per year. The environmental features of Sumba reflect a basic poverty of natural resources, including poor soil, arid conditions, and lack of water supply for irrigation, especially in the dry season. There are neither mineral nor extensive forest resources to support the development of extractive industries, and generally sparse populations offer limited market potential for broadly based urban development (Corner, 1991: 179). These conditions pose many difficulties for the development of agricultural activities. Although people in several

³ As imported animals, cattle, in contrast to horses and buffaloes, have little importance in Sumbanese adat ceremonies. Cattle are of purely economic value (see Onvlee, 1980: 199-200). Since 1913, cattle have become the major source of wealth for the noble families (see Adams, 1966: 7).

⁴ *Banda la marada* refers to livestock in the fields.

SUMBA ISLAND

Sumba Straits

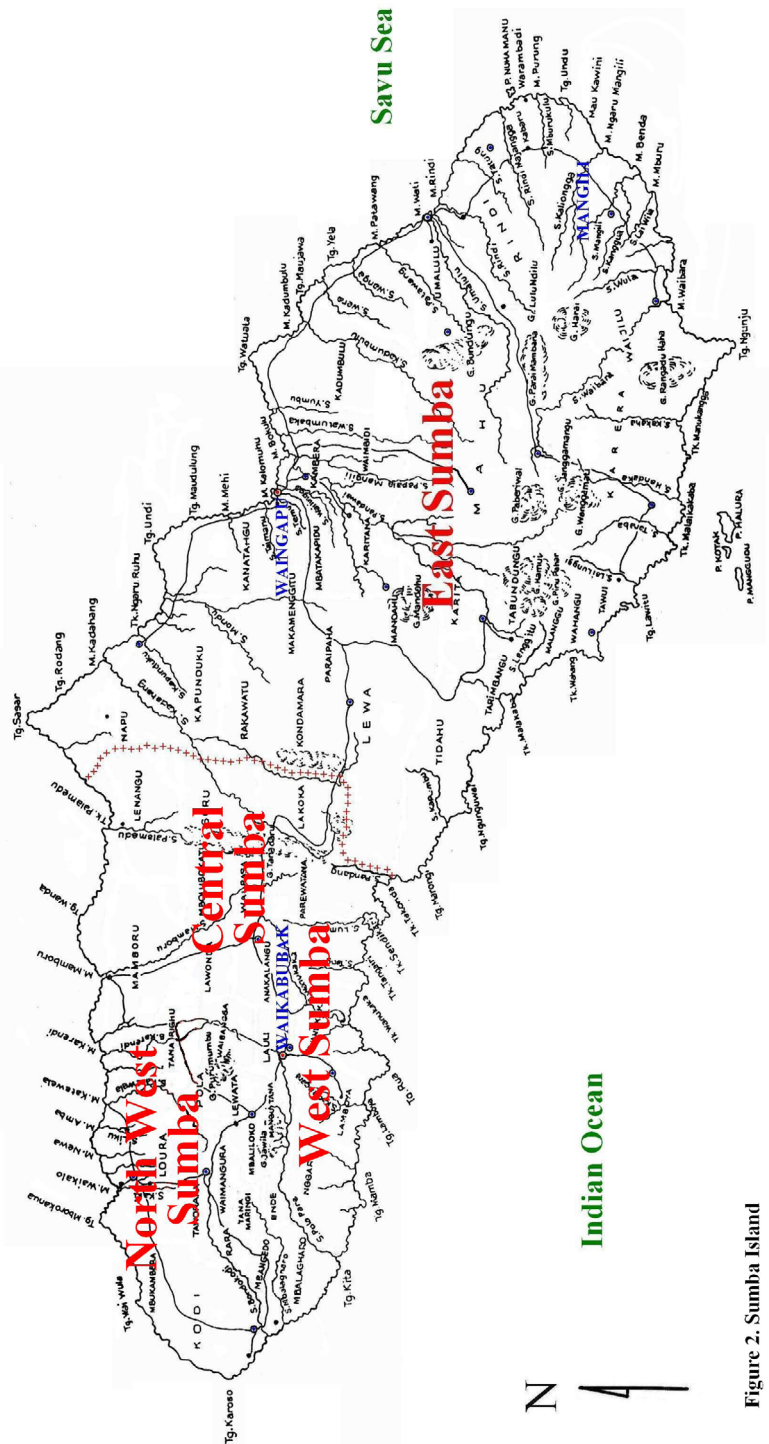


Figure 2. Sumba Island

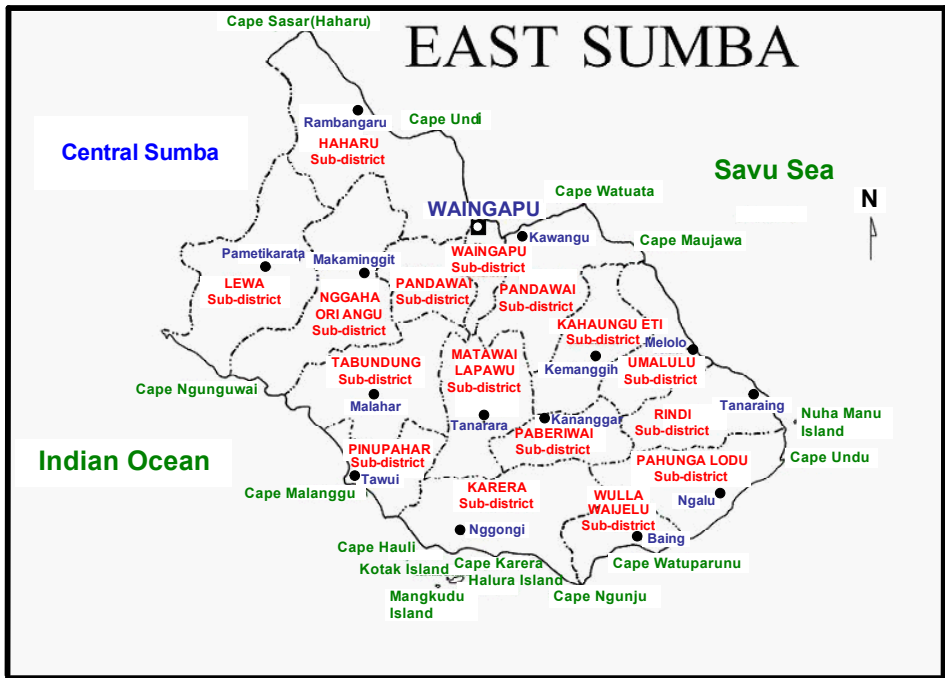


Figure 3. East Sumba District

lowland regions have built dams for irrigating their rice fields, the water supply remains insufficient for extensive fields during the dry season.

The road from Waingapu to Kamutuk heads to the east. This is the main road along the north coast of Sumba from where the shorelines are relatively clearly visible and close. The limestone hills along the right side appear to be barren and distant. Approximately 60 kilometres from Waingapu, this main road reaches Melolo, the second largest town in East Sumba. Roads intersect and head in the direction of the hinterlands and southern regions of Kananggar and Nggongi or towards the coastal regions on the easternmost tip of the island, including Rindi, Mangili, and Wulla Waijelu. The road towards Kananggar and Nggongi passes the steep rolling limestone hills and is difficult for driving, while the road headed towards Mangili is rather flat.

When I began my fieldwork in August 2002, there was no sign marking entry to the village of Kamutuk.⁵ Most Javanese villages post a

⁵ A temporary board placed by the village portal announcing, "Entering Kamutuk Village" (Memasuki Desa Kamutuk) was constructed by a group of students from Cendana University,

permanent sign on the road announcing, "Welcome (Selamat Datang) to the village of X." Apparently, the Sumbanese did not consider a welcome sign to be important.

The Sumbanese reside in districts or domains (*tana*) and are organised into a number of clans (see Onvlee, 1980: 205). They maintain their village traditions and the existence of their clans that are based on descent, alliance principles and "traditional domains", rather than territorial connotations that would be indicated by village boundaries defined by the government administration. The society is divided into patrilineal descent groups and the relationships between these groups are governed by an asymmetric system of marriage alliance (Forth, 1983: 654). The status and authority of a clan in relation to other clans are indicated by the degree to which they can transform their wealth in the exchange relationships, feasts, funerary megaliths, and traditional houses (*rumah adat*).⁶ In this sense, posting a welcome sign at the entrance to the village carries no meaning for the status and prestige of the resident clans. A sign would only represent the presence of the state in the village.

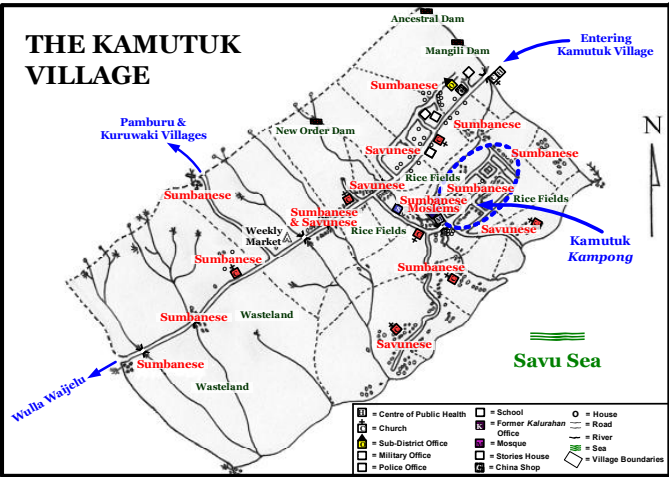


Figure 4. The Kamutuk Kampong in the context of Kamutuk Village

Kupang, during their Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN, required social action internships for advanced university undergraduate students) internship in October 2002.

⁶ Since this house has functioned as unit in a multiplicity of spheres of social life, such as economic, religious, political, and marital activities, it may be described as a 'total place' (Forth, 1991: 62).

Just before the entrance to Kamutuk village, there is a small cluster of houses⁷ on the right side of the road. The houses are built on stilts (*rumah panggung*) with peaked roofs (*uma mbatangu*),⁸ symbolising that the owners are members of wealthy maramba clans. This demonstrates that the connection between physical placement and social position finds one of its clearest expressions in the positioning of houses within a village (Forth, 1991: 58). Although parts of the houses are built with imported materials, such as corrugated iron roofing, they are utilised within a traditional framework and, thus, are not considered to be symbols of modernity. The structure of the house symbolises the social status of the owner as a maramba,⁹ while the use of imported materials reflects his economic status as a wealthy individual. In this sense, the house owners combine cultural patterns and symbols to maintain status and authority in contemporary society. Sullivan stated that modern ideologies of tradition have supplanted traditional ideology in certain settings (Sullivan, 1992: 4). Presently, many houses are built with corrugated iron roofing because the coarse grass traditionally used for the roof (*imperata cylindrical*, *rumput alang-alang*) has become scarce. Poor people who are not linked to a noble clan usually use palm leaves (*palmae*) for roofing their houses.

Kamutuk village (*desa Kamutuk*) has 2,960 inhabitants, 56% of whom are Sumbanese, 42% Savunese, 2% Javanese and other ethnicities.¹⁰ This village consists of several clusters and scattered houses, rice fields, open fields, and coastal regions. The first buildings one encounters upon entering Kamutuk village are a public health centre (*Puskesmas*) and a Protestant church (*Gereja Kristen Sumba, GKS*) on the left

⁷ People call this small cluster of houses *uma injungu* (*injungu house*), because there was a big *injungu* tree in the common yard of these houses in the past. The *injungu* tree has an edible, but fibrous, sour, plum-like fruit that is sometimes cooked to eat (Lt. *Spondias Cytheria* Sonn).

⁸ *Uma mbatangu* is the house for adat ceremonies. Usually, these houses have a triangular peak or tower built in the centre of the roof (see Forth, 1981: 23). This house structure is also called *rumah menara* (*minaret house*) or *uma djangga* (*high house*).

⁹ The house in eastern Sumba is the physical embodiment of a social group, particularly a clan or other named lineal group (Forth, 1991: 62).

¹⁰ This data is summarised from the Statistical Data of the Coordination Board for National Family Planning (*Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional, BKKBN*) at the sub-district level in 2002.

side of the road. Both buildings represent the presence of supra-local elements (state and church) in this village. Not far from these buildings, after crossing the first bridge, there are other modern buildings on the right, i.e. a Chinese store, the sub-district government office, and the military headquarters. Near the sub-district office, there is an active market that draws people from surrounding regions.¹¹ A few steps further on, there are scattered houses, as well as small clusters of houses along the main road. These scattered houses are interspersed with other buildings representing supra-local interests, such as the police office, a junior high school (Sekolah Menengah Pertama, SMP), Bethel Church (Gereja Bethel), and the former kalurahan office.¹² The houses located along both sides of the main road are usually owned by Savunese. Sumbanese houses are usually clustered in a group in the hamlets located a distance from the main roads. The buildings in Kamutuk use a variety of construction materials that reflect social function and position of the owner in the village. The brick buildings, including the sub-district office, the military headquarters, the police office, schools, and churches represent New Order development in the region. The wooden buildings that are built on stilts with peaked roofs and edged with gilt represent the traditional authority of the maramba, while the houses that are made of plaited palm-leaf walls and coarse grass roofs designate the presence of the ata in the village.

There are irrigated rice fields (latang) along the main road in the direction of the Wulla Waijelu region. Prior to the colonial period, the people in Mangili built a dam known as the "ancestral dam" (bendungan nenek moyang) to irrigate their rice fields. Between 1939 and 1940, the colonial government built a new dam that was referred to as the Mangili dam, or the "Dutch dam" (bendungan Belanda). Onvlee noted that the development of agricultural infrastructure, i.e., the Mangili dam, was said to have contributed not only to an increase in agricultural production, but also to an increase in social-economic inequality

¹¹ In June 2003, this market moved to Wulu Manu (still in the Kamutuk region), about 4 kilometres from its former location.

¹² The kalurahan office is no longer used since the status of Kamutuk was changed from kalurahan to desa in May 2002.

among the Mangili (Onvlee, [1949] 1977). Following this, the New Order administration built another dam in, approximately, 1979. The presence of equipment such as hand tractors, artificial fertilizers, and rice mills or hullers indicates that agricultural activities currently use modern, rather than traditional, methods.¹³

On the far side of a second bridge, there is a three-way intersection. Following the main road, the traveller will find a Catholic church on the right, a kampong housing project of the New Order Government dated to 1974, two fields, and several scattered Sumbanese houses near the fields. Turning left at the intersection, the asphalt road leads to the centre of Kamutuk village, i.e., Kamutuk kampong. Immediately upon turning on this road, there are the wide rice fields on the right side and an elementary school (Sekolah Dasar, SD) on the left. The density of houses on both sides of the road increases after passing another Protestant Church of Sumba that is located near a three-way intersection leading to a Savunese kampong in the coastal area.¹⁴ Across the third bridge, there is a sturdy two-story house owned by the wealthiest person in Kamutuk. This house boasts construction with the most modern building materials that are only found in the city. Not far from this house, there is a large brick mosque, representing the presence of Islam in the village. Since most Sumbanese elite converted to Christianity or adhere to Marapu,¹⁵ there are few mosques in the region. After passing this mosque, there are six houses on the right that are owned by Javanese families (tau bara) who became Kamutuk residents after migrating in 1982. Before reaching Kamutuk kampong, there is another three-way intersection. The road to the right leads to another Savunese kampong along the coast, while Kamutuk kampong is straight ahead.

¹³ Farmers in this region have used modern equipment since 1984.

¹⁴ There are three kampongs in the Kamutuk region that are dominated by the Savunese, i.e. two kampongs located along the coast and one located near the sub-district office.

¹⁵ Marapu are the divine ancestors. The term also refers to the indigenous religion of the Sumbanese. After death, the Sumbanese believe that the soul will go to the world of marapu (paraingu marapu).

This kampong is famous for producing the finest hand-woven Sumbanese cloth (*kain tenun*).¹⁶ Although the woven cloth production is promoted in tourist guidebooks, few tourists ever visit this kampong.¹⁷ Historically, hand-woven cloth is one of the symbols of conspicuous consumption that boasts of authority and position. Other symbols include high-peaked ancestral homes, funerary megaliths, and elaborate fabrics in a variety of styles (Forshee, 1998: 106). According to tradition, only women of the coastal areas practice the craft of dyeing designs onto men's cloths (see Adams, 1973: 266 and 1980: 209).

The kampong typically consists of a cluster of houses where most of the houses face each other across a wide yard in the middle (see Forth, 1981). Although there are other kampongs in this village, three of which are dominated by Savunese (*tau hau*), Kamutuk kampong is considered to be the dominant kampong in the village.¹⁸ This position is secured in the historical claims of the clans who reside in this kampong (see the Contested Story of Origin in this chapter). Some houses in this kampong still function as traditional clan houses open to all members of the clan, whether they live in the kampong or have moved away. Most houses are built on stilts and lodge one or more families. Several of them have relatively high roofs. The yard is an open space used for many daily activities, such as drying crops, drying cloth, presenting feasts and adat ceremonies, as well as raising animals, such as pigs (*Sus domesticus*, *wai*), chickens (*Gallus domesticus*, *manu*), goats (*Capra* sp, *kamimi*), and dogs (*Canis familiaris*, *ahu*). A section of the yard is used as a cemetery that is marked by monuments erected as memorials to the dead. The eastern portion of the cemetery is reserved for converts to Islam.

This kampong has 21 houses of which six are made of a brick or stone, while 14 are built on stilts and constructed of wood, and one house has bamboo walls and an earthen floor. These houses shelter 268

¹⁶ In both East and West Sumba, textiles are symbols of wealth and prestige that are given to the bride-givers by the bride-takers (Hoskins, 1989a: 159).

¹⁷ During my fieldwork, tourists visited this kampong about four or five times. Most of them bought hand-woven cloth from maramba households.

¹⁸ When people mention Kamutuk, they are usually referring to Kamutuk kampong rather than Kamutuk village.

inhabitants, or 34 households.¹⁹ There are only two small houses that have coarse grass or palm leaf roofs, whereas the others have roofs of corrugated iron sheeting.

Although located on the easternmost tip of Sumba, Kamutuk village is not isolated. Twenty years ago, only one or two buses departed for this region every day. In the 1970, the journey between Waingapu and Mangili took about one week. People had to walk or ride horses (kaliti njara) to reach Melolo before continuing on buses or trucks to Waingapu. At that time, not many roads were asphalted and there were few bridges crossing the rivers (luku). In the rainy season, the roads became very slippery and the rivers flooded. These conditions made the journey very dangerous and difficult for public transportation. Presently, however Kamutuk is easily reached by public transportation in both the dry and rainy seasons. Every morning, five or six buses depart from Mangili and Wulla Waijelu for Waingapu and return in the afternoon. Similarly, there are five or six buses travelling in the opposite direction every morning and returning in the afternoon.

Since electricity was installed in 1990, most houses in Kamutuk use electricity for lighting, although it is used only between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. The installation of electricity instigated a competition between the wealthy and elite to obtain televisions with satellite reception. Many traditional maramba houses are equipped with satellite discs that are always placed in highly visible positions in the front of their houses.

A. Economic Activities

Agriculture is a local activity. The ancestral dam was constructed to irrigate the rice fields prior to the arrival of the Dutch East Indies administration in the region. Both the Dutch East Indies, and the Indonesian national governments developed agricultural infrastructure by building newer dams. Kamutuk farmers prefer to cultivate rice

¹⁹ Since more than one family may inhabit one house, I shall define a household as a unit using the same kitchen or as the persons eating from the same kitchen. When people live together in the same house but do not eat in the same kitchen, they belong to different households.

paddy (*Oryza sativa*) rather than other crops, such as maize, cassava, bean, soy, and vegetables. Since most people in Kamutuk eat rice, it is a subsistence food and is more profitable than other crops.

The daily activities of Kamutuk residents are determined by the seasons. Prior to planting, the fields are ploughed and then harrowed by hand tractors to loosen and flatten the soil. Before 1982, buffaloes were used to trample and loosen the soil (*rencah*). The men prepare the fields, while the women prepare their meals. Women are usually involved in the planting and harvesting stages. When the planting starts during the rainy season, not many adults stay in the kampong during the day. Usually, children and the elderly stay at home, while the adult women and men work together preparing and planting the rice seedlings in the old (*sawah lama*) or new (*sawah baru*) rice fields.²⁰ Ata labourers work in their patrons' (*maramba*) fields. Since the *maramba* control most of the land in Kamutuk, they control and supervise their *ata* labourers. During the early rainy season, the *ata* rarely have spare time, as they must work in their masters' rice fields before they work in their own fields or the fields allotted to them by their masters. These fields are usually located in areas that are less fertile and far from the irrigation lines.

There are fewer agricultural activities during the dry season because of less rain, insufficient water supply in the dams and irrigation system, resulting in less fertile soil. Only the rice fields located along the main irrigation lines, which are usually owned by the local leaders, have access to sufficient water. Many rice fields are used as grazing land for the livestock. The kampongs become lively. Women weave on the terraces of their houses or under the shade of trees. Hand-dyed cloths are dried in the sun in the common yard. Areca nuts (*Areca catechu*, *pinang*) are also dried on the stone tombs in front of the houses. Many women feed their pigs every morning and evening. They also draw water from a river near the kampong if the piped drinking water that is distributed

²⁰ The term *sawah lama* refers to the rice fields that are irrigated by the ancestral, Dutch or Mangili dams, while the term *sawah baru* refers to the rice fields that are irrigated by the New Order dam.

to the maramba houses runs dry. Men often sit on the terraces of the houses while smoking cigarettes made from palm leaves or gather to chat while chewing betel (Piper betle, sirih) and areca nuts.²¹ Some men go to the rice fields to check the water supply, while others go to fields to tend their herds. During this season, they must ensure the livestock have enough food and water.

In general, the end of the dry season is a difficult time for many villagers because rice stocks decline. Although the rice prices in Waingapu are relatively stable (Rp 2,200²² per kilogram), the rice prices in Kamutuk fluctuate between Rp 2,500 to Rp 3,000 per kilogram during the dry season. However, during the harvest season, the rice prices range between only Rp 1,000 to Rp 2,000 per kilogram. Even the supply of betel and areca nuts used as an essential adat element in welcoming and honouring guests declines. This is a time of hunger (*masa lapar*). In these conditions, the maramba usually allow their *ata* to look for additional income. Unlike the harvest season when the circulation of money is relatively high, many people at this time sell most of their crops even though the prices are relatively low.

Ata families often have their own livelihoods, such as weaving, selling firewood, seasonal trading of hand-woven cloth in Waingapu, and raising chickens, pigs or goats. Several *ata* tend 0.5 to 1 hectare of rice fields as the main source of their income. Many *ata* from a wealthy clan in Kamutuk own their own rice fields (0.5 to 2 hectares) and livestock (1 to 5 animals) and are allowed to manage their own household budgets.

Most Sumbanese in the *kampong* rely on multiple sources of income, including agriculture, husbandry, and weaving. In contrast, many Savunese living in the *kampong* near the sub-district office rely

²¹ Since the chewing of betel was a mark of full membership in the community (Forth, 1981: 164), to refuse to offer betel or to take it when proffered was esteemed a deadly insult (Reid, 1985: 531). In Sumba, the long pod of the betel vine is considered to be a more appropriate male symbol than the leaves used elsewhere. This compliments the feminine roundness of the areca nut. The explicit sexual symbolism is commonly understood (Forth, 1981: 360).

²² Rupiah is Indonesian currency. It is marked by Rp preceding the nominal, e.g. Rp 2,000.

not only on their rice fields, but also on their jobs as schoolteachers, religious teachers (guru Injil), and government employees. These Savunese migrated from Melolo (46 kilometres from Kamutuk) in 1940 (see Hambarandi, 1982: 41).²³ Based on the Francis' Commission Report of 1831, Fox noted that the first migration of Savunese to Sumba occurred in the early nineteenth century through a royal marriage alliance between the ruler of Melolo on Sumba and the ruler of Seba on Savu (Fox, 1977: 162). These Savunese established a village in Melolo and maintained good relationships (*bisa bergaul*) with the Sumbanese. These early Savunese are, thus, related to Sumbanese ancestors. In contrast, the Savunese living in the two kampongs on the coast engage in fishing, seaweed harvesting and lontar-centred²⁴ enterprises, such as palm sugar (*gula sabu*) and palm wine (*panaraci*) production (see Fox, 1977: 169). Both of these kampongs are separated from Sumbanese kampongs and these Savunese rarely have direct contact with the Sumbanese. Consequently, the Savunese in these kampongs are still considered to be immigrants from Savu who came in search of a better life. They are not affiliated with the Sumbanese ancestors.

B. Livestock

Livestock represent both social and economic capital in Kamutuk. In fact, livestock are used more for social, rather than economic, purposes. Sumbanese claim that their lives are inseparable from their livestock (*banda*).²⁵ According to Onvlee, the word *banda* refers to all kinds of animate or inanimate property, such as *banda la marada* ("possessions in the field," that is, livestock) and *banda la uma* ("possessions in the house") (Onvlee, 1980: 195). Livestock, including horses, buffaloes, and cattle, are herded in large groups in the fields. Only a small number

²³ The older groups have intermixed with the Sumbanese and forgotten their origins, while the Savunese living in the coastal areas immigrated only a few generations ago and are still in contact with the residents of the island of Savu (see Keers, 1948: 30).

²⁴ Lontar is a kind of palm.

²⁵ The relationship between man and animal is such that an animal is more than an impersonal possession that can easily be estranged or given to strangers (Onvlee, 1980: 196).

of livestock (usually less than fifteen animals) are kept in the stables surrounding the kampongs during the night. Men tend the livestock in the fields, while women care for the animals that are kept near the houses, such as pigs, goats, and chickens.

In general, horses, buffaloes, pigs, and chicken have more value in Sumbanese adat ceremonies than cattle and goats, which are imported animals and thus have an anomalous status in the zoological taxonomy of the ancient Sumbanese (see Douglas, 1966).²⁶ Both of these animals are not used for sacrifices and reciprocal exchanges in Sumbanese tradition. Horses and buffaloes are both used for sacrifices and for ritual exchanges, while pigs and chickens are used only as sacrificial animals. The Sumbanese claim that they are unable to refuse their obligations to provide animals in accordance with their status and position within their clans. In Kamutuk village, only about 5% of the households have more than ten heads of livestock (horses, cattle, and buffaloes).²⁷ In Kamutuk kampong, which consists of 34 Sumbanese households, however, about 26% of the households have more than ten heads of livestock. Based on these figures, it is apparent that not all Sumbanese of Kamutuk kampong have enough animals required for sacrifice or exchange. Except for ata who usually rely on their masters' households, Sumbanese must procure animals for sacrifice and exchange for particular adat occasions. To do this, they may sell property or borrow animals from wealthier relatives. Poor maramba sometimes "borrow" animals from the ata within their clans if they have them.

As animals that have little importance in the adat ceremonies, cattle and goats are more valuable for economic purposes than buffaloes, horses, and pigs. Possession of livestock is especially beneficial in coping with unexpected needs, purchasing modern equipment, rebuilding houses, or sending children to universities in other regions or other

²⁶ Animals of this status are considered dirty because, generally, anything that defies classification or does not have a place in an ordered view of the world evokes feelings of defilement or pollution. Dirt is matter out of place (Douglas, 1966: 35).

²⁷ Based on data of livestock and population in Kamutuk village, 2002 (Statistical data of Pahunga Lodu Sub-district Office, 2003).

islands.²⁸ Since cattle command higher prices and are not important for the adat ceremonies, they are considered more profitable than horses and buffaloes.

Since livestock have been the common standard of value for all prestige transactions among Sumbanese, which include alliance negotiations, land purchases, and the payment of fines and blood-wealth, they represent a powerful means in maintaining basic social relations, displaying social status in the community, and aspiring to political roles at the local level (see Hoskins, 1993b: 162). Without livestock, Sumbanese are not able to live in accordance with their status or to achieve their goals. Livestock serve both economic and social purposes (see Onvlee, 1980: 204).

The social structure of Sumbanese society is supported through exchanges that are based on and reinforced by differences in status, power and wealth. Livestock (horses and buffalos) as means of exchange (*dangangu*) are very important in determining the relationships amongst the clans. Commonly, livestock, *mamuli* (an ornament made of gold, silver, or copper that symbolises the female genitals, representing female sexuality and reproductive powers), and other exchange requirements are the obligatory gifts of the bride-taking clans, which must be reciprocated by obligatory gifts from the bride-giver clans, such as hand-woven cloth. The basic requirements of exchange are horses, buffaloes, pigs, hand-woven cloth, *mamuli*, and, occasionally, *kanataru* (a gold chain made without plaiting), *haluku lulungu* (a plaited chain of gold or silver), and *lulu amahu* (a plaited copper chain). The three chains represent male genitals and symbolise male sexuality.

²⁸ There are twelve elementary schools (*Sekolah Dasar*, SD) and one junior high school (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*, SMP) in the Mangili region. Students who want to continue their studies in senior high school (*Sekolah Menengah Atas*, SMA) must go to Melolo (about 46 kilometres) and Waingapu (about 106 kilometres). Since the Kristen Wirawacana (Kriswina) Institute of Economy (*Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi*) was established in Waingapu in September 1997, students are now able to continue their studies in Waingapu. There are no universities on Sumba.



Figure 5. Gifts for Reciprocal Exchange

Traditionally, after the bride-giver and the bride-taker agree on the number of reciprocal gifts, the bride-taker presents the agreed number of horses, buffaloes and mamuli, while the bride-giver reciprocates with the hand-woven cloths and then slaughters a pig as a symbol of the agreement.²⁹ The status, prestige, and wealth of clans are measured by the amount of livestock exchanged. The value of sacrificial pigs also reflects the status, prestige, and wealth of the clans. The length of the pig's tusk, which indicates the animal's age, indicates its value. Since many pigs died of disease about five years ago, pigs with long tusks are now rare. Presently, a pig's value is also measured by the amount of meat on its body.

²⁹ Horses, buffaloes and mamuli are classified as "male" items, while hand-woven cloth and pigs are classified as "female" items.

Since Umbu Kelawai and his relatives converted to Islam, they are forbidden to use pigs as sacrificial animals.³⁰ Instead they use cattle or, occasionally, goats for ceremonial purposes. Those who have not converted to Islam often claim that the blood of pigs flowing on the kampong square is not only an essential requirement indicating an accord between clans, but is also symbol of unity with the ancestors (marapu). Pig blood symbolises not only the bonds between clans, but also between the Sumbanese and their ancestors. Initially, when they involved their Moslem relatives in the adat ceremonies, Sumbanese had to choose between using pigs as traditionally required or to substitute the pigs with cattle. Presently, although they claim that using cattle as sacrificial animals is not proper, they are forced to use them out of respect for their Moslem relatives. Prepared food for the feast is presented separately, i.e. pork and beef or goat meat.

Horses and buffaloes are slaughtered (ditikam) for sacrifice in funeral ceremonies. The number of animals slaughtered for these ceremonies is determined by the rank of deceased person in the traditional social stratification and the wealth of his/her clan. The traditional belief is that these sacrificial animals will accompany the soul of the dead to the afterworld, however, it is also a way to underscore the fame of one's own or one's clan's name (kaba mata).³¹ Large numbers of animals slaughtered for sacrifice measure the power and influence of a maramba family. A family's power and influence increase in accordance with its capability to display and circulate its livestock for exchange and sacrifice. Maramba must show that they own livestock. Hoskins states that herds are highly visible and since many people may have claims on livestock because of kinship, marriage, or earlier gifts, a wealthy person is constantly under pressure to circulate his animals to others (Hoskins, 1993b: 163).

³⁰ Umbu Kelawai was a leader of Kanatangu Uma Andung lineage and was the first maramba leader to convert to Islam in, approximately, 1953 (See "Indigenous Religion at the Crossroads" in this chapter and "The Impact of World Religions" in Chapter Three).

³¹ Kaba mata means prestige. This term is used to describe the ways the Sumbanese emphasise, pursue, and display their fame, status and prestige.

By controlling a large number of animals, a maramba is able to sponsor his relatives for their adat ceremonies. He is also able to establish positive relationships with other local leaders by presenting them with livestock. Contributing animals for sacrifice and exchange is not considered to be a loss, but is, rather, perceived of as circulation of property. Individuals are able to display their political prominence through these practises. Since livestock represent a powerful means in maintaining basic social relationships and displaying the status and prestige of the clans, they often become targets of aggression in competitions and disputes amongst the Sumbanese. Because of this, it is difficult for the ata and non-Sumbanese living in Kamutuk village to own large numbers of livestock. Even if they could afford them, they would not be able to protect them. Only maramba have the means to sufficiently control livestock.

C. Maramba and Ata

When I arrived in front of Umbu Pala's house, a woman hurriedly spread out a plaited mat (tapa) out on the terrace and invited me to sit down. I was offered betel and areca nuts to chew. While I was chewing the betel and areca nuts, Umbu Pala and his wife came out and sat in front of me. They were pleased that I had come to visit them. Umbu Pala opened the discussion by explaining that, according to Sumbanese adat, the offering of betel and areca nuts were an expression of honouring guests. Several more people joined us. They sat at a distance and did not become involved in the discussion. They remained silent and occasionally smiled and nodded.

In the middle of discussion, Umbu Mana and his friend came to join us. Umbu Mana took a seat on the mat close to me, while his friend sat off the mat but near Umbu Mana. Then Umbu Pala offered them betel and areca nuts to chew. A woman brought three covered cups of coffee and one smaller uncovered cup of coffee. She gave the covered cups to Umbu Mana, Umbu Pala, and me, and the smaller one to Umbu Pala's wife. Later, someone brought several glasses of coffee without covers for Umbu Mana's friend and the others. I wondered, "Why do Umbu Mana, Umbu Pala, Umbu Pala's wife, and I sit on the mat, while the

others do not?" "Why does the host serve cups of coffee with covers to Umbu Mana and me, while the others are served with glasses of coffee without covers?"

Umbu Pala and Umbu Mana are maramba who undertake leading roles in all of their clans' adat affairs. Although Umbu Pala and his clan no longer control large numbers of livestock and common property, the villagers still honour his lineage. Similarly, Umbu Mana is a member of wealthy lineage, but he no longer owns much livestock. Umbu Pala owns only six head of cattle and 1.25 hectares of land, and has two ata in his household, while Umbu Mana only has three horses and one ata in his household. It is said that the livestock of Umbu Pala and his relatives decreased after the heirlooms of their traditional house were sold. Umbu Mana's livestock and land were sold to pay gambling debts. Although they are without substantial means, other maramba elected them to positions in the village government administration. Umbu Pala was a former head of a hamlet (*kepala dusun*), while Umbu Mana became the head of a social development institute (*Lembaga Pembangunan Masyarakat*) after his elder brother was elected to become village head.

The preceding story illustrates that daily social interactions in Kamutuk are still based on positions within the clans, according to the traditional social stratification system. Those who sat on the mat and were served covered cups of coffee were special guests or maramba, while those who did not sit on the mat and were served glasses of coffee were ata. The Sumbanese are very much aware of their respective social positions, status, and existing relationships. At the gathering at Umbu Pala's house, individuals sat either near the centre of the meeting space or at the periphery, in accordance with their social status. How the host served refreshments and whether they became actively involved in the discussion or remained passive reflected their social classification. Although the position of maramba implies ownership of considerable property (livestock, land, and ata), this is not the case with Umbu Pala and Umbu Mana who have not lost their status as maramba even though their properties have decreased.

The Sumbanese social stratification system consists of the maramba (high maramba, maramba bokulu, and low maramba, maramba kudu),

independent people (high kabihu, kabihu bokulu, and low kabihu, kabihu kudu), and ata (high ata, ata bokulu, and low ata, ata kudu) (Kapita, 1976b: 19). Ever since 1911, with the last of the local rulers in this region, the distinction between high and low ranks in each group and between maramba and tau kabihu has become increasingly vague. However, the strict difference between ata and maramba remains. (I will elaborate on the differences between ata bokulu and ata kudu in Chapter Six). In the Kamutuk kampong, about 60% of the population are ata, 10% are tau kabihu and 30% are maramba. The local leaders represent one-sixth of the maramba class. The stratification system does not include any of the other ethnic groups residing in the village, including the Savunese, Javanese, and Chinese.³² Although they are also residents of Kamutuk village and must honour the Sumbanese elite, they are rarely involved in marriage affiliations, reciprocal exchanges, adat ceremonies, and kinship relationships.

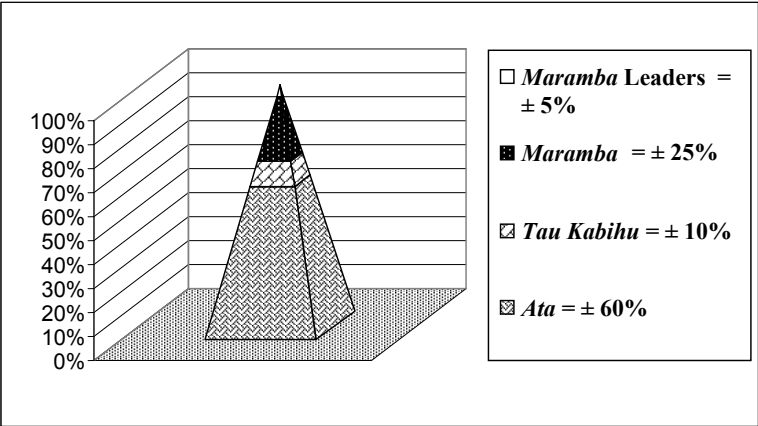


Figure 6. Social Stratification of the Sumbanese in Kamutuk Kampong

Although it has been claimed that the living conditions of ata in Kamutuk are better than in other regions, such as Umalulu, Rindi, or Paraingu Kareha, the differentiation between ata and maramba is

³² In general, Javanese in Kamutuk are not rich. Most Savunese living in the coastal regions are poor, while Savunese living in a kampong near sub-district office generally do better than those on the coast. Generally, Savunese who are able to maintain positive relationships with local Sumbanese elite are rich.

still very strict in Kamutuk. The ata always support their masters in everything they say and do as a form of paying respect. They always say, "Whatever umbu says is right" (Djia halla ma ya wana i umbu). The ata rarely have an opportunity to express their opinions in front of their masters or in an open forum. It is generally thought that ata lack adequate knowledge to participate in the decision-making process. Even the ata who have a relatively high education rarely have an opportunity to occupy any important social position in the village.³³ Most maramba control ata and incorporate them into their households to assist with social and economic activities of their households or clans. The higher the number of ata in a household indicates greater wealth and influence of the maramba. Control of ata symbolises the power and status of the nobles. Hoskins states that in East Sumba, the ata-maramba relationship reflects the continuing respect for hierarchy and the prestige of noble families (Hoskins, 2004: 106). Wealthy maramba often increase the number of their ata through adat ceremonies in which they exchange livestock and mamuli for female ata.

The ata of the wealthy maramba usually live with them as members of their households to fulfil ritual and economic roles. Traditionally, a ruler's power was contingent upon his control of slaves who provided a fixed pool of labour for the cultivation of wet-rice fields and whose status was marked by ritual and legal subordination (see Hoskins, 2004: 95). The ata who rely on the wealthy maramba households do not necessarily have better living conditions than the ata in the relatively poor maramba households. Their living conditions are dependent more on the disposition, rather than the wealth, of their maramba. In general, wealth is used for symbols of status, prestige, power, and authority, rather than for improving living conditions. Ownership of modern objects, such as satellite dishes, televisions, hand tractors, hullers, rice mills, and chain saws, are often used to legitimate the position of maramba as the highest rank in the traditional society. The strict differences in social stratification are maintained by the use of a

³³ The highest position for an ata to occupy, which is allowed by local leaders in Kamutuk, is the head of the neighborhood association (Rukun Warga).

combination of local and adopted symbols to display status, authority, and prestige at the local level.

Sumbanese life centres on clans and their relationships to each other. Membership in clan groups, i.e., maramba, tau kabihu, and ata, defines daily interactions. The cognitive maps of social status provide guidelines on how to act and honour each other based on respective social status, positions as bride-givers and bride-takers, elder and younger brothers, fathers and sons, and masters and "slaves". Social status also determines reciprocal obligations in accordance with Sumbanese adat.

The relationship between maramba and ata has all the characteristics of patronage, implying reciprocal, but unequal obligations. Classified as affiliates of their masters' clans, the ata have obligations to pay respect to their masters and support their social and economic activities. As a rule, the ata work for their maramba without receiving a wage, but the maramba help their ata to find spouses and homes, pay their bride prices, provide the basic needs of funeral ceremonies, and provide clothing and food.³⁴ In other words, the maramba guarantee the basic daily needs, as well as sponsor the adat ceremonies, of their ata. Although the maramba-ata relationship is one of domination and vertical dependency of the ata on the maramba, it is not one of pure exploitation.

Maramba-ata relationships are presently undergoing several adjustments. The maramba in Kamutuk and in other parts of Sumba no longer refer to ata as "slaves", but as "children of the house" because slavery has been legally abolished in Indonesia.³⁵ The term, "children of the house", gives the impression that the ata are the members of the household and not "slaves." The maramba also use the term for "younger brother/sister" (ari or adik) when calling ata. In return, the ata address maramba as "elder brother/sister" (aya or kakak). Since the Sumbanese have begun to assess their possessions in an economic sense, it is not surprising that many maramba tend to exploit their ata as labourers while only minimally fulfilling their obligations in

³⁴ Among ata groups, they usually refer to their masters as bos (boss).

³⁵ People in other parts of Sumba refer to ata as "people of the house" (tau la uma).

guaranteeing the daily and adat needs of their ata. If a maramba is unable to fulfil the needs of their ata, they may allow their ata to live in separate houses and have their own livelihoods when they are not assisting their maramba.

A maramba will lose his/her rank, however, if they are not able to maintain their marriage affiliations within their class. Since the purity of noble blood is important in maintaining power and authority, the maramba usually assist their relatives by supplying them with the livestock required for suitable marriage exchanges. If a maramba marries an ata, the descendents of the union may become ata.

D. Contested Story of Origin

Although there is no historical evidence about the migration of their ancestors to the island of Sumba, Sumbanese have their own stories about the arrival of their forefathers.³⁶ These stories trace the arrivals of the clans in Kamutuk and all of Sumba. The maramba claim these oral histories and origin myths as legitimisation of their claim to sovereignty in their domain (Forshee, 2001: 16). They trace their clans to these forefathers of the Sumbanese who landed at Cape Sasar³⁷ after passing through the Malay Peninsula, Singapore, Riau, Java, Bali, Bima, Makassar, Ende, Rote Ndao, Savu, and Raejua³⁸ (Kapita, 1976b: 13; Haripranata, 1984: 15; Tunggul, 2000: 8-9 and 2004: 6-8; and Beding and Beding, 2003: 37). According to this story, the travellers built the first settlements at Cape Sasar before spreading out to other areas (tana) on Sumba.

There are different stories about how the Sumbanese forefathers arrived at Cape Sasar. Some claim that there was a stone bridge that

³⁶ In a society that identifies closely with its Founder Deity, this story sets the psychological tone of the community. It keynotes the place of the community and its powerlessness in the region (Adams, 1971: 138).

³⁷ Cape Sasar is located on the north central coast of Sumba. The Sumbanese refer to Cape Sasar as Cape Haharu.

³⁸ Malaka–Tana Bara, Hapa Riu–Ndua Riu, Hapa Njawa–Ndua Njawa, Ruhuku–Mbali, Ndima–Makaharu, Endi–Ambarai, Enda–Ndau, Haba–Rai Njua are Malacca Peninsula, Singapore, Riau, Java, Bali, Bima, Makassar, Ende, Rote Ndao, Savu, and Raejua.

connected Bima, on the south coast of Sumbawa, and Cape Sasar,³⁹ and that the first waves of ancestors arrived via this bridge.⁴⁰ A forefather of the Sumbanese who had supernatural powers later shattered the bridge with an axe during a conflict. The next arrivals at Cape Sasar arrived in canoes. Others claim that there was no bridge and that all of their forefathers arrived at Cape Sasar by canoes. The various narratives make differing claims regarding which clans arrived first and, thus, reaffirm the authority and status of those clans in the contemporary context.

Although there are different versions about the arrival of their ancestors, all of these stories agree that Cape Sasar was the place where the all of the clans gathered and agreed upon the Sumbanese adat before they spread throughout the island. The clans agreed on matters such as worshiping their ancestors (*marapu*) who landed at Cape Sasar, tracing the descent lines of the clans, determining the rules of marriage exchange, and determining the territories for establishing permanent residences (Kapita, 1976a: 15-16; Tunggul, 2000: 13-16 and 2004: 12-14).

Subsequent stories about how the clans explored and settled throughout the island express the great courage (*kaborangu*), invulnerability (*kobulu*), cleverness, power, and heroism (*makaborangu*) of the forefathers (see Vel, 1994: 77). These stories reaffirm the current status and roles of the clans. The ancestors of the Maru, Watubulu, and Matolangu clans travelled to the east. They sought a suitable site to plant taro (*Colocasia esculenta*, *keladi*). They tried to plant it in the estuaries, but were unsuccessful until they reached the estuary in Mangili where the taro grew well. They decided to settle there.

Since Mangili had already been settled by several of the original Sumbanese clans, the arrival of these three new groups spurred a tribal war.⁴¹ The new arrivals acknowledged Umbu Kaka Manau, the fore-

³⁹ Based on the phrase, "Haharu Malai–Kataka–Lindi Watu" (Long Cape–Axe–Stone Bridge), from a poem in ritual speech, some Sumbanese claim that a stone bridge had once connected Cape Sasar and Bima.

⁴⁰ The members of several clans in Mangili, i.e., Matolangu, Maru, and Watubulu, claim that their forefathers were among the first arrivals.

⁴¹ According to Kapita, the original clans in Mangili region are Mbukutu–Mangili Wai, Puhu–Rewatia; Kurungu–Kawangi, Kawangi–Wanggirara; Kandara–Ana Dapi, Ana Watumanu (Kapita, 1976a: 23).

father of the Matolangu clan, as their commander. Wanggirara, one of the original clans, assisted the newcomers, who, in the end, were victorious. The triumphant clans – Maru, Watubulu, Matolangu, and Wanggirara – built their first permanent settlement on a hilltop presently called Paraingu Mangili.⁴² The clusters of houses on the hilltop are typical of the early houses in Sumba.

The four clans claimed the distinction of being the "original" clans in the area, the pioneer lords of the land (*mangu tanangu*) in Mangili. They distributed the lands in region amongst themselves and to those clans who arrived later. They also shared and distributed power among the clans. This distribution had residual effects, as the pioneer clans often referred back to these earlier gifts in expectation for more contributions from the later arrivals. The victorious clans also claimed the right to retain political and economic control over the Mangili region.

Eventually, the pioneers abandoned the original hilltop settlement. They moved to the lowland area near their rice fields and built a number of new settlements. The clans of Matolangu, Wanggirara, and several others moved to Kamutuk.⁴³ The pioneer clans in Kamutuk should be both the Matolangu and Wanggirara clans, however, the Matolangu clan has assumed political and economic control in the region over the Wanggirara clan. It is said that the Wanggirara clan has not produced any sons since they lived on the original hilltop settlement. Presently, only one family represents the Wanggirara clan in Kamutuk. Since descent is patrilineal, i.e., passed down through the male line from father to son, a clan without sons cannot be represented in the political and economic life of the community.

⁴² Kapita stated that the clans that lived at Paraingu Mangili (*La Tadulu Wa–La Majangga Dita*) were Maru, Watubulu, Matolangu, Wanggirara, Lukunara, Kabulingu, Mbaradita, Weramata, Kanjanga Luku, and Purungu (Kapita, 1979: 83-85).

⁴³ Since my informants were not able to indicate the date of the move, I estimated the date of the move based on the dates on the stone tombs of Umbu Hina Hungguwali's father and his grandfather, and on the period of his power as a local ruler of Mangili from 1901-1911. Umbu Hina Hungguwali's father, Umbu Lapu Karahanjara, died in Kamutuk kampung and was buried in the original kampung, as was his grandfather, Umbu Koparihi. This indicates that the moving of the settlement from the hilltop site to the lowlands had occurred between 1800-1900. Sumba came under direct Dutch control in the early 20th century when a government outpost was established on the island. It is possible that the relocation of the settlement may have been part of Dutch Governor Daendels's efforts in 1809 to standardise the villages (see Breman, 1980: 11).

One of the later arrivals, the Kanatangu clan, acquired political and economic power equal to that of the Matolangu clan through a marriage affiliation. When an ancestor of Kanatangu, Umbu Yiwa Tarabihu, arrived in Mangili, he married a noble woman from the Matolangu clan without paying any bride price (*la lei tama*).⁴⁴ Since he did not pay the bride price, his clan did not have rights over the children of the marriage. His children became members of the Matolangu clan. Later, he also married a noble woman from another clan, this time paying the bride price. The children of this second marriage established the Kanatangu clan in Mangili. Umbu Hina Hungguwali, a ruler of Mangili (*raja Mangili*) from 1901-1911, was a *maramba* of the Kanatangu clan (see Appendix B).⁴⁵ At that time, the Matolangu clan owned many plots of land. Currently, the Matolangu and Kanatangu clans control much of the land in Kamutuk. Their ties are strengthened by marriage affiliations in which the Kanatangu clan is the bride-taker, while the Matolangu clan is the bride-giver.⁴⁶ Traditionally, the bride-giver holds a higher position than the bride-taker (see Needham, 1980: 24). Both clans admit that their family ties influence their exercise of power in village affairs.

Sumbanese trace their position and status within their clans and in exchange relationships with other clans through these stories (see Keane, 1997a). Although most Sumbanese know the stories of their forefathers in general, the levels of understanding and the ability to retell the stories vary. Only the few *maramba* who hold authority and power in the region have the skill to narrate these stories in public.

Based on the old stories, the Matolangu clan often boasts of superiority over the other clans. They claim the rights to leadership roles in Kamutuk, as well as rights to distribute land and power to other

⁴⁴ *La lei tama* is a type of marriage in accordance with customary law where the bridegroom relinquishes his clan membership and becomes a member of his bride's clan.

⁴⁵ The term *raja* is used for a local ruler who was appointed by the colonial government.

⁴⁶ The Matolangu clan is divided into several lineages, including Matolangu Uma Andung (there are no longer any descendants in Kamutuk), Matolangu Uma Djangga Wuku, and Matolangu Uma Kaluki, while the Kanatangu clan is divided into several lineages, including Kanatangu Uma Andung, Kanatangu Uma Randi, and Kanatangu Uma Bara. The term of *uma* refers to a kinship household, which is related to a special type of house.

clans. These claims are strengthened by the position of the Matolangu clan as the bride-giver in marriage affiliations with several other clans in Kamutuk. To retain their position of precedence, this founding clan must be in a position of bride-giver to other clans (see Fox, 1988). Stretching the argument further, maramba of the Matolangu clan often say that "all people in Kamutuk are members of the Matolangu clan," because they have supplied all of the other clans with brides (who have become mothers of their children). Although it is a political construction, the villagers seem to accept this claim as being indisputable (see Fox, 1988). In this sense, the establishment of Matolangu hegemony has been successful.

Referring to different stories, the Kanatangu clan often claims to be the second ranking superior clan in Kamutuk. They base their claim on the story of Umbu Hina Hungguwali, who ruled on behalf of the pioneer clans, i.e., Maru, Watubulu, Matolangu, and Wanggirara clans, between 1901 and 1911. His descendents, the Kanatangu clan, claim rights to control land in Kamutuk. The regalia Umbu Hina Hungguwali received from the Dutch East Indies government support their claims to local authority, as does their marriage affiliation with the Matolangu clan.

Both the Matolangu and Kanatangu clans have been able to transform the stories of their ancestors' arrival at Cape Sasar and in Kamutuk into claims for their economic and political control in the region. Using a metaphor of a tree trunk with branches, this story of origins is still used as the main argument for domination by the two pioneer clans in every dispute amongst the clans (see Fox, 1988). The Matolangu and Kanatangu clans continue to dominate the later arriving clans and other ethnic groups in Kamutuk.

E. Indigenous Religion at the Crossroads

Practise of the indigenous religion (Marapu) in Kamutuk village is currently peripheral. Followers of Marapu often state, "We are still pagans (kafir)...yes, like this." Even in Sumbanese, the term tau kapir ("person who does not believe [a specified religion]") identifies individuals who adhere to Marapu. This reference to pagans is aligned with national state

policy that has penetrated into the villages since 1966.⁴⁷ On Sumba, however, the size and relative isolation of a large pagan population softened the initial impact of government policies that encouraged conversion of Marapu adherents (see Hoskins, 1993a: 277). There was only a slight increase of approximately 7.7% of Protestants in Sumba between 1963 (16.3%) and 1968 (24%).⁴⁸ In 1980, the number of Protestants and Catholics officially reached approximately 50% in East Sumba (see Hambarandi, 1982: 15). Hoskins stated that the numbers of Protestants and Catholics increased officially because the churches allowed villagers to return to the church after they committed church-identified sins, such as polygamy or offering Marapu sacrifices (Hoskins, 1987b: 138 and 1993a: 278). The government census in 1990 listed only five officially recognised religions, of which Marapu was not an option. Villagers were forced to choose from amongst the five officially sanctioned religions, i.e., Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Presently only a very small percentage (2.7%) of the total population of Kamutuk officially follow Marapu. However, although 80.1% of the total population are Protestant, tau harani; 8.8% Moslem, tau halang; and 8.4% Catholic—tau harani (see Biro Pusat Statistik, Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2002a),⁴⁹ Marapu retains an important role in regulating social interactions amongst the Sumbanese.

According to Marapu beliefs, the relationships between human beings and their ancestors (marapu) should be in harmony and balance. The nature of this relationship implies reciprocity. Offerings are presented to the ancestors with hopes that the members of the clan or community will be rewarded with good fortune. When, however, humans are not attentive of their ancestors, disasters may plague the members of the clan. If an individual makes a mistake with his/her

⁴⁷ Officially, the Indonesian government recognizes five religions - Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

⁴⁸ This is based on data from the Protestant Church of Sumba (rewritten by the general secretary of the Protestant Church of Sumba on 20 February 2004).

⁴⁹ In East Sumba, the numbers of people adhering to indigenous religion and converting to universalist religions are 70.9% Protestantism, 6.3% Catholicism, 4.9% Moslem, 0.1% Hinduism or Buddhism, and 17.8% others, or Marapu (Biro Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2002b).

ancestors, other clan members may suffer misfortune (see Yewangoe, 1980: 56 and Fowler, 2003: 317).

The first ancestor (marapu) of the clan is a divine spirit and an intermediary between the living and the almighty God.⁵⁰ Every human action in this visible world must be approved by the marapu in the invisible world. At the beginning of the 20th century, the code of ceremonial etiquette and rules for interaction with the marapu also served to regulate marriage choices, the division of land, administrative prerogatives, and the exchange of livestock and cloth (Hoskins, 1987b: 139 and 1993a: 278). Religious concepts are well integrated in Sumbanese daily life (see van Hout, 1999: 15). It is, therefore, not surprising that in each traditional house there is a place to store the sacred objects connected with ancestor worship (tangu marapu). Several altars (katoda) for worshiping and presenting offerings to the marapu are strategically placed where daily activities are conducted, whether inside or outside the kampongs.⁵¹

Rituals in ancestor worship require the involvement of the clan members and, upon particular occasions, other related clans. As an indigenous religion, Marapu defines the rules that regulate the relationships of people and clans in a particular region, including cooperation, ritual exchanges, mutual responsibilities of ancestor worship, distribution of land, and obligations of conducting rituals. The presence of Christianity and Islam, however, has altered the procedures for worshiping the ancestors. Altars for worship and presenting offerings have become only a memory amongst the elderly in recalling the glories of past rituals. The altars located in the fields, rice paddies, gardens, and

⁵⁰ The term *na mapa turukungu lii na-na ma parapangu pekada* means that the marapu are able to convey all messages and desires of human beings accurately to the almighty God. Similarly, the term *na lindi papa kalangu, na ketu papajolangu* means that the marapu are the bridges by which human beings receive divine gifts.

⁵¹ There are many kinds of *katoda* in Mangili, including the *katoda paraingu* (located in front of the house of the paraingu or kampong head), *katoda kawindu* (in front of each kampong house), *katoda pindu* (at the gate of paraingu, or kampong), *katoda padangu* (in the fields where the livestock graze), *katoda latangu* or *woka* (in the rice fields or gardens), *katoda patamangu* (on the edge of forests that are used as hunting grounds), *katoda purungu mihi* (in coastal areas), *katoda mananga* (in estuaries of rivers), and *pahomba* (in fields outside the kampong).

forests are used only as the designations of property. Only a few people still have *katoda kawindu* in front of their houses for practicing ancestor worship. Presently, it is said that those who adhere to Marapu, the *tau kapir*, do not only practise ancestor worship, but they also use chicken intestines and pig livers (*ura manu* and *eti wai*) for divination in every ritual.

In general, however, the presence of churches and the national state in Sumba have not replaced the pillars of the indigenous religion. Although most people have converted to Christianity, interactions amongst Sumbanese are still guided by the code of ceremonial etiquette and rules for interactions with the marapu, which are said to be inseparable from Sumbanese adat. Individuals, no matter what their formally claimed religion may be, tend to act and interact in accordance with their positions in their clans, which are strictly regulated by adat. It is, therefore, not surprising that the state and church have accommodated for polygamy and the offering of sacrifices to the marapu. Meanwhile, the Sumbanese of Kamutuk have defined their new faith in their own terms. The phrase "do not adhere to Marapu" means that people do not openly conduct rituals of ancestor worship that sacrifice animals on altars and do not use chicken intestines and pig livers for divination. While the religious leaders – Protestant ministers, Catholic priests, or Moslem *ustad*⁵² – lead certain public ceremonies, the marapu priests conduct secret ceremonies in which animals may be sacrificed for divining the future.

A retired Protestant minister in Kamutuk village stated that prior to 1980, the majority of Protestants in the village were Savunese, while Sumbanese Protestant converts were a minority. Formerly, efforts to baptise the Sumbanese encountered resistance from local clan leaders. Conversion to Christianity increased slightly following the communist tragedy in 1965. Although the main events of the tragedy occurred on the island of Java, its effects reached Sumba. Several people in the *kampongs* near Kamutuk were accused of being members of the

⁵² Ustad is an Islamic teacher.

communist party and were apprehended by the military. Sumbanese who were adherents of Marapu in these kampongs changed their religious affiliations to one of the officially recognised religions to evade the accusation of membership in the communist party. Despite the new converts, Protestants remained in a minority in Kamutuk (in 1981 they made up 28.5% of the population, see Hambarandi, 1982: 49).

Generally, Sumbanese followed their local clan leaders' religious conversions. The conversion of a maramba was often followed by the conversion of all the members of his household and also other related households.

Moslems and Catholics are concentrated in Kamutuk kampong and the immediate surroundings, while Protestants live scattered throughout the village. Islam arrived in Kamutuk in 1953 when a leader of the Kanatangu Uma Andung lineage, Umbu Kelawai, married a Moslem woman from Melolo who was a descendent of Moslem sailors and traders who had settled in Ende, Flores, three or four generations previously (see Hoskins, 1987b: 145). Most members of this clan then converted to Islam, while a few remained loyal to Marapu to tend the ancestor worship service in their traditional house. The Moslems living in Sumba are said to possess strong magical powers, originating from the conversion of Umbu Kelawai and his relatives to Islam. Presently, the Kanatangu Uma Andung clan, whose leaders are considered to be the most important Moslem figures in Kamutuk because their grandfather was the first person to convert to Islam in the region, dominate the Moslems in Kamutuk.

The emergence of Catholicism in Kamutuk is linked to a dispute between a leader of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki lineage and a Protestant minister around 1990. (The dispute is described in Chapter Three.) Following this dispute, the leader of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki clan decided to convert from Protestantism to Catholicism. His relatives and ata also converted. Presently, the members of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki and Kanatangu Uma Bara lineages dominate the Catholics in Kamutuk.

Since Sumbanese incorporate the names of their grandfather or grandmother (boku or apu)⁵³ into their names, their positions in the traditional social stratification system are clearly identifiable. Generally, after ata have been baptised, they prefer to use their Christian names, e.g., Melky, Josep, Mateus, Ana, and Florence, rather than their original names. Christian names carry a connotation of equality for the ata that Sumbanese names do not. In contrast, baptised maramba prefer to use their original names, or umbu and rambu, rather than their Christian names. The Sumbanese Moslems in Kamutuk, both maramba and ata, add Arabic names in front of their Sumbanese names, and then use these Arabic names in daily encounters, e.g., Abidin, Habib, Habiba, Harun, Mustofa, Husein, and Ismail. The maramba retain the prefix umbu or rambu as an indication of their social status.

F. Leadership in Kamutuk

The Sumbanese elite in the villages are still dominated by claims of precedence. The stories of origin and the reconstruction of descent lines are the major factors in determining who is to be the first, foremost, elder, superior, greater, or central (see Fox, 1988). Relationships amongst clans and individuals people are appraised as superior, equal, and inferior. It is, therefore, not surprising that every clan has its own oral history about their origins and their ancestors. These stories determine claims on social classification, rank, power and authority in relation to other people and clans, as well as future claims on land control, livestock, ata, and other property.

As mentioned above, the Matolangu clan arrived first, while the Kanatangu clan arrived later and became affiliated with the Matolangu clan through marriage. The leaders of the Matolangu and Kanatangu clans, i.e., the eldest males in the extended family, have the best opportunity to become the local leaders in Kamutuk. Maintaining these roles and positions does not only require the possession of wealth, including land, livestock, ata, and other property, but it also requires

⁵³ Boku is the local term for grandfather, while apu is the local term for grandmother. The Indonesian word, nenek means grandmother, while kakek means grandfather. However, the Sumbanese use nenek for both grandmother and grandfather.

the ability to transform social, cultural, and economic capital into maximal support for their leadership roles and positions.⁵⁴ Symbolic capital is property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception that cause them to know it and to recognise it, to give it value (Bourdieu, 1994: 8). In this sense, rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriages are the main factors in transforming capital into valuable resources that support personal leadership.

As villagers without noble blood, the *ata* have no opportunity to occupy leadership positions. Since they occupy socially inferior positions in relation to the *maramba*, they must act accordingly and obey the *maramba*. They rarely have direct contact with the government and outsiders. The strict social rules have prevented the *ata* from involvement in local politics. They do not have any rights to distribute land to other people, while the *maramba* have nearly total control over resources and, therefore, over other groups.

In Kamutuk, there are three wealthy *maramba*, Umbu Habib Meta Halima (of the Kanatangu Uma Andung clan)⁵⁵, Umbu Kombu (Kanatangu Uma Bara clan), and Umbu Mbani (Matolangu Uma Djangga Wuku clan), who control more than 15 *ata* in their households and more than a hundred head of livestock. As the eldest sons within their lineages, they are the leaders of their clans (see appendixes A and B). The leader of a clan or lineage has the responsibility to oversee maintenance of the livestock, land, and the *ata* of their clan, and to manage the duties and obligations of their clan members. Other males in the clan also control the livestock, land, and the *ata* and undertake a common responsibility in maintaining the unity and prestige of their clan.

The social organisation within kin groups is drawn into interdependent networks by their mutual responsibilities in relation to performance of Sumbanese adat and feasts (see Adams, 1974: 329). Individuals and clans are linked by the rights and obligations of affinal

⁵⁴ Possessing wealth has a special meaning in local politics since the political roles are related to the positions of owning livestock, land, and *ata*.

⁵⁵ Umbu Habib Meta Halima will henceforth be referred to as Umbu Habib.

alliance (Gunawan, 2000: 313). Each clan member is obligated to support the clan's activities, including rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriages by contributing livestock, gold mamuli, rice, hand-woven cloth, or ata labour. The clan represents an intricate network of reciprocal exchanges and mutual help. These contributions are appraised in view of the authority and status of the clan member. Whether the contributions are proper or in accordance to the contributor's position in the clan becomes material for gossip.

When Umbu Amahu and Umbu Mana did not contribute the best quality hand-woven cloth at the adat inauguration ceremony for the village head in November 2002, many people criticised them. "As the relatives of village head, they should have given the highest quality hand-woven cloth, but they only gave the second best quality. In doing this, they embarrass only themselves."

Although Umbu Habib, Umbu Kombu, and Umbu Mbani⁵⁶ are regarded as the wealthy local leaders in the village of Kamutuk, their influence is lower than that of Umbu Djangga. Umbu Djangga is not only a member of one of the pioneer clans, but he is also a powerful charismatic leader.⁵⁷ He has been able to express his wealth through his authority and status, especially during his terms as village head from 1962-1973 and 1983-1988. Other local leaders in Kamutuk are subordinate to him. Presently, Umbu Djangga controls less than fifteen ata and less than one hundred livestock, but he is still considered to be the most prominent and influential figure (ama bokulu) in Kamutuk. He serves, upon occasion, as a bridge between the supra-local elements and the villagers.

G. Summary and Conclusion

Although Kamutuk kampong is only one of ten kampongs in the village, this kampong is dominates village life. The clans in this kampong base

⁵⁶ Based on clan precedence and the ways of transforming their wealth, these three local leaders rank equally.

⁵⁷ As Kuipers states, powerful charismatic men use ritual speech to legitimate economic exchanges and feasting displays, create political obligations and alliances, and fulfil old obligations to ancestors (1998: 29).

their claim to dominance on stories that identify their ancestors as the initial settlers in the area. In this sense, tradition takes precedence over modern components.

Over the course of time, the presence of supra-local elements has created tension between ideas of local origins and imported authority. The foreign symbols of modernity, such as the government offices, schools, the Dutch and New Order dams, churches, mosques, hand tractors, artificial fertilisers, rice mills, satellite dishes, and electricity lines have been introduced into this village in several phases. These imported symbols exist side by side with local symbols, such as traditional houses, the ancestral dam, rice fields, livestock, stone tombs, and hand-woven cloth. Occasionally, both the local and supra-local symbols are used to strengthen and legitimate local hierarchy and the status of the maramba and their clans. The local elite often combine cultural patterns and symbols to legitimate claims to social stratification, rank, power, and authority over fellow villagers and clans in contemporary society.

3

CHANGES IN KAMUTUK

Two trucks and a few motorcycles quickly passed by a maramba's house on the main road. The trucks were full of passengers wearing Sumbanese clothes, as were the motorcycle drivers. Without being asked, my host explained, "There is an adat ceremony in Melolo". He continued, "In 1975, we rode horses or walked to the adat ceremonies". At that time, horses were the mode of transportation in Sumba, particularly when going to the adat ceremonies. The main roads from Mangili to Melolo were not as good as they are now. Some roads were in good condition, however some were muddy and there were not enough bridges crossing the rivers. "Public transportation and road conditions are much better now," he said. "People can travel more easily anywhere by public transportation. We can rent a truck or a bus to take people to the adat ceremonies. People can get to the ceremonies by a variety of modern transport."

This story shows that major changes have occurred in Sumba. People wear the traditional hand-woven cloth while riding trucks and motorcycles. How do they define and redefine their identity in the midst of these contrasts? How do they assimilate new elements with the traditional aspects of their lives?

For more than half a century, Kamutuk has been subject to the implementation of a state policy that incorporates many different cultures into a single uniform national entity. Sukarno's regime created a national bureaucracy in 1958 and aimed at moulding national unity by eliminating cultural and ethnic differences throughout the archipelago. Soeharto's regime used development programmes to create an authoritarian administration and political regulations, and to

promote integration of political and economic systems. Development programmes, including the construction of schools, medical care facilities, bridges and roads, have been implemented in Kamutuk since the beginning of the New Order administration. Agricultural development programmes were introduced in Kamutuk around 1980¹ and it have influenced villagers' farming methods.

When the New Order administration required every Indonesian citizen to declare adherence to one of five religions: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Catholicism, and Protestantism, the number of converts to Protestantism increased dramatically. Although the statistics for the Mangili region and all of Sumba during the early years of the New Order government are unavailable, Kamutuk residents point out that starting in the early 1970s, local clan leaders led many people in the Mangili region to convert to Protestantism.² The local power structure was challenged by the arrival of supra-local political, religious, social, and cultural elements, such as Indonesian national legislation and ideology, religious conversion, public education, national and international mass media, and growing interaction with foreigners (Forshee, 2001: 16).

In this chapter, I will document the changes that have occurred in Kamutuk village during the past decades. I will explore the impact of non-Sumbanese in the village and how the local elite are able to determine the direction of changes resulting from this impact. The local elite have appropriated the new institutions, i.e., state, religion, and mass media, to sustain the existing social boundaries in contemporary Kamutuk. They have been able to effectively obstruct physical and social mobility. Although many changes have occurred, the traditional

¹ Indonesia increased its oil exports between 1974-1981. This oil boom provided an opportunity for the central government to launch several ambitious development programmes (see Dick et al., 2002: 207-210).

² Similar conversions occurred throughout Java and other areas of Indonesia. After the tragedy of 1965 in which the communist party was accused of staging a rebellion, many people adhering to indigenous religions converted to one of the five universalist religions that were recognised by the government. This was an attempt to avoid government accusations of being atheists. The common assumption at that time was that atheists were associated with communists and communists should be eliminated. Therefore, there were massive conversions to universalist religions.

social structure has been able to resist modernisation.

This chapter will examine the social change caused by the presence of supra-local elements in the village. I will discuss these elements i.e., the national state administration, universalist religions, mass media, and transportation, in the first section, and then examine the local responses to these new elements by examining village participation in socio-economic development and education. Confrontation creates intense pressure on tradition, however the effects of these encounters have been rather limited in Kamutuk because the local elite have consolidated a monopoly of power and authority.

A. External Forces

A.1. Administrative Control

In 1911, after the death of Umbu Hina Hungguwali, the last local raja of Mangili promoted by the Dutch colonial government, Kamutuk lost its position as the centre of the Mangili kingdom. A family conflict between Rambu Babangu Nona, the daughter of Umbu Hina Hungguwali, and her uncles resulted in the return of the ruler's regalia (*tongkat kerajaan*) to the Dutch East Indies administration.³ At that time, Kamutuk and Mangili were part of the administrative region (*landschap*) of Rindi-Mangili that was governed by a local ruler from Rindi (see Appendix C). According to Umbu Landu, although the Kamutuk-Mangili region was under the administration of a ruler from Rindi, the people of Kamutuk did not feel that they were under Rindi authority. Kamutuk kampong was governed by the head of the kampong (*kepala kampung*) who was elected by the clan leaders. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the head of the kampong was a maramba from one of the pioneer clans,

³ Umbu Hina Hungguwali had one daughter. Since his daughter married a maramba without receiving any bride price from her husband's clan, she retained the legal rights to the livestock, land, power, and golden heirlooms of her clan. However, when she married a maramba and received the bride price from her husband's clan, she had to move to the clan of her husband and forfeited legal rights to the livestock, land, power, and golden heirlooms of her natal clan (see Kuipers, 1986: 459). When she wanted to assume her father's position, her uncles disagreed. This disagreement erupted into a family dispute.

who, together with the other local leaders, monopolised the political, economic, cultural, and social sectors, as well as much of the interaction with outsiders. Generally, they legitimised their positions as power holders through an ideology embodied in oral tradition, oral histories of their ancestors, and marriage affiliations among the clans.

In 1957, Sukarno's regime initiated a reorganisation of the government administrative system at the village level. It was not until 1962, however, that it reached Kamutuk with the formation of Kamutuk village (*desa*) as the lowest level of regional government administration (see Appendix D). Several *kampongs*, including Kamutuk *kampung*, were grouped together to form Kamutuk village. The position of *kampung* head was replaced by a newly created position, i.e., village head. At the same time, the government formed the sub-district government administration (*kecamatan Pahunga Lodu*) that was comprised of several regions: Melolo, Rindi, Mangili, and Waijelu.⁴ Government employees were required to have at least an elementary school diploma. At that time, however, few people in the region, primarily only children of *maramba*, had the opportunity to pursue formal education, so there were few villagers eligible for government positions. The first sub-district head, Umbu Tunggu Mbili, came from the Rindi region, while most of the sub-district staff came from other regions of Pahunga Lodu.

Government officials were not appointed to the village level positions. By selecting the village head, many Sumbanese appeared to accept the legitimacy of the nation, at least in part, by imagining their location as meaningfully encompassed and confirmed within it (Keane, 1997b: 51).

The first village head of Kamutuk was Umbu Djangga, a member of the Matolangu clan, who had graduated from elementary school during the Dutch East Indies colonial administration.⁵ With the support of Umbu Katanga Lili, a respected figure (*tau patembi*) and the

⁴ In 1964, the Melolo and Rindi regions were regrouped into a separate sub-district, leaving only the Mangili and Waijelu regions in the Pahunga Lodu sub-district. On October 14, 2000, Waijelu became a new sub-district and Mangili alone remained in the Pahunga Lodu sub-district.

⁵ Umbu Djangga was selected to go to school as a representative the pioneer clans.

head of Kamutuk kampong prior to 1960, he became the village head of Kamutuk. At that time, Umbu Djangga was not a rich person but his clan controlled much of the land in Kamutuk. He was fond of gambling and he became a feared leader of livestock thieves in the Mangili region.⁶ By electing Umbu Djangga as the kampong head in 1960 and then as the village head in 1962, the clan leaders hoped that their region would be safe from cattle rustlers. They hoped that a village head who was a thief would defend his village against other thieves. The factors behind Umbu Djangga's election as the village head were his lineage, maramba status,⁷ formal education, and reputation as a thief.

The formation of the village as the lowest level of government administration involved a shift from a form of administration based on unwritten customs to one based on formal organisational principles that were part of written (codified) state regulations. The bases of traditional authority and power, i.e., oral legitimacy, were replaced by the written legitimacy of modern authority and power.

With the support of the government, the position of village head, which was occupied by a member of the local elite, became increasingly stronger. Umbu Djangga represented most of the local leaders in the Kamutuk region. As the village head, he was able to consolidate his authority and power over the other clan leaders, including Umbu Katanga Lili, the former kampong head and member of the Kanatangu clan. Although there were changes in the village leadership, there were few changes in the social stratification system in Kamutuk because the positions of the village head and his assistants were still occupied by the local elite. De jure, the formation of the desa reflected the presence of the national state administration at the village level; de facto, the presence of the government in the village did not dismantle the local

⁶ When Umbu Djangga related his life story he was both proud and regretful of his past. He also spoke about his success in bringing many development programmes to the Kamutuk region, including bridges, asphalt roads, water, and electricity.

⁷ Umbu Djangga's lineage was unclear. Several sources said that he was a maramba, but others said that his grandfather had married an ata. If this were true, then his grandfather's descendants would become ata. Differing versions of a story could be used to either defend or defeat a person.

stratified social structure in Kamutuk. On the contrary, the presence of the state effectively strengthened the local leadership structure.

The duties of the village head in support of the central government increased. During the Soeharto administration, the government initiated requirements for written regulations at the village and sub-district levels, including identity cards, birth certificates (*surat kelahiran*), marriage certificates (*surat perkawinan*), death certificates (*surat kematian*), certificates of land ownership (*sertifikat tanah*), authorisation for travelling, authorisation for migrating, livestock identity cards (*kartu hewan*), authorisation of livestock sales (*surat persetujuan penjualan hewan*), certificates of good behaviour, and certificates of non-involvement in the 30th of September 1965 communist coup.⁸ Many activities that formerly required only verbal approval from the clan leaders were then required to secure written licenses from government officials at the village or sub-district levels. Citizens often had to pay administrative fees to procure these government documents. These new administrative requirements occasionally caused problems amongst the local elite.

Umbu Harun told me that he was very angry with Martinus Ngongo who served as the sub-district head of Pahunga Lodu from 1986 to 1991. At that time, he wanted to sell his cattle, so he ordered his *ata* to ask for the signatures of the village head and sub-district head on the required forms. Martinus Ngongo refused to sign the animal sales agreement because Umbu Harun's *ata* did not bring payment for the administration fee. Actually, Umbu Harun knew about the administration fee and after receiving the report from his *ata* he went directly to the sub-district office to explain to Martinus Ngongo that he would pay the fee after his cattle was sold. This incident caused a serious breach between the two men.

This story illustrates how Umbu Harun tested the authority of the sub-district head by postponing payment of the administrative fee. He felt that the sub-district head had insulted him and by displaying his anger, he re-affirmed his status and authority as a *maramba* who was not subordinate to a sub-district government official.

⁸ After Soeharto resigned in May 1998, the requirement for the certificates of good behaviour and non-involvement in the 30th of September 1965 communist coup for Indonesian citizens were rescinded.

Njuru Meta spoke of abuse of the village head's position. Njuru Meta's grandfather and Umbu Djangga's father were brothers. When Njuru Meta was young, his father entrusted him to the custody of Umbu Djangga. He asked Umbu Djangga to preserve his extensive lands for his son, Njuru Meta. The agreement between the two men was recorded on a cassette tape. After Njuru Meta's father died, however, the cassette tape, the evidence of the agreement, disappeared. Njuru Meta was given only a small part of his father's land. Formerly, there were no certificates of land ownership and boundaries were marked only with stones or trees. According to Njuru Meta, Umbu Djangga, as village head, was responsible for processing land ownership certificates. The larger portion of Njuru Meta's father's land was certified in Umbu Djangga's name. Apparently, he also appropriated some of the clan lands in the certification process to his close political friends. "Why didn't he give it to his family or his ata?" Njuru Meta grumbled.

Njuru Meta's story describes how a new state law that processed land ownership through written certification overruled traditional land rights. It allowed the ambitious village head to misuse his authority to acquire land and strengthen his position in the village. The new administrative regulations introduced new "vehicles" for the local elite to strengthen their positions. They had access to a choice of alternatives to express and develop their power and authority, either through oral tradition or written certification. Although for many Sumbanese the lack of scripture is accepted as one of the defining features of marapu ritual, other Sumbanese prefer to ground authority in written form (Keane, 1997c: 687).

A.2. The Impact of Universalist Religions

The introduction of Christianity to Sumba occurred during the Dutch colonial administration.⁹ The Catholic mission concentrated its efforts primarily in the northwest region of West Sumba, around Weetabula, while the Protestant mission (zending), which was already present in some districts in West Sumba, concentrated on the eastern parts of the

⁹ Protestant mission started to work in Sumba in 1880, while Catholic missions arrive in Sumba in 1889.

island (Webb, 1986: 54). However, the Catholic mission disbanded and left the island between 1898 through 1921 (see Luckas, n.d.: 17; Hoskins, 1987b: 141-142 and 1993a: 282). In accordance with the "Flores-Sumba Contract" signed on 31 March 1913, the colonial government entrusted the island of Flores to the Catholic church and Sumba to the Protestants, to provide religious instruction, education, and health care, and to develop socio-economic facilities (Luckas, n.d.: 18). It is, therefore, not surprising that when the Catholic mission returned to Sumba in 1921, the Catholic schools and health care centres were not granted government subsidies or an official stamp of approval (see Webb, 1986: 53 and Hoskins, 1987b: 144).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, during the colonial administration, both the Catholic and Protestant missions did not succeed in converting many Sumbanese to Christianity because they did not allow for Sumbanese to return to church after practicing adat ceremonies. They faced considerable opposition from the traditional culture regarding ritual practises (see Kapita, 1965). However, Christian schools did have a major influence on the evolution of Sumbanese society by admitting the young nobility as its pupils (see Hoskins, 1993a).

Protestantism finally started to gain converts in Kamutuk after 1970, especially those who were accused of being members of the communist party. In the popular discourse, the relationship between conversion to Protestantism and the Indonesian communist tragedy of 1965 was never openly stated. Most stories attribute the increase of Protestants in 1970 to the replacement of the Protestant minister in the Mangili region. Hapulewa, the first Protestant minister in Mangili from 1948 to 1970, was not a maramba, and, thus, not able to attract the local leaders to convert to Protestantism. However, after Taraandung, a maramba from Melolo, became the minister in Mangili in 1970, the number of Protestant converts in Kamutuk began to increase. Taraandung was not only a maramba, but he was also able to befriend many local leaders in Kamutuk. He often claimed, "Although I come from another region (Melolo), my ancestors and the ancestors of the maramba in Kamutuk are closely related. We are close relatives (*nyuta pakalimbing*)".

Umbu Harun spoke of another reason for the small increase of Protestants after 1970. When he was studying in an elementary school in 1972, he was required to choose a religion for the school records. The selection was limited to the five religions recognised by the national government, i.e. Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Although his parents adhered to Marapu, this was not one of the available choices. His teacher suggested that he choose Protestantism, and without any objections, he, along with several of his classmates, declared this his new religion. As Hoskins stated, conversion to a universalist religion became a prerequisite for participation in the wider world of government, education, and trade (1993a: 274). Although most people in Kamutuk have officially converted to one of the religions recognised by the government, they still follow the rules of Marapu that regulate the relationships between individuals and clans, including marriage choices, division of land, administrative prerogative, and exchange of livestock and cloth. They convert to universalist religions only to comply with government regulations, while continuing to practise syncretism.

Conversion to Islam was relatively rare. In the case of Kodi, West Sumba, Hoskins stated that although there was no active effort to convert the local Sumbanese to Islam, some conversions did occur as the result of marriages between Moslems and the indigenous population (Hoskins, 1987b: 145). Moslem presence in Kamutuk dates to 1953, when Umbu Kelawai, a local leader from the Kanatangu Uma Andung clan,¹⁰ married a Moslem woman from Ende, Flores. The Moslem community in Kamutuk was limited to the relatives and *ata* of Umbu Kelawai. The son of Umbu Kelawai, Umbu Meta Halima added an Islamic name in front of his name to become Habib Umbu Meta Halima, however he was called Umbu Habib. His relatives and his *ata* followed his conversion. The *adat* ceremonies that traditionally used pigs as sacrificial animals, were revised to sacrifice goats or cattle. In 1970, the Moslems in Kamutuk moved about 200 meters away from the

¹⁰ After Umbu Kelawai converted to Islam, he added a Moslem name, Said Umbu Kelawai. However, people still called him Umbu Kelawai.

kampong because of the presence of many pigs in the kampong. In 1978, Umbu Habib invited a Moslem teacher from Java to teach in Kamutuk. In 1995, Umbu Habib, who had already become the richest person in Kamutuk, renovated and built a very luxurious mosque near his house. As a Moslem leader, Umbu Habib was a major contributor for all religious activities in the community. Some Javanese Moslems who had lived in Kamutuk since 1982 noticed that not many Sumbanese attended the prayer gatherings at the mosque every Friday. However, the Moslem leaders always contributed a large number of sacrificial animals for the *Idul Adha* (day of sacrifice) celebrations.

Redefinition of religious requirements following conversion was not limited to Moslems. Protestants and Catholics also assimilated religion in their lives. Umbu Pala converted to Protestantism thirty years ago. His relatives and most of his ata followed his conversion. Although they rarely go to church, he occasionally hosts prayer meetings that rotate amongst the Protestant homes in Kamutuk kampong.

When I met Umbu Pala, he was eager to discuss the place for keeping the sacred regalia of his clan and his involvement in rituals conducted in the traditional clan house. The proximity of the traditional clan house to his own house signified the status, authority and wealth of his ancestors. Many heirlooms and regalia of his clan were still stored in the clan house. His ata, who tended the clan house and its contents, still adhered to the Marapu religion. "We need them to take care of our traditional house and our sacred properties because these activities involve our ancestors. If a member of our clan dies, the body must be brought to this traditional house. It is our obligation to bury our clan members in the proper way," Umbu Pala explained. He said that the Sumbanese had to give priority to the adat practises. Even though a Sumbanese did not own any pigs, buffaloes, or horses required for an adat ceremony, they had to acquire these animals somehow for the ceremony. After he spoke about Sumbanese adat at great length, I asked him about his activities as a church member. I just wanted to see his response because I knew that he hosted prayer meetings in his house. He answered these questions very briefly.

Umbu Petrus's experiences in converting to Catholicism also reflect that religious adherence is often a nominal one. Although Sumbanese often distinguish between those who have converted to

Christianity (sudah masuk gereja, "already entered church") and those who still adhere to the traditional beliefs (masih Marapu, "still adhere to Marapu"), and they often mark social status and identity by using symbols of Marapu, Protestantism, or Catholicism, there is much overlapping of Marapu ideology and practises amongst the Sumbanese Christians (Forshee, 1996: 25-26).

Umbu Petrus converted to Catholicism in his childhood during the 1960s, when his father was a local leader from the Matolangu clan in Pamburu, approximately eight kilometres from Kamutuk kampong. His father built the first Catholic Church in Pamburu. Most of his relatives followed his conversion. Although Umbu Petrus sometimes went to church on Sunday and was involved in church activities, his ata never took part in these activities and rarely attended church on Sunday. Although Umbu Petrus had converted to Catholicism, when he did not have any children from his first and second wives, he married a third wife who was an ata and bore him children. To maintain the continuation of his descent line, however, he married for the fourth time with a maramba woman. Although his first marriage was legalised by the church and adat, his other marriages were recognised only by adat tradition. According to Sumbanese adat, a marriage is legal if both parties have conducted the marriage exchanges in accordance with the negotiated agreement.

Apparently, the clan leaders in Kamutuk accept the presence of the universalist religious institutions, although several of the religious requirements are not strictly followed. The options for the ata to convert frequently depend on the maramba they serve. For example, when Umbu Kombu converted to Catholicism at Easter 2003, approximately 40 of his relatives and ata also converted to Catholicism. A feast to celebrate the conversions was held on 20 April 2003. Some of the five cattle, four pigs and five goats slaughtered for the feast were contributions from several leaders of Kamutuk, both Christians and Moslems. As Keane stated, Christians and non-Christians live in the same villages, cooperate in working the same fields, usually are not forbidden to intermarry, and perhaps most importantly, participate equally in the compelling social obligations of feasting, marriage negotiations, and funerals (Keane, 1995b: 294). A feast to strengthen the relationships among local leaders

and clans in Kamutuk celebrated a religious conversion. As this custom of feasting was a venue for redistribution of wealth, it also confirmed and displayed traditional status and prestige. Contributions reinforced in material terms the debts fostered and renewed in recurrent feasts. Local leaders remembered their contributions to Umbu Kombu and expected comparable contributions for their future feasts. This system served to reinforce the perpetuation of the traditional structure that resisted change under pressure from foreign sources.

Presently, Protestants in Kamutuk represent the majority of the population (80.1%). This increase was a result of registration during the government census in 1990 that offered only five officially recognised religions as options, and the role of the Protestant minister in accommodating Sumbanese who practised polygamy or participated in sacrifices to the marapu.¹¹ Also, clan leaders have redefined conversion to a universalist religion. Economic and political issues have come to play a crucial role in religious conversion. The local elite acquired a "new vehicle" to perpetuate social dynamics through the contributions to the feasts celebrating new conversions to Christianity or Islam.

Not only Catholic priests and Protestant ministers redefined the requirements of Christianity, as illustrated in the case of Umbu Djangga, who converted from Protestantism to Catholicism in 1990.

Umbu Djangga was a Protestant. Since he had four wives, the Protestant minister asked him to divorce three of his wives and remain married to only one of them. The church would legalise this marriage. Divorce, however, was a foreign concept to Sumbanese adat and Umbu Djangga refused to do this. The Protestant minister publicly reprimanded him during a Sunday church service. Umbu Djangga was offended by the sanction. He felt that the Protestant minister did not show him the respect due to him as a maramba. Umbu Djangga decided to convert to Catholicism. His relatives and ata also converted. The Catholic church legalised only his third marriage. However, although the church did not sanction his other marriages, he did not have to get divorced.

¹¹ Based on the estimations of Taraandung, a retired Protestant minister, the converts to universalist religions in Kamutuk after Umbu Djangga converted from Protestantism to Catholicism in 1990, are 75% Protestant, 8% Islam, 7% Catholic, while the remaining 10% still adhere to Marapu.

Presently, there are seven Protestant churches, one Catholic church, and one big mosque in Kamutuk village that are attended by Protestant ministers, Catholic priests, and an Islamic teacher. Protestants and Catholics are required to have baptism certificates for their children studying in elementary schools.

Differing rules of marriage between Sumbanese adat, Christianity and Islam can create a dilemma. According to Sumbanese adat, a marriage is sanctioned through exchanges between two social groups. However, according to the religious institutions and the state, a marriage must be legalised by both a religious institution and the state. The Sumbanese conduct marriage exchanges according to the adat agreements, but they must also legalise their marriages in accordance with the religious institutions and state laws. If the religious institutions and the state do not accept a marriage exchange sanctioned by adat, then the legality of that union is questioned. In this sense, tradition is challenged by supra-local social element.

The local elite have become actively involved in these religious institutions. As a result, these religions have not effectively transformed the existing social system, but rather have strengthened them. Umbu Habib, a central figure in the growth of Islam in Kamutuk, has redefined the requirements for conversion to Islam. Many activities related to Islam and carried out in the region of Kamutuk, must obtain his approval. He appears to be more important than the ustad, the local Islamic leader. Umbu Djangga, who built a Catholic church in Kamutuk village, is a well-known figure in the Catholic community. His third wife has become a council member of the parish. Umbu Mbani is recognised as an important figure in the Protestant community in Kamutuk. The prominence of these maramba shows that economic and political power is crucial in the religious communities. Some of the maramba began to convert to the new religions following a historical inclination toward forming alliances with foreign powers in order to maintain and expand their own control (Forshee, 2001: 20). The state also produces religious symbols that divide the Sumbanese into several "compartments" of religions. This provides the local elite with alternative venues to strengthen their positions.

The Sumbanese of Kamutuk have accommodated Christianity and Islam over the last thirty years, and conversion has increased drastically over the last decade. In many cases, they were pressured to convert to a new religion by the social, cultural, political, and economic circumstances of the times (see Fowler, 2003: 325). It is difficult to judge this change theologically. The conversions have been used as an alternative means for supporting social stratification. Many Sumbanese define and redefine their identity by separating "pagan" practises as an effort to preserve local culture (see Keane, 1995a: 115). Hence, many Christian converts continue to practise Marapu rituals and express pre-Christian beliefs, particularly involving death rituals, marriage alliances, and honouring ancestral and supernatural powers (see Forshee, 2001: 18). Practises of universalist religions are adapted to the local culture, while adat ceremonies incorporate elements of these universalist religions.

A.3. The Role and Use of Television and Public Transportation

Almost every night, crowds gather in the houses of local leaders in Kamutuk to watch television. Soap operas (*sinetron*) are the most popular. The majority of the crowd are *ata* amongst only a few *maramba*. Their physical positions in the room reflect their social status. The *maramba* usually sit on chairs, while the *ata* always sit on the plaited mats on the floor. Children and women usually watch television until 9 p.m. or, sometimes, 10 p.m., while the men usually watch until 1 or 2 a.m. The young people take this opportunity to gather and socialise while they wait for their favourite television programmes.

Rural electricity reached Kamutuk in 1990 and television followed shortly thereafter in 1992. At that time, only a few *maramba* had televisions that had to use satellite dishes to receive programmes that were broadcast by stations in Jakarta. Television became a symbol of status, prestige, and wealth amongst the *maramba*.¹² Satellite dishes were posi-

¹² Many wealthy *maramba* spent their money on a television, receiver, and satellite dish. In Wainapu, the cost of a 21-inch screen television, receiver, and satellite dish is approximately Rp 4,000,000, or the equivalent of one cow, one buffalo, or two horses.

tioned on the front side of their houses as a public items of competition between the local leaders. The owners had the prerogative to turn their televisions on or off and to select the channels without considering the interests of the other spectators.

After about five years, ownership of televisions was no longer limited to Sumbanese local leaders. Some Savunese and Javanese living in Kamutuk village also own televisions. Residents could enjoy entertainment, information, and news broadcasts by private and government stations. Ata, however, never owned televisions. Some ata, especially those belonging to the Kanatangu Uma Bara lineage, had enough money to buy televisions and antennas but they did not purchase them to avoid creating the impression of competition with maramba. Mbira explained, "Not all clan leaders in Kamutuk have televisions. If we ata have them, it would make our lives difficult. It would be alright if we had two or three animals, or one or two hectares of rice fields, because they (the maramba) have more than we have, [but this does not apply to televisions]."

Presently, most young people prefer to watch television in the houses of Javanese villagers. The differences of social stratification amongst the television spectators are not as clear when they watch television in these homes. Also, sometimes the young people are allowed to select the television programmes. Prior to the presence of televisions in Kamutuk there were few night-time activities. People sometimes gathered to listen to the stories about their ancestors narrated by their clan leaders. Funerals were the only opportunities to gather with their friends and relatives as they guarded the body in the clan house at night (pawala).

Television spectators often discussed the contents of television broadcasts, e.g., riots, fashions, social movements, soap operas, and natural disasters, but they rarely applied any of this information to their social reality. However, Kamutuk residents took note of television news broadcasts concerning protests during the post-reformation period after 1998. Several of the local elite adopted the idea of a petition and collected signatures from other members of the elite as a collective refusal of a government programme. (This case is discussed in Chapter

Four.) In this instance, television did have an impact on Kamutuk by inspiring an activity that had never occurred previously.

Prior to the presence of public transportation, villagers from Kamutuk rarely travelled to Waingapu. Only maramba accompanied by their ata would go to Waingapu to sell their livestock, visit relatives, or purchase goods that were not available in the local market, such as electronic equipment, hand tractors, and milling machines. Generally, people travelled to other regions only to attend the adat ceremonies of related clans, including marriages and funerals.

The construction of bridges and roads between Waingapu and Mangili has facilitated public transportation between the areas. The ease of accessibility has led to an increase of traders, especially Javanese, visiting Kamutuk village. Since Kamutuk kampong was well known as the central production region of hand-woven cloth, tourists also visited the kampong. Public transportation allowed young maramba to travel to Waingapu to sell the hand-woven cloth. Unescorted women who travelled were often associated with earthly and metaphysical dangers, and to venture out without good reason or to undetermined points outside of kin networks was not a usual practise for Sumbanese women (Forshee, 1998: 117). However, women sometimes found ways to avoid these social restrictions on their movements.

Public transportation is used by both maramba and ata. Residents of Kamutuk can now easily depart for Waingapu in the morning and return home in the afternoon. They can access information about Waingapu or other regions directly from fellow travellers. However, although improved regional transportation offers possibilities for ata to escape from their patrons, few attempt to leave. The government requires a letter of authorisation for any change of address from the residence of origin to the new one. Without a release from the residence of origin that requires approval from the clan leaders, ata will face difficulties in their new residence. Ata who leave without permission of their masters and are found by the police are returned to their maramba.

In the past, the local clan leaders controlled the information flowing into the village. Currently, however, clan leaders no longer monopolise information because residents of Kamutuk have access to

television broadcasts, inter-regional travel, and education in Waingapu and outside Sumba.¹³

B. Responsive Forces

B.1. Participation in Socio-Economic Development

Efforts to develop agricultural production in the Kamutuk region began when the Dutch colonial administration built the new Mangili dam on the Luanda River in 1939. This new dam had an impact on emerging social-cultural conflicts. Onvlee noted, "the new dam and its irrigation canals may be seen to represent new and a greater opportunity. And in a sense they do. But they also augur the dissolution of a way of life, and force us to ask: What other bedrock can this culture now build on? Into what soil shall it root?" (Onvlee, [1949] 1977: 163)

Actually, there was already a dam on the Luanda River that was built by with river stones and without cement. It was used to irrigate the rice fields between the villages of Tanamanang and Kamutuk. The division of drainage systems between male drainage (*londa muni*) and female drainage (*londa kawini*) maintained the irrigation system that was regulated in accordance with the bride-giver and bride-taker relationships of the pioneer clans (Maru, Watubulu, Matolangu, and Wanggirara). By building a new dam about 300 metres downstream of the traditional dam, the Dutch colonial administration introduced a modern irrigation system that altered the existing system that was balanced on clan relationships. This development of the agricultural infrastructure not only increased agricultural production, but also increased social-economic inequality in the Mangili region (Onvlee, [1949] 1977).

About 40 years later, in 1980, the New Order government built a dam on Laijatang River, referred to as the New Order Dam. During the period of the oil boom (1974-1981), other government development programmes implemented in Kamutuk village included the construc-

¹³ Twelve households in Kamutuk village send their children to universities outside Sumba (Biro Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2002a).

tion of new irrigation canals and the conversion of dry fields into new rice fields. The government also sponsored a housing project that built 30 new houses in a field that was a distance from the kampong and closer to the new rice fields.¹⁴ The new houses and rice fields were distributed to residents of Kamutuk along with certificates of ownership.¹⁵

The government also implemented the Kabela (Kami Benci Lapar—We Hate Hunger) programme in 1982. Villagers of Kamutuk and Tanamanang were ordered to work in the rice fields controlled by the military for three months. All adult males were required to work in the rice fields from 5 a.m. until 7 p.m. Absences and mistakes were subject to punishment. Although it was acknowledged that this programme was successful in stimulating the villagers to work hard, it was traumatic for them. The Kabela programme introduced modern agricultural equipment, such as hand tractors, hullers, and rice mills, to the region. By cooperating with the government at the sub-district level, several non-government organizations (NGOs), including World Vision International (WVI), Tananua, and Participatory Integrated Development in Rainfed Areas (PIDRA), also supported agricultural modernisation.

Unlike the development projects prior to 1980, such as family planning (*keluarga berencana*) and agricultural extension (*penyuluhan pertanian*), these later development programmes have had an impact at the village level. The reason the earlier development programmes did not foster much response from the villagers, several maramba explained, was that the government officers for these programmes had not enlisted the help of the local leaders in Kamutuk. Several changes have occurred since the conversion of the dry fields into rice paddies. The livestock have been moved to pastures farther away from the rice

¹⁴ Since the sub-district office was located in Kamutuk village, this village was selected as the site for the housing project. This programme aimed to stimulate the villagers to inhabit residences along the main road. However, not many Sumbanese were interested in this programme. Many Sumbanese who did not have their own houses were still strongly tied to their patrons and relatives. As a result of this, the majority of participants in the the housing programme were Savunese.

¹⁵ Most of the new rice fields were distributed to the local Sumbanese leaders, although several plots were distributed to the Savunese who participated in the housing project.

fields. The owners of rice fields must pay administration fees for their certificates of land ownership, as well as land taxes. These requirements have imposed a money economy onto the villagers.

After the Kabela programme, most villagers in Kamutuk implemented the farming methods that were introduced by the programme. In 1982, five Javanese families moved to Kamutuk as part of the national voluntary transmigration programme. They were expected to teach Javanese farming methods to the farmers in Kamutuk. In the interest of agricultural modernisation, hand tractors provided by government aid programmes gradually replaced buffaloes used to prepare the soil of paddy fields. Motorbikes, trucks, and buses gradually replaced horses, which had served as the primary mode of transportation in the region prior to 1980. As a result of these developments, some maramba started to sell their livestock to buy hand tractors, hullers or rice mills. Those who already owned equipment rented them to maramba who were unable to purchase them. Others opened small enterprises, such as machine repair shops (*bengkel*), welding shops (*las*), and rice mills.¹⁶ Ownership and the ability to use modern agricultural equipment became another venue of competition for prestige and status.

The supply of household commodities, including sugar, salt, coffee, soap, cigarettes, and betel and areca nuts, also gradually increased. These commodities were obtained at weekly markets. Prior to 1980, harvested rice was grown purely for subsistence needs and not sold. After agricultural modernisation, however, rice harvests were sold to cover production costs, including hand tractor rental fees, fuel, paddy seeds, fertilisers, and pesticides. Most labourers in the rice fields, especially in the fields of the wealthy clans, were *ata*. Clans that did not own many *ata*, procured labour by reciprocal agreements between clans in which they shared labour forces on alternate days. Several Javanese and Savunese families hired agricultural labourers, especially for planting and harvesting. The clan leaders who were not able to

¹⁶ The presence of modern agricultural equipment did not cause a decrease in the livestock population in East Sumba. Statistical data points out that the livestock population actually increased. The population of livestock (cattle, horse, buffalo, and pig) was 103,900 in 1978; 184,865 in 1991; 120,731 in 1999; 124,100 in 2000; and 127,422 in 2001. (See Beding and Beding, 2002: 204).

manage their economic resources, including those of the Kanatangu Uma Randi and Matolangu clans, often sold their livestock to cover the costs of agricultural production. The resources for these clans gradually decreased. On the other hand, the clan leaders, including the leaders of the Kanatangu Uma Andung and Kanatangu Uma Bara clans, who have been able to manage their economic resources and capture opportunities to grow through trading livestock, opening machine repair businesses, welding shops, and rice mills, gradually increased their wealth. In light of these developments, the functions of livestock became two-fold, i.e., as a traditional requirement for adat exchanges and as a new economic resource. As mentioned in Chapter Two, cattle, in contrast to horses, buffaloes and pigs, have little ceremonial importance in Sumbanese adat. They do, however, have economic value.

Although most rice fields are still controlled by the village and clan leaders, several *ata* own the rice fields. The few clan leaders in Kamutuk who allow their *ata* to own land and livestock are usually from the Kanatangu Uma Bara lineage.¹⁷ These *ata* are able to support their own relatives with their own livestock and rice fields, and some of them are even able to send their children to senior high school in Waingapu, while the *ata* of other clans must work in the rice fields of their *maramba*. As individuals without property, *ata* are often beneficiaries of government aid programmes, such as subsidies for rice, seed, housing, and living expenses in Kuruwaki (approximately 10 kilometres from Kamutuk). *Maramba* often register their *ata* for housing and living expense subsidies. Although, the names of the *ata* are listed, in reality, the subsidies go to the *maramba* of the registered *ata*.

In the interests of agricultural development, several local leaders, including Umbu Mbani and Umbu Habib, moved away from the *kampong*. Although they moved only about 100-200 metres, they were better able to develop their new businesses in their new residences that were located on the main road. Several prominent Islamic figures also moved out of the *kampong* and built houses on stilts as symbols of their

¹⁷ Unlike most other clan leaders, the leader of Kanatangu Uma Bara expects that his *ata* will be able to manage their own household economies.

economic success. In this sense, these developments have made religion increasingly exclusive. This resembles the parochialism experienced in the Kei Islands, Moluccas.¹⁸

In general, the New Order development programmes that have been implemented since early 1980 have brought socio-economic, religious and technological changes to Kamutuk. However, they have not influenced the system of social stratification. Prior to 1980, residents depended on raising livestock, weaving cloth, and traditional agriculture. Following agricultural modernisation, the economic opportunities broadened to include enterprises such as machine repair shops, welding shops, rice mills, animal trading, and agricultural labour. With the increase of a money economy in the village, rice and hand-woven cloth, which, previously, were rarely commercialised, have become commercial goods. The main economic resources, however, remain in the control of the clan leaders. Most *ata* have no access to these economic resources; only a few of them own rice fields and livestock. Savunese and Javanese villagers have more opportunities to own rice fields and hand tractors than the Sumbanese *ata*. This dominance of economic resources is part of the *maramba*'s strategy to keep the *ata* in their traditional places.

In general, although several government programmes have been implemented in Kamutuk, these programmes have effectively strengthened the position of the local elite, albeit not completely. The programmes have enabled socio-economic development, however, at the same time, they have sustained existing social boundaries, such as the *ata-maramba* relationships and marriage affiliations. Thus, many *ata* remain trapped in poverty, facing many constraints of social boundaries and lack of access to economic resources.

B.2. Participation in Education

There was no writing system in Sumba prior to the establishment of Dutch mission schools in the late 19th century (Forshee, 2001: 15).

¹⁸ As Laksono explained, what the Keiese have experienced is stiffening parochialism, which divides them into increasingly sharper segments (Laksono, 2002: 195).

When Korporal van Nijmwegen was appointed as a tolk (interpreter) in Mangili from 1769 to 1775, he opened a school in the region with a number of Sumbanese students and a teacher from Ambon, Moluccas (Haripranata, 1984: 39). This school was closed in 1775. In line with the ethical policy of the Dutch colonial administration, the Dutch missions opened a school in Mangili after 1900.¹⁹ At that time, most Sumbanese families did not allow their children to attend school. According to Umbu Landu, few maramba children from Kamutuk kampung attended school during the Dutch and Japanese colonial administrations. Only five or six maramba children attended elementary school and did not continue on to junior high school. At that time, more Savunese children than Sumbanese children attended school because they were Christians. Umbu Mana said that when he wished to continue his schooling, his father replied, "Who will take care of our livestock if you go to school?"

During the Sukarno government, many maramba children in Kamutuk kampung still did not attend school at all, or if they did, they did not graduate from elementary school. Formal education was not a requirement for maramba children to become kampung and clan leaders. Most ata children had little opportunity to attend school, as they needed permission of their clan leaders. One ata explained that he was able to attend school only because he was delegated the task of accompanying and taking care of his clan leader's son at school. Opportunities for education for ata opened up in 1974 when the government required basic elementary education for all school-aged children. The New Order government prioritised school construction and brought in teachers from Java to raise the quality of education in Kamutuk.²⁰ Following the implementation of this policy, the children of ata and maramba began to attend elementary school, although most ata children did not finish their schooling because their parents did not have enough

¹⁹ The ethical policy, devised by JC van Deventer in 1900, was based on the commitment that the Netherlands was responsible for the economic development of the East Indies and for its social and cultural preservation. It promoted social welfare, primary education and agriculture, but not political development.

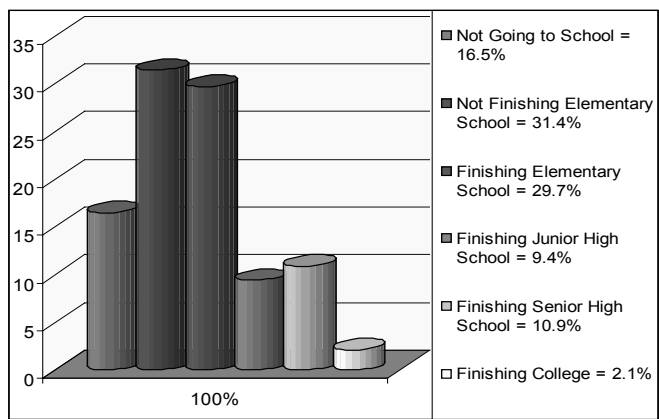
²⁰ The New Order government invested large amounts of money in schools (every child was required to attend elementary school), roads, health care, electricity, etc. (Vel, 2001: 147).

money to pay the education costs or they had to work in the fields or herd livestock of the maramba. Several maramba were able to send their children to other islands to continue their studies.

The presence of educational institutions has created a new venue for maramba children. There is now, in addition to the traditional hierarchy, the national hierarchy. Hoskins stated that for many years the two systems were considered to be complementary modes of ritual action, one attuned to the ancestral villages, the other to the world of education and government service (Hoskins, 1993a: 304). However, they remain accessible only to maramba, while the ata children see only the hierarchies without any possibilities of moving out of their current positions.

Based on the Statistical Data of the Coordinating Board for National Family Planning at the sub-district level (2002),²¹ the majority residents of Kamutuk (71.8%) did not attend school or did not finish an elementary education (see Figure 7). Compared to the data from East Sumba, where more than 50% of the population attended school, these statistics are very high (see Figure 8). This indicates that the educational levels of residents in Kamutuk are very low.

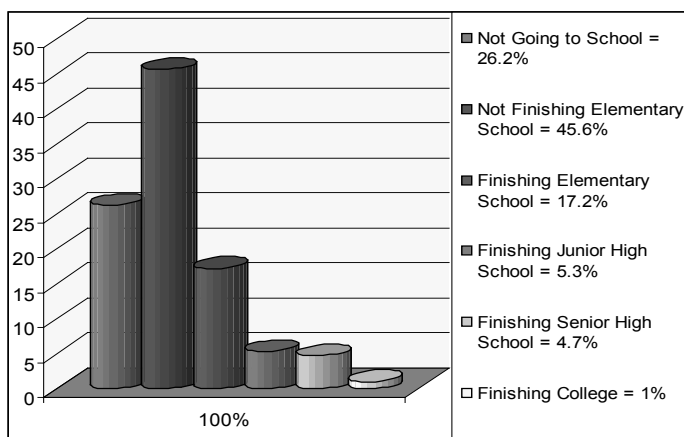
Figure 7. The Educational Levels of Residents in Kamutuk



Source: The Statistical Data of Coordination Board for National Family Planning at the sub-district level (2002).

²¹ The government Coordinating Board for National Family Planning has nothing to do with family planning anymore. Currently, they coordinate all matters related to the family unit, including education.

Figure 8. The Educational Levels of Residents in East Sumba



Source: Bureau of Central Statistics, District of East Sumba, 2002b.

Although the statistical data indicates that most residents in Kamutuk have a low level of education, the presence of education institutions have brought changes to the region, e.g., the ability of most Sumbanese to use Indonesian to communicate with non-Sumbanese. Formerly, only maramba were fluent speakers of the national Indonesian language (bahasa Indonesia). Currently, most ata who are over forty years old are not able to, or do not dare to, speak Indonesian, although some of them may be able to understand it. However, the youth of Kamutuk, both maramba and ata, who are under the age of thirty, not only understand but also are also able to speak Indonesian fluently.

The students of higher levels of education are still dominated by the children of maramba and Savunese. Ata cannot afford to send their children to senior high school or college. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the senior high schools are located only in Waingapu and Melolo, while there are colleges only in Waingapu. Sumbanese elite usually send their children away to cities such as Kupang, Malang, Salatiga, Yogyakarta, and Makassar to continue their studies at the university level.

Recently, several maramba children in Kamutuk have graduated from college. Most of them have been accepted as government officials at the district level, while some are pursuing further degrees at universities

in Kupang, Timor, and Yogyakarta. This represents remarkable progress in education over the past ten years. Sending children to universities is not easy for residents of Kamutuk. Although relatives often contribute to educational expenses for clan members, the parents' livelihoods are the primary source of educational funding. Several maramba have fallen into poverty because they have sold all their livestock to pay for their children's education. Some of them are proud because their children have their college degrees and work in Waingapu. Others, however, regret selling most of their livestock to pay for their children's education, and then their children fail in school.

The ideal occupation for young Sumbanese who have finished their education is the civil service (see Vel, 1994). According to one of Umbu Habib's daughters, he paid Rp 10 million to a district level official in Waingapu to arrange to have his daughter accepted as a civil servant in 2001. Generally, parents are proud to have their children work for the government, as it increases their prestige amongst other local leaders in the village.²² Acceptance into the service is often made possible through close relationships or the ability to pay a large bribe to district level officials. A relative of Umbu Habib claimed that "Umbu Habib is a valuable person for the district government, so his daughter was accepted into the civil service. If he was not valuable, his daughter would not have been selected."

The educational institutions have brought many changes to Kamutuk since the New Order era. Bourdieu stated that one of the major powers of the state is to produce and impose, especially through the educational system, categories of thought that we spontaneously apply to all things of the social world, including the state itself (Bourdieu, 1994: 1). At children now have the opportunity to go to school. Although most of them do not graduate from elementary school, they learn to speak and communicate in Indonesian.

²² After warfare could no longer be used as a means of establishing authority, the local rulers procured power through taxation, and gained access to the governing institutions through their educated children, who were eventually appointed to prominent government positions (Vel, 2001: 147).

C. Impact on Social Stratification

The new institutions, including government administration, universalist religions, socio-economic development, education, and mass media, have brought changes to Kamutuk. The Sukarno government introduced two administrative formations in the Mangili region, i.e., the sub-district (kecamatan) and the village (desa). Basically, the sub-district and village administrations placed pressure on the social stratification system as the basis of local power and authority. Government officials were appointed to positions at the sub-district level. The local elite rarely fulfilled the educational requirements for government administrators at this level. However, there were no educational requirements to hold office at the village level. This allowed the local elite to continue in positions of authority at the village level where they have been able to strengthen their power through association with the government. They have actually benefited from the presence of the state at the local level.

The local elite have also utilised the presence of educational and religious institutions to strengthen their positions. By becoming involved in these institutions, they have been able to maintain their roles as the local leaders. Possession of modern agricultural equipment and electronic goods have also strengthened their status and prestige in the village.

Although the social stratification system is rigid, occasionally an individual, especially someone of the tau kabihu category, is able to break free. In fact, the distinctions of the tau kabihu category have become unclear. In the past, the tau kabihu resided in the traditional settlements. They were neither maramba nor ata and their households were not dependent on the maramba. It is also said that this social rank referred to an agreement by the original pioneer clans before they spread throughout Sumba. Some of the chosen clan leaders were maramba, while other leaders were called tau kabihu. However, after the traditional settlements disbanded and they moved to the low lands in the 19th century, the social boundaries between maramba and tau kabihu became unclear. The independent clans have been economically

successful, as they possess land, livestock, and ata, and some have become village leaders and members of the local elite.

Social mobility, however, has never been possible for the ata. The presence of ata remains to be a symbol of social status for maramba and independent clans who enjoy better socio-economic levels. The ata continue to be the primary source of labour for the maramba. Ata children who pursue their studies outside of Kamutuk are still considered ata when they return home. They have little opportunity to assume important roles in the village, no matter what level of education they attain. Non-Sumbanese have more opportunities for social mobility than the ata. Although non-Sumbanese residing in Kamutuk are more successful in commerce and education than Sumbanese are, they are not perceived as competitors as long as their livestock and land holdings do not exceed the number of livestock and land of the Sumbanese local leaders.

D. Summary and Conclusion

Kamutuk has undergone many changes over the past fifty years. Bridges, road construction, basic educational facilities, communication infrastructure, and development programmes have increased opportunities for interaction between the villagers with the outside world. Not only the maramba and tau kabihu, but also the ata (although with very small portion of them) have had opportunities to raise their standards of living. The differences between maramba and tau kabihu have become increasingly vague. As mentioned in Chapter Two, although several independent clans claimed status as maramba, others cannot maintain their independent status because of marriage affiliations with ata.

Although the local elite have lost their monopoly on information because radio, television, and public transportation provide easier access to the outside world, the changes in Kamutuk village have not deeply affect the social stratification system where differences between the maramba and ata remain very distinct. Although most Sumbanese of Kamutuk have officially converted to one of the five religions recognised by the government, they still practise the conventions of Marapu that

regulate the relationships between individuals and clans, such as marriage affiliations, division of land, administrative prerogative, and ritual exchanges of livestock and cloth. These changes have not resulted in a weakening of the maramba status or in a strengthening the ata's situation. Although institutions such as the church and state government have missions to improve life for all people, these institutions tend to rely on and to enlist support from the local elite in implementing their programmes. As a result of this cooperation, they do not to interfere with the existing social structure. Following Sumba's incorporation into the national Indonesian state, the local elite lost its monopoly on power through the enforcement of adat law, but it nevertheless retains considerable social control (Forshee, 2001: 16).

Many of the changes that have occurred in Kamutuk have not significantly affected the traditional social structure. However, the changes have constructed the Sumbanese imagination concerning the outer world. As mentioned above, the ata still face many constraints in adapting or applying information and news from television programmes or personal relationships with outsiders to improve their living conditions.

INCORPORATING THE LOCAL POLITY

The inauguration ceremony of the new village head of Kamutuk held on 26 November 2002, was very impressive. When Umbu Kombu won the election for village head, most of community leaders in Kamutuk agreed that he should be installed by the district head (bupati), not by the sub-district head (camat) as was usual. They invited the district head to the ceremony in accordance with Sumbanese adat and prepared a traditional ceremony to welcome him. The clans of the district head and the newly elected village head were affiliated by marriage. The clan of the district head was the bride-giving clan, while the village head's clan was the bride-taker. This adat welcoming ceremony not only reaffirmed the marriage affiliation of the two clans, but also demonstrated that the two men were not strangers to each other. Other government officials, including the chairman of the Regional Legislative Assembly (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD), the vice-district head, and the head of the sub-district were also invited. The adat welcoming ceremony was immediately followed by the official inauguration ceremony.

The district head and the other officials, as the guests, and the village head as the host each brought their own *wunangu*¹ to negotiate an agreement of reciprocal exchange in accordance with Sumbanese adat. As agreed, the district head, as the bride-giver, received a horse and a gold *mamuli* from the village head. The vice-district head, who was also a bride-giver, also received the same gifts from the village head. In contrast, the chairman of the Regional Legislative Assembly and the head of the sub-district, who were

¹ *Wunangu* is a ritual speaker who represents one of the parties and skilfully negotiates the intricacies of adat ceremonies.

both bride-takers, received a hand-woven cloth from the village head. In return, the district head, the chairman of the Regional Legislative Assembly, the vice-district head, and the head of the sub-district reciprocated these gifts by giving the newly elected village head Rp 100,000 each. Although the bride-giver should reciprocate with a gift of, at least, a hand-woven cloth, and the bride-taker should give a horse and one gold mamuli, substituting these items with Rp 100,000 was acceptable in this contemporary context.²

The treatment of the sacrificial animals for the ceremony was unusual.³ Usually, the reciprocal exchange is symbolised by a slaughtering of animals for the ancestors (kameti) that is witnessed by both parties. Half of the meat is usually cooked for a meal shared with the guests and the hosts take the remaining half home.⁴ Since the district head and the other officials had limited time because of their official duties, they took the live animals home. The district head, vice-district head, and the chairman of Regional Legislative Assembly took home large pigs, while the head of the sub-district took a large cow as additional gifts from the village head.

After the adat welcoming ceremony that was conducted in the local language,⁵ the inauguration ceremony was conducted in Indonesian. The traditional symbols of the welcoming ceremony were replaced by the modern symbols of state protocol. The elected village head wore a uniform. After he took his oath of office, the district head pinned an insignia on his lapel as a symbol of his official position in the government administration of

² A villager pointed out that "Reciprocating the gifts with Rp 100,000 is not an equal substitute for a hand-woven cloth or, moreso, a horse and a gold mamuli. One hand-woven cloth costs Rp 300,000 or Rp 400,000."

³ Several local leaders soothed the displeasure expressed about the unusual distribution of animals by explaining that the district head did not have enough time to wait for the slaughtering and cooking of the meat.

⁴ One can leave only after having partaken of the food provided by the host and having obtained a portion of the raw meat (Renard-Clamagirand, 1992: 7).

⁵ The people of East Sumba all speak Kampera as a local language, while those of West Sumba have ten different languages (Hoskins, 1996: 223). There are many dialects of Kampera, including Kampera, Melolo, Umbu Ratu Nggai, Lewa, Kanatangu, Mangili-Waijelo, and Southern Sumba. The Kampera dialect is widely understood. The speakers of Lewa and Umbu Ratu Nggai have difficulty understanding the Mangili dialect (cf. http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=SMI). The local Mangili-Waijelo dialect dominates every discussion in everyday life among Sumbanese in Kamutuk. Indonesian, the national language, is utilised only in communicating with non-Sumbanese, in schools, and in formal meetings, usually at the sub-district and upper levels of government.

Indonesia.⁶ Following the welcoming speeches (*sambutan*) by the chairman of the Regional Legislative Assembly and the district head, the ceremony ended with a communal meal.

This inauguration ceremony is evidence of the presence of the "modern" Indonesia government system in this region. This is one example of how the central government incorporates the local elite into its system. The village head is the part of the bureaucratic structure of the state at the lowest administrative level who is responsible for the uniform structure of village governance implemented throughout Indonesia. However, the local elite in Kamutuk, in this case, succeeded in displaying the prominence of their traditions by hosting an adat welcoming ceremony prior to the official inauguration. This incident supports the argument that although the government imposes its presence in the village, it must honour local adat. In state protocol, the most important figure speaks last. It is the elite in Kamutuk, however, as discussed in Chapter Two, who determine who is to be first, foremost, elder, superior, greater, or to occupy the centre, based on their stories of origin, gift exchanges, kinship relations, and descent lines. In this sense, the adat welcoming ceremony was a spectacular display of ritual drama (see Kuipers, 1998: 69). In the presence of a large audience, it served to display the authority of the village head, while allowing him to define the nuances of his relationship with the district head. Some of the most prominent forms of social interaction theatrically represent large-scale social relations that they initiate and perpetuate as if those relations consisted, to a large extent, of self-referring acts of speech (Keane, 1991: 311). This adat welcoming ceremony illustrated the coexistence of two systems in the village that, upon occasion, compete with each other. And how did this evolve and why do these dual systems still exist in light of the fact that it has been fifty years since the central government has been present in the villages?

This chapter discusses how the centralised state entered Sumba and what the consequences for local polities were. This discussion will begin

⁶ Based on the decree issued by the district head of East Sumba, number 598/410/1546/11/Pemdes/2002/13 November 2002, concerning the official approval of a new village head of Kamutuk.

with an examination into the history of state interference, which reflects government policies towards uniformity of citizenship. I will then explore how the government used the local elite to foster its interests and how the local elite, in turn, utilised state power to safeguard their positions. Then, I will examine the intersections of government mechanisms and social structures at the local level that concern the negotiation process between state power and local authority. This chapter also analyses the general perspectives of the local elite towards the state.

A. The History of State Interference

Kamutuk has officially been governed by several political bodies, including the Dutch colonial administration, the Japanese occupation forces, and the Indonesian national government. Although located on easternmost tip of Sumba island, the local elite in Kamutuk have been in contact with many non-Sumbanese, each with their own agenda, including traders, immigrants, colonial administrators, missionaries, social workers (non-government organisations), and government officials. According to Kapita, ever since the 15th century, many traders of Bima, Ende, Savu, Bugis, Macassar, China, Arabia, and Portugal traded with the Sumbanese for sandalwood (*kayu cendana*, *Santalum album*), fustic (*kayu kuning*, *Maclura cochinchinensis*), ebony wood (*kayu arang*, *Dyospyros celebica*), aloe (*kayu gaharu*, *Aquilaria malacensis* or *Aquilaria microcarpa*), myrtle (*kayu kemuning*, *Muraya paniculata*), sea cucumber (*teripang*, *Holothuria scabra*) and horses. They bartered with valuable cloth, porcelain plates and crockery (*piring mangkuk*), chopping knives (*parang*), knives (*pisau*), and earthenware (*periuk belanga*) (Kapita, 1976a: 27-28 and 1976b: 17-18).

Formerly, the maramba were buried with their possessions (see Soelarto, ndb: 17). Old Chinese porcelain plates and crockery, as well as expensive commodities from other islands, including Bali and Java, have been discovered in ancient Sumbanese graves.⁷ Many in eastern

⁷ Forshee stated that "Objects of value from Sumba have moved along trade routes for centuries, travelling far from their places of origin. Worldwide demand for what I will shorthandedly term 'arts' accelerated tremendously in the last decades of the twentieth century, following both a

Sumba recount tales of a grave robbing in the 1970s (Forshee, 2002: 70). Several maramba in Kamutuk still possess antique porcelain plates and crockery that serve to display their status as wealthy maramba whose ancestors were in contact with traders from other islands for centuries.

During the years of the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC) presence in the island, political contracts (*korte verklaring*) between local rulers and the VOC required each local ruler to recognise the sovereignty of the Netherlands (see Kahin, 1949: 234-235). These contracts represented an early effort to incorporate local leaders into the system of the Dutch East Indies administration. Kapita noted that in 1750 a political contract was signed between the regional trade representative of the VOC (Opperhoofd) in Kupang and eight local rulers from Sumba⁸ declaring their recognition of Dutch sovereignty (Kapita, 1976a: 28). The VOC presented awards to these rulers as symbols of friendship. Several of these local rulers were from the pioneer clans in their districts, while others, with or without approval by the pioneer clans, represented their own clans. After the VOC was dismantled on 31 December 1799, the position of Opperhoofd, the regional trade representative of the VOC, was replaced by the Resident, as the Dutch East Indies government official at the regional level and stationed in Kupang, Timor. The political contracts with local leaders in Sumba were continued during the period of the Dutch East Indies colonial administration. Between 23 April 1845 and 8 May 1845, several local rulers of Sumba signed political contracts with Resident Sluijter declaring recognition of the sovereignty of the Dutch government (Kapita, 1976b: 26). These contracts renewed the former contracts with the VOC. Generally, the policy of the Dutch East Indies administration regarding these political contracts was to secure the power symbols in the regions they occupied in order to discourage the presence of competitors, specifically Portugal and England.

boom in international tourism in Indonesia and a flourishing global commerce in 'ethnic arts'—drawing in goods from many non-Western societies into a largely Euro-American market." (Forshee, 2002: 66)

⁸ They represented the leaders of several districts, including Mangili, Umalulu, Patawangu, Mbat-akapidu, Kanatangu, Kapunduku, Napu, and Lewa

Apart from earlier alliances with various Indonesian kingdoms, Sumba was largely left to its own devices with very little interference beyond occasional trading missions by Indonesian, Portuguese and Dutch ships until the Dutch assumed control in 1866 (Saul, n.d.). On 31 August 1866, a district commissioner (*controleur*), Samuel Roos, was appointed to become the first political agent of the Dutch East Indies government in Sumba (see Kapita, 1976a: 28 and Haripranata, 1984: 72). He received directives from J.G. Coorengel, the resident in Kupang, Timor. These directives were the policies of the Dutch East Indies government concerning indirect rule.⁹ Although government officials had been placed in Sumba, they only represented the power symbols of a distant colonial state that had limited authority in local affairs. If the state's goals were minimal, it need not know much about the local society (Scott, 1998: 184). Local leaders and rulers retained their autonomy in maintaining and governing their own societies. This situation was consistent with the general policy of the Dutch administration that allowed local rulers to govern the society in Sumba. Similar to the early-colonial state in Java, the principle of indirect rule left the population essentially under the rule of their own local rulers (Bremen, 1980: 14). The colonial administration felt that the island of Sumba was not especially beneficial for the Dutch government.

Several local leaders in Mangili representing the leaders of the pioneer clans in the region or on behalf of their own clans, signed political contracts first with the VOC and then later with the Dutch East Indies government.¹⁰ Since they maintained political and economic control over the region by means of kinship ties, they retained their

⁹ As noted by Haripranata, one of the directives of the resident in Kupang was: The Dutch *controleur* on the island of Sumba should not govern directly and should not interfere in the daily life of society (1984: 72). The Dutch *controleur* might act as an adviser, but he was basically a power symbol to show to the world that the Dutch East Indies government had occupied the region. The Dutch *controleur* reported to the Resident and to the Governor General in Batavia (currently Jakarta). He could not provoke any hostilities with the local rulers because he did not have military forces to support him.

¹⁰ The leaders from Mangili who signed political contracts with the VOC and the Dutch East Indies government were Umbu Lakaru Taraandungu (1750-1775), Umbu Mangu (1860-1870), and Umbu Ngabi Rajamuda (1872-1893). None of these leaders represented any of the pioneer clans in the Mangili region, i.e., the Maru, Watubulu, Matolangu, Wanggirara clans.

positions of precedence as the founding clans of the settlement by granting approval to the other clan leaders to also sign the political contracts with the VOC or the Dutch East Indies government.

According to Kapita, the leaders from the pioneer clans avoided direct contact with the Dutch East Indies government (Kapita, 1976b: 147). In this way, they were able to avoid the unpredictable consequences resulting from any direct contact with this foreign entity. Umbu Lakaru Taraandungu, a leader of the Karindingu clan, received permission from Umbu Tanga Ndemalulu, a leader from the Maru clan who was a founding clan in Mangili, before he signed a political contract with the VOC in 1750 (see Kapita, 1976b: 147). Similarly, when Umbu Hina Hungguwali, of the Kanatangu clan, received acknowledgement and authorisation of his position in the form of an official document (*akte van erkenning*) and regalia (a gold baton and a Dutch flag) from the Dutch East Indies government, the leaders of the Matolangu clan, one of the pioneer clans in Kamutuk, also endorsed him. Umbu Hina Hungguwali, who ruled between 1901 and 1911, was the first ruler (*raja*) of Mangili who was bound to both the pioneer clans by tradition and the colonial government by contract at the same time.¹¹

Following a change in the colonial policy, the government embarked on a programme of pacification and rule intensification to subdue the local communities and bring them under indirect control. Lieutenant Rijnders, the military and civil *Gezaghebber* (power holder in an administrative region), administered this programme in Sumba from 1906 to 1912. Sumba was designated an *afdeling* (administrative region) under the Timor residency. The Sumba *afdeling* was divided into three *onderafdeling* (districts), each of which was divided into several *landschap* (sub-districts). A government appointee administered every *landschap*. The administrative units were defined by territory.

When Umbu Hina Hungguwali, the ruler of Mangili, died in 1911, the regions of Mangili and Rindi were combined into the *landschap* of Rindi-Mangili.¹² The colonial government appointed Umbu Hina Maru-

¹¹ The Kamutuk kampong was the centre of the Mangili kingdom.

¹² Based on local history, the regions of Rindi and Mangili are in different traditional domains. By

mata, a local ruler of Rindi, as the head of the landschap (bestuurder).¹³ Umbu Limu Rihiamahu, a local leader from the Karindingu clan, was appointed as assistant head of the landschap (medebestuurder or raja bantu) in Mangili (see Kapita, 1976b: 51). He was not a member of one of the pioneer clans, but they accepted him as a leader.¹⁴ Generally, the colonial administration appointed the leaders of the pioneer clans or other local leaders to head the government administration in the village. In this way, the local elite could retain their traditional privileges and maintain customary practises. The local rulers benefited politically from the support and legitimacy of the state in governing the community.

The colonial government attempted to enforce its power at the local level through this system. The local rulers, who functioned as the intermediaries between their communities and the colonial administration, facilitated the organisation of taxes and labour. In discussing intermediaries in Javanese villages in the early colonial state, Breman stated that since the term "intermediaries" involuntarily encouraged the tendency to see this agent in a social stratum who lived in a separately distinguishable in-between level, this assumption took horizontal stratification of society too much for granted (Breman, 1980: 18). Similarly, the Sumbanese have their own leaders within clans that are based on descent and alliance principles, rather than on territorial boundaries. According to Scott, given the relative scarcity of population and the ease of physical flight, the control of arable land was pointless unless there was a population to work it (Scott, 1998: 185). Although the traditional rulers were also linked to traditional domains based on the agreement between clans at Cape Sasar (see Chapter Two), the physical boundaries of these domains were not fixed. Clan members were divided

grouping these two regions into one landschap and by appointing a ruler of Rindi as the head of landschap, the Dutch colonial administration disregarded the fact that the people in Mangili did not have any historical ties with the new ruler. After Umbu Hina Hungguwali, who was from Mangili, died, people in the region remained loyal to their own domains and clan leaders.

¹³ Umbu Hina Marumata was from the one of the pioneer clans in the region of Rindi.

¹⁴ Since Umbu Limu Rihiamahu lived in the region of Tanamanang, he was accepted by the leaders of the Maru and Watubulu clans, who were the pioneer clans in the region. The leaders of the Matolangu and Wanggirara clans were not involved.

into vertical groups who could be physically disperse, but who were subject to the same family leaders. Since Sumbanese in Kamutuk had never been traditionally subject to a ruler of Rindi as a *bestuurder*, or a ruler of Mangili as a *medebestuurder*, they did not recognise either as their leaders, despite their appointments by the colonial administration. Even though they resided near the *medebestuurder*, they were subjects to the leaders in Kamutuk in accordance with their genealogical ties or their *ata-maramba* relationships. The foundation of the indigenous system, which was based on personal/genealogical ties, differed dramatically from the foundation of the colonial government's system, which was based on territorial boundaries.

After landing in Waingapu on 14 May 1942, the Japanese military (*kaigun*, navy and *rikugun*, army) penetrated the island (see Kapita, 1976b: 66). The Japanese army had a base camp in Kopa, Tanamanang village, while the navy had a base camp in Laiwila, Kamutuk village. The government bureaucracy in Sumba did not undergo many changes during the Japanese occupation. The Japanese military changed the Dutch terms *afdeling*, *onderafdeling*, and *landschap* to *ken*, *bunken*, and *suco*. The island of Sumba was divided into two *bunken* (*onderafdeling*). The population, organised by the local leaders, was forced to deliver livestock and labour services. Most villagers, except the clan leaders and their close relatives, attended an official ceremony daily in Kopa before they started their work as forced labourers (*romusha*, *kerja paksa*). Men worked in the rice fields, while women prepared meals for the Japanese military. Most of the livestock was gathered in Kopa, some used for transportation, some for ploughing the rice fields, and some for slaughter to be cooked for meals for the Japanese military. Some men built bomb shelters in the navy base camp, while others served as auxiliary soldiers who carried supplies for troops and performed other unskilled tasks (*heiho*).

It is claimed that the Japanese occupation was a time of repression. Since most people had to work as forced labour during the day, they did not have any opportunity to practise Sumbanese adat. In contrast with the former colonial government, the Japanese military implemented a policy of direct intervention in the areas under their control and

suppression of the local community. The period of the Japanese occupation remains a bitter memory in the community, particularly in regards to the forced labour and prohibition of adat practises.

NICA (Nederlands Indische Civiele Administratie, the Netherlands Indies Civilian Administration) replaced the Japanese military in 1945. The Dutch assumed that the Republic of Indonesia led by Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta was supported only in Java and Sumatra. They attempted to create the Federal State of Indonesia (Negara Indonesia Serikat, NIS), which, they maintained, was comprised of a varied group of states, "special territories," and "autonomous areas" that were created spontaneously by their indigenous inhabitants, enjoyed a high degree of self-government and democracy, and truly represented the Indonesian national spirit (see Kahin, 1949).

However, there were many traditional local leaders who held power in regions in eastern Indonesia who would lose their positions if they collaborated with the Federal State of Indonesia. Since many traditional leaders in these areas wished to maintain their positions as primary power holders in their regions, they did not want to cooperate with Sukarno-Hatta government. They preferred to cooperate with other traditional regional leaders in establishing the State of East Indonesia on 24 December 1946, which included the Celebes, the Lesser Sundas (Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa, Sumba, Flores, West Timor), and the Moluccas (Widiyatmika et al., 1984: 56-57). The leaders in these regions retained their roles as the primary authorities. This strategy of "divide and rule" was designed to oppose Sukarno-Hatta's effort to create the Republic of Indonesia.

In 1950, Sukarno, aiming for unification, liquidated the system of federal states, including the State of East Indonesia.¹⁵ Merging Java with the other islands into a unitary state was a revolutionary step that intended to demolish the federal structure imposed by the Dutch after 1946 as a tactic to isolate the Republic (Dick, et al., 2002: 179). Sukarno

¹⁵ Based on the Governmental Regulation, Number 44 (1950), the State of East Indonesia was liquidated to become several provinces (see Kapita, 1976b). The Province of the Lesser Sundas (Sunda Kecil) became the Province of Nusa Tenggara in 1954.

began the unification process by declaring that the many sultans and local rulers in Indonesia who had ruled their autonomous regions in cooperation with the Dutch, no longer held political power. In the interests of promoting nationalism, with the exception of the Sultan of Yogyakarta, traditional rulers no longer held the highest political power at the regional level. The Sultan of Yogyakarta, who had been instrumental in the nationalist movement, was rewarded with the appointment of governorship of his region.

It is important to note that throughout the presence of state powers from 1866 through 1957, except during the Japanese occupation, traditional leaders maintained autonomy in governing their own regions (see Appendices C and D).

In 1958, Sumba was divided into two districts, i.e. East and West Sumba, within the Province of East Nusa Tenggara.¹⁶ The "special territories" and "autonomous" administrative regions at the local level (*swapraja*) that had been governed by traditional rulers became sub-districts (*kecamatan*) administered by government officials, i.e., sub-district heads, in 1962.¹⁷ This system was integrated into the structure established during the Dutch colonial period. New villages (*desa*) were designated as the lowest level of government administration and were defined by geography, rather than genealogy. The government began to incorporate the local communities into the "modern" administrative structure with the establishment of a national bureaucracy that encompassed the central government, provinces, districts (*kabupaten*), sub-districts (*kecamatan*), and villages (*desa* or *kalurahan*). Although the government reorganised its administration to effectively implement its power at the local level, government officials still faced the difficulties of challenging the authority and power of local leaders.

Soeharto named his administration the "New Order" (*Orde Baru*, 1967-1998), while referring to his predecessor's regime as the "Old Order" (*Orde Lama*). A sense of a new and different temporality grew

¹⁶ As of May 2007, the district of West Sumba was divided into three districts, i.e., Central Sumba (Reg. No. 3/2007), Northwest Sumba (Reg. No. 16/2007), and West Sumba.

¹⁷ At that time, the *swapraja* of Rindi-Mangili became the *kecamatan* of Pahunga Lodu.

during this period due to dramatic increases in the construction of schools, the establishment of literacy programmes for both adults and children, and an expanding bureaucracy that recruited many local people as civil servants (Hoskins, 1993a: 273).¹⁸ This mechanism not only helped national institutions to 'participate' in the governance of village life while closing channels for villagers to participate in the governance of national life, but outside Java they also replaced culturally and geographically specific, traditional forms of authority and organisation (Bebbington et al., 2004: 193).

Since government policy implemented direct rule, rather than indirect rule, many constraints arose, particularly in regards to the payment of the civil servants. With a limited budget, the New Order government attempted to implement the regulation, Number 5 (1979), which specified that the village head was a civil servant placed in the government administrative unit at the lowest level in a territory and was assisted by a secretary and a staff (see Appendix D). A system of payment for the lowest level of civil servants was devised in which the communities themselves paid the salaries.

The village head must co-exist with the traditional community leaders in the village. Although, in his official capacity, he may involve the community leaders in the village development programmes, the boundaries of his leadership are not fixed in relation to the other local leaders whose relationships are traditionally based on descent and alliance principles. In Kamutuk, the village head has kin ties with the other local leaders. He is not only an official in the hierarchy of the government bureaucracy, but he is also an active participant in Sumbanese adat. The traditional leaders retain their roles of authority and power in the social structure.

The head of the sub-district often faces many constraints in implementing state policies in the region. As a representative of the state, the sub-district head is responsible for governing the community

¹⁸ Any substantial state intervention in society—to vaccinate a population, produce goods, mobilise labour, tax people and their property, conduct literacy campaigns, conscript soldiers, enforce sanitation standard, catch criminals, initiate universal schooling—requires intervention units that are visible (Scott, 1998: 183).

by direct rule within the hierarchy of the government administration. In the reality, however, the sub-district head is rarely able to implement policies without negotiating an approval from the traditional community leaders who retain their positions of authority based on "precedence", descent and alliance principles. In many cases, government officials execute their duties by cooperating with and paying respect to the local traditional leaders. To enlist their support, they often distribute development funds through the local leaders.

The sub-district head is rarely able to adjudicate issues concerning village and land disputes. Since the rules that regulate the relationships of people and clans refer to their ancestors, it is more often the traditional leaders, rather than the sub-district heads, who resolve problems of social relations by referring to adat. The example presented in the Chapter One described a dispute between the sub-district head and the village chief of Kamutuk over an infraction of a government regulation that was finally resolved by a traditional leader.

During my initial stay in Kamutuk in early 2002, I was invited by a traditional leader to go to the sub-district office just to have a photo taken with the sub-district head and his staff. I wondered what was so special about this traditional leader that he was able to disturb the official activities in the sub-district office just because he wanted to take a picture of his guest with the sub-district head and his staff? I realised that the government officials in the Mangili region must adapt to the local society. Their interaction with the traditional leaders in Sumba may be different from the actions of government officials outside Sumba.

After "Reformasi" in 1998,¹⁹ the government began the process of decentralisation and promoting regional autonomy. Generally, traditional authorities began to re-emerge at the regional level. They competed with each other through the new mechanism of direct elections to secure positions as district head or governor. In many

¹⁹ This term refers to the student movement that demanded the resignation of President Soeharto and his regime in 1998. It also refers to the period after Soeharto resigned, when the government modified political practises and aspects of social legislation concerning decentralisation and regional autonomy.

cases, those who had pursued a successful career at the provincial or national level returned to their original region to join in the process of decentralisation. In Sumba, a suitable candidate for regional head must also be deemed "suitable" according to his position in the kinship structure, his social rank, and his traditional domain of origin (Vel, 2005: 87). Occasionally, politicians used a combination of cultural patterns and symbols, both local and supra-local, to establish legitimacy of contemporary leadership.

There is an exception for *ata* in relationship to leadership positions in their community. Based on the traditional social stratification system, they are considered to be unsuitable to occupy positions of leadership. Traditional authorities rarely support them as the leaders in Sumbanese society, regardless of their education. No *ata* were nominated as candidates in the direct election of the Village Representative Assembly (Badan Perwakilan Desa, BPD) of Kamutuk village on 1 October 2002. Although there were several *ata* who had graduated from senior high school, the elite in the village preferred to nominate *maramba* with lower educational achievements or Savunese high school graduates rather than *ata*.

B. Negotiating Power

In the political history of Sumba, there has never been a single, socially accepted local ruler for the entire island. There have always been struggles between social groups and their leaders for access to the resources of the state (Vel, 2001: 157). The local leaders have maintained their own domains based on "precedence," descent and alliance principles, where they hold not only power, but also authority. The population is loyal to its own leaders, rather than to the government officials. Based on the hierarchy of the government bureaucracy, the sub-district head and his staff hold the power to govern in a particular region, however, they must negotiate continuously with the local elite to implement the government policies and programmes in the community (see also Schulte-Nordholt, 1987). Although the government reorganised its administration to impose its power by direct rule, in reality, this system is not running smoothly at the sub-district and village levels.

The presence of the state in Sumba and Kamutuk is an effort to apply direct rule through the hierarchical system of the government administration (centralising polity). Although a political hierarchy had been in place since the Dutch colonial period, it was broadened, refined and able to attain higher administrative coherence and discipline only during the Soeharto era. In Kamutuk, however, the system did not function as it was designed to function. Below the level of the sub-district, the officials always needed the cooperation of the maramba and village community leaders as intermediaries to implement government policies. The relationship between the government officials and the local leaders required constant negotiation of power.

While documenting the activities of a sub-district head in my research area, I realised that he often visited several community leaders and members of the local village elite. According to the hierarchical system of government administration, these kinds of visits were more appropriately carried out by the village head. The sub-district head supervised the village head who implemented government policies or disseminated information to the local elite and the villagers. However, the sub-district head would usurp the role of the village head and lead the village meetings discussing government policies. In these meetings, the village head acted more as a representative of the village rather than a representative of the government in the village. The sub-district head also visited local community leaders and their followers to inform them of government policies and programmes and obtain their approval as the authoritative leaders in the village.

Approval from the local leaders is an important factor for implementation of a particular government policy or programme in the village. Most local leaders may approve the policies or programmes which involve funds distributed by the government, such as subsidies for rice, housing, agricultural equipment, livestock subsidies, etc. However, they may refuse the policies or programmes that do not involve distribution of funds or require the distribution of their capital, including land, livestock, etc. This capital is an essential element in maintaining the basic social relationships and representing the status and prestige of the clans.

When the government officials of the district level introduced a plan to use an open field in Kamutuk as the location of a low-income housing project in a meeting held on 26 September 2002, several members of the local elite disagreed with the proposal. The government proposed to build housing and distribute land to Sumbanese who did not own a house and land. Since the field in question was used for herding livestock, most of the local leaders and elite who owned the livestock objected to the conversion of the field into the housing project. Many of those who did not own livestock agreed with the plan. The meeting ended inconclusively.

The friction that arose in response to the government plan stimulated further discussion. The debate between members of the elite in Kamutuk continued in their daily lives. Those who supported the proposal argued that it was a good programme because it would provide a solution for the poor. Umbu Djangga, the most authoritative local leader in Kamutuk, supported the plan. He stated, "The government will build housing and distribute land for the poor, but we refuse it. This is odd." He argued that those who rejected this programme were only thinking of their current interests without considering the future of the poor and the *ata*. On the other hand, those who disagreed with the programme argued that the government did not understand the Sumbanese world in which livestock were an essential element in maintaining basic social relationships. Since this programme intended to use a field that was suitable for herding their livestock, they rejected it. Umbu Habib, the wealthiest local leader in Kamutuk, argued, "We all know that the Sumbanese, since the time of their ancestors, are inseparable from their livestock. We are able to send our children to school because of livestock. Suddenly, however, the government threatens our main assets by implementing this programme in our fields. How will we survive in the future?" Many *ata* supported their *maramba*. Several *ata* supported the arguments of Umbu Djangga because they wanted a better life, however others did not respond. One *ata* told me that those involved in the dispute acted only in their own interests.

Members of the local elite who supported Umbu Habib collected 21 signatures from other *maramba* in a petition that they sent to the district head as a collective refusal of the housing project. Many of those who signed the petition owned livestock that usually grazed in the Kamutuk fields.

They had never before expressed their refusal of a government programme by petition. Television news broadcasts that reported on popular protests prior to and after the "reformasi" period in 1998 influenced the villagers.²⁰ Umbu Harun said, "We must do this to prove that many of the local elite in Kamutuk do not agree with the proposal to use the fields for the housing project because many people still rely on herding livestock for their adat affairs or for their income". The government postponed the project without offering any explanations.

This story illustrates how the local elite in Kamutuk expressed their disagreement with the government programme to use the fields of Kamutuk for a low-income housing project. The majority of those leaders who supported the plan were close to Umbu Djangga and were not threatened by the transformation of the field for the housing project because they did not own much livestock. However, those local leaders who disagreed with the plan owned herds and were close to Umbu Habib. The low-income housing project was considered to be a threat to their capital, their livestock, as well as a threat of the existence of their ata, because, controlling large numbers of livestock and land also meant controlling many ata.

Many maramba in another village, Kuruwaki, approximately ten kilometres from Kamutuk, registered their ata in a similar housing project in their region. The ata received new houses and monthly subsidies from the government. However, the ata did not live in their new houses and their monthly subsidies were turned over to their maramba. This may have been a part of the negotiations between the government officials and the local leaders in securing their approval for the programme. The local elite were able to receive benefits from the government.

Andreas Randja, head of a sub-district in the Mangili region, stated, "It is not easy to be a sub-district head in this region. Since my clan is affiliated with many other clans in this region, most traditional leaders in this region are also my relatives". Although he is from Mangili, this

²⁰ Umbu Habib also gathered signatures for a petition when lobbying with the head of one of the government departments in Waingapu.

does not guarantee that he does not have to negotiate for power with the local elite to execute his duties. The members of his clan and their relatives may accept a sub-district head as a representative of the state, as well as an authoritative leader, however other clans are not obliged to accept him as their traditional or local leader. Since this particular sub-district head is related to most other local leaders in his region, he must utilise these relationships to achieve maximum support for his role and position. The experiences of Andreas Randja illustrate how his efforts to negotiate with the local elite in Kamutuk village utilised their existing traditional kinship relationships. This meant that he was involved in the rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriages in accordance with Sumbanese adat.²¹ In these relationships, his position was based on the personal relationships within his family (elder and younger brothers or father and son relationships) or between clans (bride-giver and bride-taker relationships).²² Since the civil servant salary of a sub-district head is very meagre, he often faces difficulties in financing these adat obligations. Involvement in the adat relationships, however, is crucial for the support of the government policies. Since the sub-district head often participates in adat affairs, the wealthy traditional leaders of Kamutuk often present horses, cattle, pigs, or buffaloes as gifts. Occasionally, these gifts represent a request from the maramba that government policies will be favourable for their positions and interests, however the gifts also serve as means to display their status and power. In this sense, the negotiations for cooperation are crucial not only for the sub-district head, but also for the local elite.

When the sub-district head explained how he was able to provide for his ritual clan obligations, he unintentionally told me that Umbu Habib had given him cattle as a symbol of their friendship. This gift was presented to him during the time when there was tension between Umbu Habib and the government officials over the low-income housing project. This is indicative

²¹ Involvement in the traditional rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriage ceremonies means that one does not only attend these events, but one also contributes money, livestock, mamuli, or hand-woven cloth, in accordance with his position in the kinship relationships.

²² Upon occasion, it is possible to base one's position in a kinship relationship on fictive kinship.

of how Umbu Habib negotiated with the sub-district head. Although this gift was not one of adat obligation, it could be factored into determining obligations in future adat exchanges.

Umbu Djangga used a similar tactic when he requested the removal of all police personnel at the sub-district police headquarters. He requested their removal after his dispute with an officer at the sub-district police headquarters did not reach a resolution. At that time, Umbu Djangga was the village head of Kamutuk and was friendly with a head of the District Police Resort for East Sumba. Umbu Djangga presented livestock to the district official in exchange for his support of his leadership in the village. These gifts were in the name of friendship, rather than adat obligations. Occasionally, he "adopted" officials into his clan by creating fictive kin relationships. Once these officials were entrapped into kin relationships, they were often unable to refuse the occasional requests for recognition of Umbu Djangga's authority and power in the village. It is, therefore, not surprising that Umbu Djangga felt justified in requesting the head of the District Police Resort to dismiss police personnel in the sub-district police headquarters.

Local leaders use local tradition as the vehicle to display their status and authority. The relationships between the clans of bride-givers and bride-takers, for example, are often used to maintain the precedence of a clan in relation to other clans. The maramba who are able to manipulate and transform traditional capital in accordance with rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriages affiliations are respected as the authoritative community leaders. Since livestock are an important factor in determining the relative status and wealth of clans, using or receiving large numbers of livestock in reciprocal exchanges is a source of clan pride. Kuipers noted that elite status and prestige was related to the ability to recruit labourers and sponsor animal sacrifices for large-scale feasting, ritual performance, and reciprocal exchange (Kuipers, 1998: 92). This is still applicable and, occasionally, used for achieving political favours from government officials.

The local elite insist that recognition of status and authority is a form of showing respect. Conflicts and disputes should be resolved through adat as the proper way to acknowledge the relative status and authority of the disputants. Disagreements are often followed by

one party wounding, killing or even stealing the livestock of the other party. It is an underhanded show of forces between the disputants that demands acknowledgement of clan status and authority.

The livestock of both the Kanatangu Uma Bara and Matolangu Uma Kaluki lineages were wounded and killed when there was a dispute between the two lineages in 1983.²³ First, several animals owned by a leader of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki lineage were wounded and killed. Then, several animals owned by a leader of the Kanatangu Uma Bara lineage were wounded and killed. The perpetrators of the attacks were unknown, although it was assumed each attack was carried out by the opposing lineage. In the end, both lineages felt that they had taken their revenge on each other, and the attacks ended.

Incidents like this still occur as a means of demanding recognition of the status and authority between individuals and clans involved in a dispute. They represent a manner of power negotiations in a traditional context. The local elite are skilled in negotiating within the tradition, but also in encountering modernity and combining cultural patterns and symbols.

In 1964, two years after Umbu Djangga of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki lineage replaced Umbu Katanga Lili of the Kanatangu Uma Bara lineage as the head of Kamutuk kampung,²⁴ the kampung was incorporated into the village (desa) of Kamutuk. Umbu Djangga became village head of Kamutuk (for the chronology of lineages and headmen, see Appendices A and B). Since he was a member of one of the pioneer clans of Kamutuk, he was in a position of traditional power and authority. He secured support from a leader of the Kanatangu Uma Bara lineage who was a former head of Kamutuk kampung. His clan's position as the bride-giver to the Kanatangu clan garnered more

²³ This dispute erupted because the leaders of Kanatangu Uma Bara felt that Umbu Djangga, a leader of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki lineage, was involved with improper voting procedures in the election for village head.

²⁴ Since Umbu Djangga was known as a thief of livestock in the Mangili region, Umbu Katanga Lili selected him as his replacement as kampung head so that the Mangili region would be protected from crimes. It was said that he had magical powers (*tama la patuna*) that enabled him to commit crimes.

support for his leadership.²⁵ However, he still had to negotiate with the leaders of other clans to secure his position. His efforts to befriend Umbuna i Nggaba and Umbu Yadar, the local rulers in the Nggongi region, enhanced his status in the region. Since he was both village head as well as a traditional community leader, the new sub-district heads visited Umbu Djangga to introduce themselves and request his support.²⁶ However, although he was a representative of the state and a village leader, he was not the only power holder. He had to share his power with the other village elite through community meetings (*musyawarah*) and adat rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriages.

In 1973, following a car accident in which one of his *ata* died, Umbu Djangga appointed Umbu Mananga, another leader in the *Mato-langu Uma Kaluki* lineage, to become village head. As the term for the village head was several years, selection should have been by election, not appointment by the former village head. However, Umbu Djangga's authority allowed him to determine his own successor and to continue to play a major role behind the village head. After Umbu Mananga passed away in 1983, Umbu Djangga was reinstated as village head, this time by means of an election. The supporters of Umbu Kombu, a rival candidate from the *Kanatangu Uma Bara* lineage accused Umbu Djangga's faction of manipulating the ballots. These accusations were never proven. As mentioned above, this incident resulted in the slaughter of the livestock of both lineages. Umbu Mbani, a leader from the *Mato-langu Uma Djangga Wuku* lineage, replaced Umbu Djangga in 1989.

When *kalurahan* were established as official administrative units in 1994, the village (*desa*) of Kamutuk became the *kalurahan* of Kamutuk. Umbu Hangga became the village chief (*lurah*), replacing Umbu Mbani who was the village head (*kepala desa*) of Kamutuk. Unlike the position of village head, the position of village chief was a civil servant and

²⁵ The clan and lineage leaders in Kamutuk were Umbu Habib Meta Halima of the *Kanatangu Uma Andung* lineage, Umbu Kaling of the *Kanatangu Uma Andung* lineage, Umbu Pranggi of the *Kanatangu Uma Bara* lineage, Umbu Landu of the *Kanatangu Uma Randi* lineage, and several leaders of the *Kabulingu* clan in a *kampong* near the open field.

²⁶ Several sub-district heads who did not receive support from Umbu Djangga served relatively short terms in their positions.

appointed by government officials at a higher administrative level. Since there were no members of either the Matolangu or Kanatangu clans who were civil servants at the sub-district level, the government appointed Umbu Hangga as village chief of Kamutuk. Umbu Djangga, representing the village leaders in Kamutuk, approved the appointment. Although Umbu Hangga was a member of the Wiku clan, who were not original residents of Kamutuk, his clan were bride-takers with Umbu Djangga's clan.

Umbu Kombu was elected to the position of village head in May 2002, after the status of the *kalurahan* of Kamutuk was reinstated as the village (*desa*) of Kamutuk. Umbu Djangga supported him because there were no candidates from his clan. He felt that none of the leaders in the Matolangu clan at that time was capable of becoming the village head.

Sumbanese occupied most of the important positions at the village level, while Savunese occupied most of the less important positions at the hamlet levels. This alignment indicates that the local elite were able to manipulate the government administrative structure. They were not only skilled in negotiating power with the government officials at the higher administrative levels, but also skilled in negotiating authority with people at the hamlet levels (*dusun*). Placing the Savunese in official positions at the hamlet level represented the Sumbanese strategy of maintaining positive relationships with the Savunese who comprised almost 50% of the village population.

The processes of incorporating the local polity in Kamutuk have not been linear. The implementation of central government policies must be constantly negotiated with the local elite in the villages. The two systems of authority exist and interact with each other by constructing dynamic local contests. (These systems are discussed in the "Existing Modern and Traditional Hierarchies" section in this chapter.) The powers of officials within the government administrative system and the authority of the local elite in the village exist in competition, cooperation, and combination with each other, each striving to foster their own interests. The government is in constant need of the local elite to support the implementation of its policies and programmes in the village. In turn, contact with the government allows the local elite to enhance their own position and power in the community.

C. Opportunities to Manoeuvre

The adat conference for the Pahunga Lodu sub-district held on 10-11 December 1988 and sponsored by the director of the Education and Culture Department at the sub-district level reached several agreements, including limitations on the quantity of livestock used in the marriage exchanges for the bride price (maximum eight animals), limitations on livestock slaughtered in funeral ceremonies (maximum eight animals), limitations on time span to hold funerals after death (maximum eight days), limitations on animals sacrificed as symbols of adat agreements (maximum eight pigs), etc. (see Tay, 1988). Adat practises that required the slaughter and exchange of large quantities of livestock were declared a waste of local capital, expense, and time. The ritual sacrifices and competition in the marriage exchanges were perceived by the administration as obstacles to economic development (Renard-Clamagirand, 1992: 12). Hence, the government attempted to restrict these traditional practises. As Pemberton stated, the New Order government undertook a great effort to domesticate traditional cultures into a folklore that continuously embraced potentially unruly practises only to frame them as examples of "traditional rituals" performed for the sake of an ever more "Beautiful Indonesia" (Pemberton, 1994: 205).

Although the adat conference reached several agreements, the relatives of maramba who were the practitioners of these adat practises did not comply with these agreements. When a maramba died, the funeral would be held more than eight days after the death. For example, the funeral of a noble woman from the Matolangu clan died on 25 February 2003. Her body was buried on 8 March 2003 (more than eight days later).²⁷ In contrast, when an ata died, the body would

²⁷ Umbu Djangga, a leader of the Matolangu Uma Kaluki lineage, who died on 2 September 2007, was buried on 3 November 2007, 62 days after his death. Umbu Hina Kapita, a maramba from Maru clan in the village of Tanamanang, who died on 21 December 2002, was buried on 11 January 2003, 21 days after his death. On 30 September 2002, I attended a funeral ceremony of a maramba in the region of Umalulu, a member of a clan related to the Kanatangu clan. The corpse had been kept in a special room of the traditional house for two years to await preparations for a funeral ceremony, which included the construction of a stone tomb, amassing of livestock, settlement of all family disputes, etc.

be buried within eight days. An ata from the Kanatangu clan died on 16 December 2002, and his body was buried six days later, on 22 December 2002. There were also differences between the maramba and ata groups in the number of livestock slaughtered as sacrificial animals in funeral ceremonies or exchanged as the bride price. Although the maramba incurred some financial loss in observing these traditions, they did not perceive it as such because of the importance of the non-economic values inherent in the exchange (see Onvlee, 1980: 199). The local elite chose to maintain and reinforce the existing social boundaries by applying the conference agreements only to the ata. It also allowed the maramba to reduce their obligations in supplying sacrificial animals or bride prices for their ata.

Although the government had policies for social organisation and development, the maramba were allowed to redefine these policies to suit their own interests. The government favoured the elite to the disadvantage of the ata. The decisions made at the adat conference should have been universally applied to all members of the community however, in reality, they were applied only to the ata. The maramba constructed arguments about status and authority in justification of their continued practise of the traditions and disregard of the conference agreements. The maramba manoeuvred support from the government to force the ata to obey the new regulations on adat practises while they refused to follow them and insisted on maintaining their position as a group with different status, wealth, and prestige.

The maramba simultaneously occupy positions of patron (internal) and broker (external). A broker is an intermediary who does not hold any power himself, while a patron possesses local sources of power, such as benefits of precedence, land, livestock, royal or noble descent, and ata. As discussed in Chapter Two, benefits of precedence are extended by transforming historical legitimacy and translating economy into authority and status in determining who is to be first, foremost, elder, superior, and greater. Together with maramba of related clans they form a solidarity facing encroaching systems of power. With this concordance, the local elite are rarely amenable to orders from government officials. Even the non-government organisations (NGOs) often

face difficulties implementing their development programmes for the poor if they do not involve the maramba in their programmes. An NGO staff worker explained that the cooperative project between his NGO and the government that provided subsidies for hand tractors for the poor did not reach the targeted recipients because many maramba, who were positioned as intermediaries for programme implementation, monopolised the programme without any resistance from government officials and other local leaders.

Since the local elite have maintained their local sources of power, they are able to approve or, occasionally, reject government programmes. The maramba control the ata who are subject to their master's orders, not the government officials' orders.²⁸ Since the government is not able to communicate directly with the ata, the government programmes cannot be implemented in the region without support from the local elite. Umbu Djangga, Umbu Habib, Umbu Mbani, and Umbu Kombu, are the authoritative figures of Kamutuk village who must be involved in the process of negotiating implementation of development programmes. As exemplified by the above-mentioned low-income housing project, programmes that do not receive approval by the community leaders, inevitably fail.

In commenting about the dispute over the government low-income housing project, the former village head of Kamutuk said that only a resolution in accordance with adat would provide a balanced settlement that did not leave either of the disputants with a sense of defeat. Balanced decisions are favoured in resolving disputes and conflicts. Clan leaders negotiate to reach the adat agreements in which each party reciprocates gifts in accordance with the marriage affiliations between their clans. Although people claim that normatively each party has nothing to lose or gain, these occasions sometimes represent an opportunity for the bride-giving clan to take advantage of the bride-taking clan by requesting large amounts of livestock.²⁹ These relationships often factor

²⁸ Since the ata are subordinate to their own patrons, they cannot directly communicate with outsiders.

²⁹ The bride-giving clan occupies a superior position in relation to the bride-taking clan.

into claims to relative status in the competition between the local elite and, even, in relation to government officials at the sub-district level. Although sub-district level government officials were not Sumbanese, Umbu Djangga placed these officials into inferior adat positions to himself based on rituals, early presentation of gifts, and fictive kinships (see Vel, 1992). These relationships represent opportunities for the local elite to manoeuvre for position and power.

When Barnabas Kana, the head of the sub-district office of the Education and Culture Department, visited Umbu Djangga, the chair he was sitting in collapsed and he almost fell. Both men were embarrassed. A few days later, Umbu Djangga delegated a *wunangu* (an adat delegation) to negotiate with Barnabas Kana for the adat ceremony to heal the soul (*dendiha hamangu*) so that they would no longer feel shame. Barnabas Kana, as a Savunese, was unfamiliar with this Sumbanese custom. However, Umbu Djangga explained that a long time ago, an ancestor of his Matolangu clan had gone to Savu and lived there. At that time, an ancestor of Barnabas Kana's clan married a woman from the Matolangu clan. This marriage affiliation placed Barnabas Kana's clan into the position of bride-taker to Matolangu's clan.³⁰ In the end, on 4 August 2002, the *dendiha hamangu* was held and an agreement was reached: Barnabas Kana presented two horses and two golden *mamuli* to Umbu Djangga, while Umbu Djangga reciprocated these gifts with a hand-woven cloth. This agreement was confirmed with the sacrifice of a pig.

As the group that holds power and authority at the local level, the *maramba* try to maintain good relationships with all levels of the society. They are in key positions, whether interacting with the government or

³⁰ In determining the position of alliance groups, people refer to the first known marriage between the two groups. Gunawan described a marriage between a man from Wanokaka, West Sumba, and a woman from Mangili, who were married in the early 1960s (Gunawan, 2000: 126). Initially, following this marriage, all Wanokakans, whatever their relationship to the husband was, were treated as bride-takers. Wanokaka, as a whole, represented a single alliance group in relation to Mangili. However, as there is increasing contact between the people of Mangili and Wanokaka, there will be increasing differentiation of Wanokaka in the eyes of Mangili people. There will also be differentiation in Mangili in the eyes of Wanokaka. The alliance groups are no longer Wanokaka and Mangili as whole units, but as smaller segments within these larger domains.

with fellow villagers. They are also able to play on the stage of local politics to demonstrate their authoritative presence as community leaders. Many maramba attended a village effort to repair the fences around the rice fields to prevent livestock from entering the fields. The ata did the actual work, while the maramba simply supervised their ata. This situation confirmed and strengthened the position of the maramba as the party who gave orders and the ata as the party who executed the orders.³¹ The maramba often avoided personally responding to orders from government officials by assigning their ata to represent them in the implementation of the government programmes in the village. Through indirect means they were sometimes able to refuse to comply with orders of government officials, thus maintaining their positions and authority.

The maramba play local politics to retain their positions as the leaders in the village. As previously mentioned in Chapter Two, the ata are rarely involved in the formal and adat discussions, allowing the maramba to maintain their monopoly on power. Occasionally, the local elite are able to exploit state power to strengthen their own authority. Umbu Djangga used his position as village head of Kamutuk to strengthen his authority in the traditional accounting by increasing his herd of livestock and gaining more ata. His ability to exploit state power enhanced his position as local leader in Kamutuk. His clan's resources, including their position as one of the pioneer clans in the region and as the bride-givers in relation to many other clans in Kamutuk, also supported his personal position. He successfully combined traditional and modern sources of power to attain his position of predominance. Several predicates applied to him, including former village head, respected person (*tau patembi*), courageous or fearsome person (*tau kaborangu*), and invulnerable person (*tau kobulu*).³²

³¹ This structural power engendered ideas that set up basic distinctions between the organisers of labour and those being organised, between those who could direct and initiate action and those who responded to these directives (Wolf, 1999: 275).

³² *Tau patembi* is a person respected for his heroism, wisdom, authority, power, and courage. *Tau kaborangu* is a great, courageous person feared for his criminal inclinations, invulnerability, anger, magical skills, cruelty, power, or courage. Kuipers used the term "angry man" (*kabani-mbani*) (Kuipers, 1998: 48). According to him, the word *mbani* can be glossed as "anger, daring,

During the New Order era, Golongan Karya (Golkar, official government party of former President Soeharto) recruited Umbu Djangga as their candidate and representative at the sub-district level. His involvement with Golkar strengthened his position amongst the other maramba in Kamutuk. Although he was no longer the village head and a representative of Golkar,³³ he remained an authoritative figure in Kamutuk until his death in September 2007. State powers often reinforced the positions of traditional authority in the community.

D. Existing Modern and Traditional Hierarchies

An official Independence Day celebration ceremony was held in the yard of the sub-district office of Pahunga Lodu on the morning of 17 August 2002. As in similar ceremonies throughout Indonesia, the ceremony was conducted in Indonesian and with military discipline. The participants were directly linked to the state organisation, including civil servants, soldiers, police, village heads, and schoolteachers. The schoolteachers required their pupils to attend and the village heads invited several community figures to the ceremony. Many villagers watched the ceremony from outside sub-district office yard. The ceremony began with the raising of the national flag, singing the national anthem, reading the proclamation of independence, the constitution, and the five basic principles of the Republic of Indonesia, and closed with a speech by the sub-district head. This ceremony represents a standardisation of political expression by the government to produce political meaning. The Indonesian Independence Day celebration is a national event that must be commemorated every year by Indonesian citizens.

My experiences while living on Java indicate that the commemoration of Indonesian independence is passed down from the central government through the province, the district, the sub-district, and the village to the kampongs. Most people in the kampongs and villages celebrate Independence Day by raising the national flag in front of every citizen's house, decorating the kampongs, holding a variety of contests, organising festivals and public

threatening, rage." It is not associated primarily with a "feeling, experience," but it is more closely linked to forms of expression and active strategy. Tau kobulu is a person who is invulnerable.

³³ At present, the Golkar representative is a local leader from the village of Mburukulu.

entertainment. These activities are intended not only to construct a sense of nationalism for Indonesian citizens, but also to reflect the manifestation of state power at the local level. In Mangili, however, the Independence Day activities involved only a horse race and a volleyball competition, in addition to the official ceremony at the sub-district office. Many villagers participated in the activities just for entertainment, not in the interest of commemorating a national event. They did not raise the national flag in front of their houses. In this sense, no special celebration was held to commemorate Independence Day in the village.³⁴

Generally, the central government uses the Independence Day celebration as a vehicle to instil a sense of nationalism amongst Indonesian citizens. These events are constructed as sacred national events rather than part of the local tradition. They reflect a deliberate strategy to incorporate the local community into the national framework. In line with the government administrative structure, the sub-district head always organises the commemoration of Indonesian Independence Day, although the villagers rarely respond seriously to this celebration.

Villagers in Kamutuk identify the state as originating from an external source and alien to their society. As Sekimoto stated, the state provides a comprehensive entity that is fundamentally different from and transcendent to the society comprising people's collective daily social relationships (Sekimoto, 1990: 60). It also reflects that the construction of a sense of nationalism has encountered resistance amongst villagers who have a different base for their sense of identity. The national celebration of Indonesian independence has no meaning to the status and authority of the local elite. They emphasise rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriage affiliations, rather than participation in national celebrations, as the main factors that support their position as the ruling elite.

The above description also illustrates how the mechanism of the administrative hierarchy in which government policies are passed

³⁴ A similar situation occurs in the observance of the religious holy days. The special observances of the holy days are often constructed as ordinary events.

down from the central government through the province, district, and sub-district, intended for the villages, often stop at the sub-district level. To reach the village level, the government must interact with the local social structure, which is strictly regulated by Sumbanese tradition. In this sense, the centralised administration system has failed to bring about desired social transformations in the national periphery (see Kaartinen, 2000: 10).

Since local people are organised in complex kin and locality groups, they have their own leaders within clans that are based on the concepts of precedence, descent and alliance principles, and traditional domain. Government officials and outsiders need the maramba, as the traditional leaders in the village, as intermediaries to reach the villagers, many of whom are ata (see Figure 9).

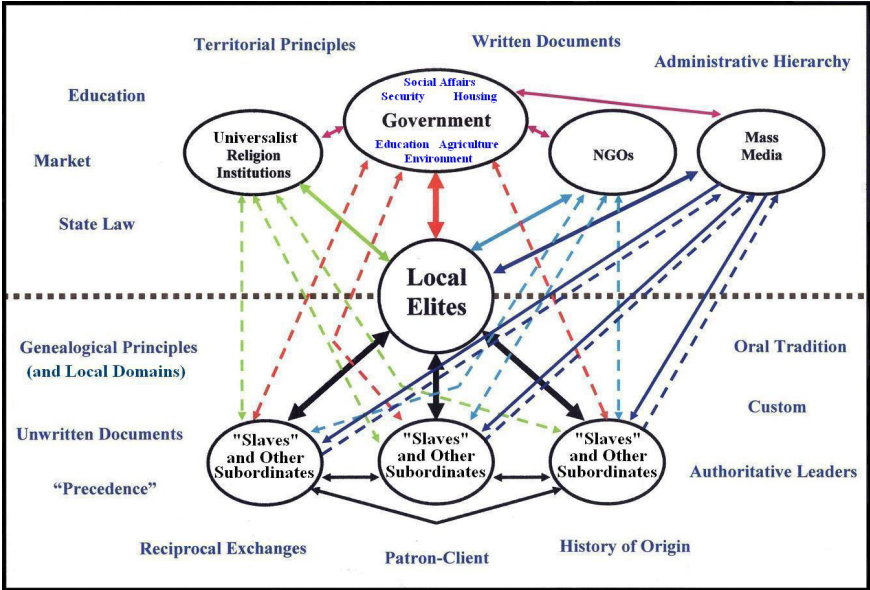


Figure 9. The Position of the Local Elite as Patron and Intermediary

Figure 9 illustrates the position of the local elite as intermediaries in communication and interaction between outsiders and villagers. In this position, they are able to monopolise communication and interaction at the local level. The government, religious institutions, and NGOs must cooperate with the local elite for the implementation

of their programmes. As patrons, the local elite also control patron-client networks within the community.

Since the local elite have retained their authoritative positions based on the traditional mechanisms, they act as "the gatekeepers" in controlling interactions between their subordinates and outsiders. As Kaartinen stated, the dual nature of state presence in East Indonesia is largely personified in leaders who simultaneously act as the representatives of the government towards their own people, while representing their community to outsiders (Kaartinen, 2000: 11). Several members of the local elite often have more power and authority than the sub-district head. They have traditional social and cultural resources to fortify their positions as local authorities. Occasionally, they incorporate state power to strengthen their positions as village leaders. As mentioned above, formerly, the local leaders in Kamutuk competed with each other for the position of village head, which created opportunities to combine cultural patterns and symbols, both local and supra-local, to attain legitimacy of contemporary leadership. Many of the local elite strengthen their positions by becoming members of the Village Representative Assembly.

As village "gate keepers", the local elite have the opportunity to assess and apply their power that is amassed from a variety of resources. The government provides privileges to the local elite for supporting its interests. In turn, the local elite manipulate state power to extend their own interests. They are able to utilise both traditional and modern sources of power in the face of both external and internal influences. Those members of the local elite who have been supported by the government have more power than they had previously. Not only do they have access to local resources, but they can also mobilise state resources for their individual benefit. Placed in strategic positions, the local elite are able to play local politics by using different resources of power. This situation is contradictive of the national government objective that requires the loyalty of all government officials, from the lowest to highest levels, to the central government. The government cannot easily incorporate local leaders, who have social and cultural resources that determine claims on status and authority, into its system.

E. Summary and Conclusion

Historically, government systems have been present on the island of Sumba since 1866, when the colonial government placed a Dutch controleur, district commissioner, in the region. At that time, colonial government policy focused on efforts to convince the local leaders to acknowledge sovereignty of the Netherlands by swearing allegiance to the Queen of the Netherlands and the Governor-General in Batavia. The colonial government imposed its presence through indirect rule, so the local leaders and rulers retained their autonomy in governing their communities without political interference from the colonial administration. This was the general arrangement until 1957, when the Sukarno government reorganised the central administration through regional (sub-district and village) levels. However, the Sukarno and Soeharto governments did not succeed in incorporating the traditional village structure of East Sumba into their systems. The cultural unity of the East Sumbanese is sustained by an exchange system that is maintained not by a centralised social structure, but by overlapping networks of small social groups (Adams, 1969: 8). The affiliation between the modern state and the local community is neither a one-way relationship nor purely hegemonic. The government officials at the village level must negotiate with the local elite for implementation of their policies. The local elite (maramba) have the authority to make decisions within clans and in the village. They often combine traditional and modern sources of power to secure legitimacy of their leadership. In rejecting government policy, they utilise their networks of bride-giver and bride-taker affiliations or may resort to direct confrontations.

Traditionally, the status and authority of the local elite are related not only to an ability to recruit labour and animal sacrifices through rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriage affiliations in accordance with Sumbanese adat, but also to the local histories of clan arrivals in the region and precedence amongst the clans.³⁵ The government uses

³⁵ This reflects the ideologies of dominance to retain and maintain superior positions (see Wolf, 1999)

the elite by placing them in positions of power in the local political system to implement government policies. In turn, the local elite use the government authority to strengthen their positions in the village. Although the government strives to incorporate the villagers into the national system, it actually reinforces the traditional authority of the local elite by strengthening the existing social boundaries. State intervention, aimed at creating a uniform bureaucracy by eliminating competing power structures, also works to strengthen local hierarchies and the elite.

5

THE APPROPRIATION OF NATIONAL POLICIES BY THE LOCAL ELITE

As mentioned in Chapters Three and Four, government policies attempt to assimilate the local polity into its system and introduce changes into the region by creating a standardisation of political expressions and a uniform structure of village government. There has been a remarkable continuity of colonial policy regarding the incorporation of the local polity that has extended through independence. Over the years, the local elite have developed tactics to maintain their positions as the power holders in the community. In this chapter, I will explore the strategies of the local elite in transforming the threat of state interference that could potentially weaken their control over local resources and, thereby, their authority in the community. The local elite have succeeded in monopolising contact and communication with outsiders and in appropriating education, economic modernisation, and migration for their own purposes, and, thus, retaining their power.

The following story of Umbu Diki Dongga illustrates how an individual's power can vanish or become provisional, as well as how power depends on precise timing and is limited by moral judgment values.

When our bus passed the region of Kawangu, approximately fifteen kilometres from Waingapu, my friend pointed out a large house surrounded by stonewalls on the right side of the main road. Although it was in poor condition, this house retained an impression of the glory of its former owner. My friend began to tell me about Umbu Diki Dongga, the wealthy owner of the house several decades ago. He controlled many *ata*, land, and a large herd of livestock.¹ Many people also believed that he possessed magical

¹ An estimation of Umbu Diki Dongga's herd at that time ran to almost eleven thousand animals.

powers from the sea (*tama la kuru duna la libu muru*) that enabled him to control people.² Apparently, these "magical powers" enabled Umbu Diki Dongga's herd to increase. Residents of the eastern part of Sumba who sold their livestock in Waingapu were apprehensive about passing through regions under the authority of Umbu Diki Dongga. In many cases, herds passing Umbu Diki Dongga's fields never returned to their owners. Since he had many subordinates and supernatural powers, few people dared to check Umbu Diki Dongga's fields. Those who did search for their lost livestock never found them because the brands were changed to DD (Diki Dongga). Umbu Diki Dongga was not only a wealthy local leader, but he was also a formidable person (*tau kaborangu*) in the region.³ When Umbu Diki Dongga died, however, his glories were buried with him. The livestock his family inherited did not last very long after his death. Some of the animals died of illness, while others were stolen. Stories about the glories of Umbu Diki Dongga usually ended with the statement: "Generally, wealth obtained by illegal means cannot be bequeathed to descendants, because these tactics are considered to be 'illegitimate' or 'hot' (*mbana*)."⁴

The story of Umbu Diki Dongga describes his ability to accumulate and maintain a large herd.⁵ It also indicates that he was able to control human resources, i.e., *ata*, to tend his livestock and support his lifestyle. Keane states that to maintain basic social relations with others, to sustain a decent reputation, and to avert the ire of ancestors, one must have

² Hoskins describes a very special and intimate relationship between a snake, a wild spirit, and *raja Horo* in Kodi, West Sumba. The spirit is represented as a jealous wife who may place restrictions on her human partner's relationships with other women. This relationship consists of complicated obligations on both sides: The wild spirit offers gifts of wealth and success in love, but requires regular payment in the form of sacrifices and the respect of particular taboos (Hoskins, 1998: 91).

³ The central authority of the *tau kaborangu* was legitimated partly by a charismatic personal style of fierceness and competitiveness used to attract cattle, pigs and other goods for large-scale feasting and display of wealth (Kuipers, 1998: 48). As a charismatic personal style, a great courageous or fearsome figure (*tau kaborangu*) is affiliated with other characters, including a respected person (*tau patembi*), a person who was dangerous when angered (*kabani-mbani*), and an invulnerable person (*tau kobulu*).

⁴ Similar stories are found in other parts of Sumba. In describing the story of the people of Pangadu Jara, Vel stated that a similar story is used in Lawonda to illustrate that if wealth is acquired by theft or other illegal ways, it is "hot", and it will not result in lasting benefit (Vel, 1994: 96).

⁵ A person's wealth is usually calculated by size of the herd they possess.

access to cattle and rice (Keane, 1997a: 57). Controlling livestock and land is not only essential to supporting social and political roles at the local level, but also to display and increase power through managing adat affairs, maintaining relationships amongst clans, and contributing animals for marriage affiliation and funeral ceremonies. If not for display in adat rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and marriage ceremonies, the possession of livestock is meaningless. Umbu Diki Dongga's power was based on the transformation of these assets in adat ceremonies that required the involvement of his relatives, his *ata*, and his affiliated clans in accordance with the tradition and expectations of the society. The relationship between Umbu Diki Dongga and the other local leaders was defined by their respective abilities to compete with each other for local authority. In this sense, Umbu Diki Dongga integrated and systematised all the elements of a total situation to provide a socially authorised meaning. He utilised symbols to mediate the relationship between himself and his audience, through speech, symbolic exchanges of food, cloth, and valuables, with spectacular displays of ritual drama (Kuipers, 1998: 69). Politics is the site par excellence of symbolic efficacy; the action that is performed through signs capable of producing social objects (Bourdieu, 1985: 741).

Stories of magical abilities and supernatural powers are often associated with local leaders. These prescribed abilities represent, perhaps, effective symbols in maintaining positions of authority and local leadership. Individuals pursue their targets in a framework of rules that have been agreed upon and are acceptable by all parties. The stories about Umbu Diki Dongga describe his efforts to strengthen his position in the region that were outside this framework of accepted rules. On the one hand, the story describes the successful tactics of an individual attaining a leadership position, but on the other hand, the story departs from the normative framework.⁶ This story is popularly referred to in the village in reference to former and present local leaders

⁶ Normative rules are very general guides to conduct. They are used to judge particular actions ethically and within a particular political structure they can be used to justify publicly a course of conduct. Pragmatic rules are statements not about whether a particular line of conduct is just or unjust, but about whether or not it will be effective (Bailey, 1970: 5-6).

who have undertaken similar tactics. Most revealing is the failure of Umbu Diki Dongga to transmit his power to his descendants and how revenge was eventually taken against him. It is often predicted that the illegally obtained wealth of local leaders will not last long after their death. The local leaders who attained their wealth legally are not subject to such dire forecasts.

The story of Umbu Diki Dongga describes the tactics of a local leader in accumulating, managing and maintaining his power by manipulating local resources. He protected his clan, while simultaneously displaying his aggressiveness to control both his subordinates and competitors. Bailey states that each culture has its own set of rules for political manipulation, its own language of political wisdom and political action. It consists of local tactics in strengthening political position in the community and in facing the contingent interfering forces such as state, religious institutions, and education (Bailey, 1970: 6). The ability to attract and hold a potential or productive population was an integral key for Umbu Diki Dongga's success. The control of large herds indicated the control of a large population, many of whom were tied by *ata-maramba* relationships. His subordinates were subservient exclusively to him. Leadership was established not only by wealth and the distribution of it during ritual feasts, which increased influence in the extended social network, but also through distinctive abilities, such as mastery of supernatural powers, recitation of the stories of origin, and skills for ritual speech and negotiation (see Renard-Clamagirand, 1992: 9).

A. Leadership in Action

When Mbira's horse wandered into Umbu Djangga's rice fields, Umbu Djangga became furious. He ordered his *ata* to confiscate the horse. He reported the incident to the village head and requested that the horse's owner be punished. Looking for community support, he spoke of the trespassing to others in the village. Mbira was very frightened not only of Umbu Djangga's anger, but also because his clan was in the inferior position of bride-takers to Umbu Djangga's bride-giving clan. He was worried that if Umbu Djangga

asked for an adat resolution to the dispute, it would mean that he would have to give at least one horse and one gold mamuli to Umbu Djangga. In the end, this dispute was resolved without any punishment or adat exchange after Mbira apologised to Umbu Djangga.⁷

However, since Mbira belonged to the clan of the current village head, this incident induced gossip about the current village head's attitude, which was perceived to be unenthusiastic about an agreement to repair the fences around the rice fields. Many of the elite in Kamutuk agreed at a village meeting to the fence repair because it was urgently needed to prevent animals from entering the rice-fields and destroying the crops. Several members of the elite in Kamutuk kampung initiated the discussion about the need for the fence after a member of the kampung became the village head. From 1994 to 2002, Kamutuk was a *kalurahan* that was led by a village chief (*lurah*) who was not a native of Kamutuk. The villagers felt that this *lurah* was inattentive to local aspirations. Some villagers recalled how rice field fences had previously been installed and maintained under the former village heads. They compared the attitudes of the former village heads and the present village head towards local needs and interests.

This incident also created an opportunity for Umbu Djangga to gather support from other local leaders by focusing on the weaknesses of the village head. The complaints were concerned not only with his position as the village head and government bureaucrat, but also with his position as a clan leader. Several members of the elite felt that he did not take a dominant stance in dealing with his *ata*. He allowed them to possess land and livestock, to manage their own household budgets, and to permit *ata* children to pursue higher education if they could afford it. The elite were apprehensive that these allowances would create opportunities for the *ata* to distance themselves from their relationship with the *maramba*. Several members of the local elite spoke of the village head as a "close-mouthed leader" or Umbu Makadingu, "the silent Umbu". Silence is not one of the common attributes of the local elite, who generally prefer to converse openly about their successes and the supremacy of their ancestors. Most local leaders

⁷ Actually, Umbu Djangga had a close connection with the owner of the horse, who once served as his special henchman when Umbu Djangga was the village head.

in Kamutuk were skilled in rhetoric which they utilised to reaffirm their status, power, prestige, and authority.

Despite his weaknesses, Umbu Makadingu was elected to be village head.⁸ He was one of the elders in his clan, who had not held power in Kamutuk kampong since 1960. There were no other candidates considered suitable for the position. As the younger brother of the elected village head, Umbu Harun whispered to me "We must stay close to our brother to cover his weaknesses in leadership. This is an opportunity for our clan to regain power in this region that has been held by the other clan for almost fifty years."

This brief description of the attitudes and characteristics of the elected village head will serve as "an entry point" into understanding the worldview of the local elite in Sumba. The leadership characteristics of this elected village head contrasted sharply with the characteristics of the traditional Sumbanese leaders that tended to feature aggressiveness and assertive protection.⁹ The villagers began to complain about his uncharacteristic attitudes and actions, which were perceived as signs of weakness and inability to transform social, cultural, and economic capital to attain maximal support for authority and status. Keane states that possession of wealth is a practical necessity for the operations that maintain identity (rituals, reciprocal exchanges, marriages), however those operations are also crucial in translating material assets into expressive ones, i.e., authority and status (Keane, 1997a: 55). As mentioned in Chapter Four, livestock often became a target of aggression in the competition and disputes among local leaders because they were a resource for sustaining unity and prestige of the clans. Ambitious local leaders often aggressively challenged or confronted their rivals. In the tension of competition, simple disagreements became a reason

⁸ Since the colonial period, there have been two clans who have competed with each other for power in Kamutuk, i.e. Matolangu and Kanatangu. Most leaders of the Matolangu clan supported the candidate from the Kanatangu clan in the village head election in October 2002 because they felt that there was no suitable candidate from the Matolangu clan for the position.

⁹ The actions of Umbu Diki Dongga illustrated these types of leadership. Keane states that when people talk about maramba, they often mention their extended wealth, generosity, protectiveness—and their rage when angered (Keane, 1997a: 58).

for stealing or killing the livestock of rivals. The display of force and the willingness to use it was an effective tactic for local leaders in strengthening their influence in the region (see Siegel, 1998: 108).

When people talk about Ongko Kaweda, a Chinese trader who lived in Kamutuk for 40 years, they mention the tragedy that befell his livestock. In 1990, when Ongko Kaweda drove to Melolo, Umbu Djangga, who was going in the same direction to attend a ceremony, joined him. However, when Ongko Kaweda returned to Kamutuk, he did not invite Umbu Djangga to ride with him. Umbu Djangga was upset and felt that Ongko Kaweda did not show him proper respect. On his way home, he stopped at Ongko Kaweda's house and expressed his anger. Not very long this incident, tragedy befell Ongko Kaweda's livestock. Most of his herd was killed, while much of the rest were stolen.¹⁰ His remaining livestock did not last very long after this incident.

A similar story is told about the Savunese. In 1970, Ama Talo's parents were considered to be a wealthy Savunese family in Kamutuk. However, a dispute erupted between Ama Talo's family with the village head of Kamutuk. Ama Talo's parents' livestock did not last very long after that. Although there is no clear explanation about the dispute or the animal killings, this story is offered as a warning of what may happen if the Savunese do not respect the Sumbanese.

As mention previously, ownership of livestock is one of the traditional Sumbanese symbols of power. There is a lively competition amongst members of the local elite who strive to maintain their status and authority. A Savunese family living in a coastal kampong explained, "It is better that I do not raise livestock. I always have bad experiences with them. I never profit from the herd because my animals are always stolen". This statement illustrates the predicament of the Savunese and the ata as they strive to exist in the ruling class world. Typically, the ruling class selects their victims from amongst those who they consider disrespectful of their traditional status. The killing and wounding of livestock have proven to be effectively traumatic for potential livestock owners. The intrusion of the ruling class upon the efforts of the

¹⁰ It was commonly thought that Ongko Kaweda owned almost fifty animals at that time.

under-class is present not only in the event itself, but also through the continuous re-telling of stories of similar incidents (see Siegel, 1998: 96).

Umbu Djangga became the most prominent local leader in Kamutuk following a rivalry between him and Umbu Kilimandu, a leader of the Kabulingu clan that lived in a cluster of houses near the open fields prior to 1965. At that time, Umbu Kilimandu's clan owned a large herd, while Umbu Djangga's pioneer Matolangu clan owned less livestock, but more land. It was rumoured that the rivalry had simmered a long time and began to surface when the two men courted the same woman, who was finally won by Umbu Kilimandu. After the communist tragedy in 1965, Umbu Djangga had an opportunity to defeat his rival. As the village head of Kamutuk, he had the authority to identify those who were accused of being members of the communist party in the region. Umbu Kilimandu was named and arrested. His livestock disappeared soon after his arrest. When he was released several years later, he no longer owned any animals. Although he did not win the woman, Umbu Djangga's success over his rival was not only a personal victory, but also one for his clan.

Although normative claims emphasise the deep respect and sense of obligation between related clans, this respect is crosscut by several kinds of ambivalence, including the potential desire of the bride-givers either to absorb or to reject their bride-takers, or the desire of the bride-takers to abandon their bride-givers in favour of more powerful affinities (Keane, 1997a: 51). In other words, they use these relations as power resources in maintaining the unity and prestige of their clans and in transforming their capital into status and authority. It is claimed that there is neither a loser nor a winner in these relationships because each party fulfils its obligation and respect for each other. It is also claimed that the clan of the bride-takers are in a subordinate position because they become potential suppliers of animals for ambitious persons in the bride-giving clans. In reality, the system of reciprocal exchanges has become imbalanced because animals now have higher economic value than hand-woven cloth or female *ata*. It is currently preferred to negotiate the reciprocal exchanges only in terms of animals and

not hand-woven cloth or female ata. In this situation, the bride-takers incur a financial loss and are, indeed, dominated by the bride-givers. However, they also affirm the prestige of their clan by showing their ability to amass a large payment of animals. Ambitious local leaders often confirm their positions of power in relation to their bride-taking clans.

Umbu Djangga often claimed, "All clans in this region come from my house" because his clan provided brides for many of the other clans in the region. This statement implied that all of the affiliated clans should hold and display respect for him as a bride-giver to their bride-taker status. By convention, bride-givers are the source of life for their ngaba wini (Anakalang term for the bride-taking clan; in East Sumba, ana kawini or laiya) and thus require great deference, reinforced in material terms by the debts fostered and renewed in recurrent exchange (Keane, 1997a: 54). Based on Sumbanese marriage rules, a male is permitted to marry his mother's brother's daughter (the daughter of tuyu), but is prohibited to marry his father's sister's daughter (the daughter of mamu). The two types of cross-cousins are distinguished to regulate marriage affiliations amongst the clans, i.e., a man from clan A marries a woman from clan B, a man from clan B marries a woman from clan C, a man from clan C marries a woman from clan D or returning to clan A (see van Wouden, [1956] 1977) and Adams, 1973: 268-270). In the interests of maintaining the continuation of the descent line, marriage is restricted to members of the same rank.

The bride-givers and the bride-takers develop their own strategies in maintaining their relationships. In many cases, the bride-takers do not pay the full amount of the bride price as agreed upon during the marriage negotiations, or they postpone the full payment by debts fostering and renewing debts in recurrent exchanges (puha). Achieving the maximum amount of the bride-price in marriage exchanges reflects upon the status and wealth of the clans involved in the exchange, however, the actual payment of the negotiated agreement reveals the tactics involved in sustaining their further relationships, such as affirming the position of the bride-givers as superior to the bride-takers, determining the position of the bride-givers as the source of life

for their bride-takers, etc. In many cases, the marriage payments are flexible in accordance with propinquity of relationships between the two parties and the prosperity of the bride-taker (see Wellem, 1995: 86). Similarly, in the Kei Islands, Moluccas, the bride price would not be paid and would be taken to the grave as an unpaid debt (Laksono, 1998: 91 and 2002: 53).

The relationships among affiliated clans in conducting adat ceremonies and rituals are limited because these relationships require exchange obligations between the clans of bride-givers and bride-takers. In this sense, intermarriage leads to social closure. Marriage is the key arena where the games of social status are enacted (see Hoskins, 2004: 92). Since social closure is the basis of power, it strengthens the positions of the affiliated clans in relation to other clans. Attendance at adat ceremonies is restricted exclusively to those who are invited by the clans involved. Even funeral ceremonies are attended only by invitation by representatives of either the bride-giving or bride-taking clans. Without an invitation, there is no involvement in the reciprocal exchange processes that are the vehicles for the local elite to display their status and authority. Unaffiliated clans and other parties remain outside of this relationship. This stipulation provides space for the local elite to reinforce their distinctive character and cultural autonomy, despite the presence of the state and universalist religions in the region over hundreds of years. By retaining rituals, reciprocal exchanges, marriages, and funeral ceremonies among the affiliated clans, the elite can still negotiate to maintain traditional power resources to reaffirm their existence.

Clan affiliation is determined not only by the bride-giver and bride-taker relationships, but also by the notion of 'precedence' (see Chapter Two). These factors are utilised by the clan leaders in negotiating exchange agreements that best reaffirm and strengthen their positions and authority. Some local leaders claim that they should play their roles on the borders of normative rules to create the appearance that the relationship is relatively equal in the nature of respect and obligations between the clans. Based on their relative status and wealth, the clans know the general terms of the agreements they are negotiat-

ing. The transformation of the negotiation processes into expressive performance is essential in reflecting the status and authority of the local leaders within their clans. Both cooperation and conflict invoke and involve plays of power in human relationships, and ideas are emblems and instruments in these ever shifting and contested interdependencies (Wolf, 1999: 4).

B. Coping with the Government

The elite emphasise the practise of reciprocal exchanges through marriage, feasts, rituals, and funeral ceremonies to reaffirm their status and authority.¹¹ As mentioned in the beginning of Chapter One, a dispute between a sub-district head and a village chief over an infraction of official discipline was sought to be resolved not only through official channels, but also according to tradition. The official resolution would place the village chief under the sub-district head, in accordance with the hierarchy of government bureaucracy. The village chief, however, sought an adat resolution in which he might be able to reverse their respective positions based on the bride-giver and bride-taker relationship of their clans. This effort represented not only a resistance to state ideology, but also a marriage between the traditional and modern venues of authority.

Local leaders attempt to balance the two venues to reaffirm their authority and status as power holders in the local community. Occasionally, a non-Sumbanese sub-district head is incorporated into a fictive kinship relationship with a Sumbanese clan. In this way, relations with supra-local authority are redefined in terms of local kinship structures, which then can be manipulated into reverse hierarchical positions.

Umbu Vincent, a Dutch community developer who worked for the Protestant Church in Lawonda, accepted a gift of a pig and a hand-

¹¹ Similar with Toraja custom in the Celebes, the method of conducting a funeral is based on the social status of the deceased and the economic power of the deceased's clan. The size of funeral is demonstrated by the number of buffaloes (Toraja) and horses (Sumba) sacrificed during the funeral (see Yamashita, 1994: 71).

woven cloth from Umbu Hapi. He then reciprocated by presenting Umbu Hapi with a horse, a buffalo, and mamuli. Later, when the two parties became involved in a dispute and a resolution to the argument was sought through adat law, Umbu Hapi was regarded as the bride-giver and Umbu Vincent as the bride-taker, based on the initial exchange of gifts, although Umbu Vincent never married a woman from Umbu Hapi's clan (Vel, 1992). Their bride-giver and bride-taker relationship was established without Umbu Vincent's knowledge when he agreed to the ceremonial exchange upon his arrival in Lawonda.

Johanes Hapu, a Sumbanese from Lewa who became the sub-district head of Pahunga Lodu from 1975 to 1977, was identified as a bride-taker to Umbu Djangga's clan. When Johanes Hapu proposed marriage to Rambu Babangu, a Sumbanese noble woman from Mburukulu village,¹² her parents and the leaders of her clan did not consent. They insisted that Rambu Babangu had to marry someone from one of their bride-taker clans.¹³ Also, they objected to her, a Sumbanese noble woman, marrying a Sumbanese of unknown social rank. However, Rambu Babangu had fallen in love with Johanes Hapu. The couple eloped. Umbu Djangga granted the couple his protection and arranged a Sumbanese marriage ceremony. This was an opportunity for him to display his power and authority in Mangili and, at the same time, to secure the sub-district head's support. In the marriage exchange, Umbu Djangga represented the bride-giving clan that received animals (horses and buffaloes) and mamuli from the parents and relatives of Johanes Hapu. In exchange, Umbu Djangga reciprocated these gifts with hand-woven cloth and a large pig that was slaughtered as a symbol of the agreement and sacrificed to the ancestors. Rambu Babangu's clan feared Umbu Djangga, so they did not dare to protest.

The implications of this arrangement is that, in the future, the relatives of Johanes Hapu will always be in the position of the bride-taker in relationship to Umbu Djangga's clan. This means that Johanes

¹² Mburukulu village is in the sub-district of Pahunga Lodu, located about 7 kilometres from Kamutuk village.

¹³ According to Sumbanese custom, prospective wives come from the daughters of one's maternal uncles (cross-cousin marriage) in accordance with the bride-giver and bride-taker relationships of the clans.

Hapu, as the sub-district head, should always show respect and carry a sense of obligation to Umbu Djangga's clan. Any dispute or conflict between them should be solved in accordance with adat. Although he was in a position of official power at the sub-district level, Johanes Hapu accepted the traditional authority of the local elite through establishing a relationship with one of the local leaders. This example illustrates the ingeniousness of the local elite in Kamutuk in incorporating an influential outsider into the Sumbanese social structure.

Relationships between the local leaders and the sub-district government officials are occasionally constructed in accordance within the worldview of the local elite. As mentioned in Chapter Four, Barnabas Kana, a Savunese and head of the sub-district office of the Education and Culture Department in Pahunga Lodu, was identified as a bride-taker to Umbu Djangga's clan, based on a claim of a marriage between his ancestors and the Matolangu clan. In this position, Barnabas Kana was required to constantly negotiate with the local elite to implement the educational development programmes in the village.

Both the local elite and government officials at the sub-district and district levels need to maintain positive relationships to support their respective positions. This implies that the presence of the state floats outside the boundaries of the Sumbanese community. A "good relationship" means that each party contributes to the other to reaffirm and strengthen their respective positions. Members of the bride-taking clan must show respect and acknowledge obligations to their bride-givers. Disputes are usually solved through adat. These resolutions are venues to reaffirm their relationships within the Sumbanese worldview.

When individuals are not part of a bride-giving and bride-taking clan relationship, they are relatively independent and they usually keep a distance from each other both in their daily lives and adat affairs. Competition to display authority and achieve goals between unrelated individuals usually proceeds with greater caution than competition between those from related clans.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, a dispute between a strong local leader and the head of sub-district office of the Police Sector was not resolved by adat, because the disputants had no marriage affiliations,

fictive or real. The local leader resorted to manipulating a relationship he did have, who happened to be the head of the District Police Resort of East Sumba. The dispute resulted in the removal of all personnel at the sub-district office of the Police Sector, upon direction of the district head. Repeated narration of these stories reproduces and reaffirms power and authority of the local elite in Kamutuk. The theme of powerful "outsiders" who confront, negotiate, and exchange with the "insiders" is reproduced in the narratives of lineage history (Kuipers, 1990: 15).

When several local leaders disagreed with a government plan to use the village fields for a low-income housing project, as mentioned in Chapter Four, villagers began to gossip about the present district head. Villagers felt that the present district head did not care about development programmes in the village. They felt that he was concerned only with construction projects in Waingapu, such as building and renovating legislative offices, bus terminals, markets, the district office, etc. It was rumoured that he was renovating his house in Rindi and that government programmes for animal husbandry were implemented in ranches of his relatives. Since it was perceived that he was implementing government programmes only in the Rindi region (where his relatives were), his relationship with the leaders in Kamutuk was less than friendly. In contrast, the former district head, Lukas Mbadi Kaborang (1994-1999), focused on agricultural and husbandry development programmes in Kamutuk. He was very close to Umbu Djangga. Lukas Mbadi Kaborang contributed money for Umbu Djangga's medical expenses and paid for his car repairs. This district head cleverly courted the constituency of a powerful local leader.

The friendship between Umbu Djangga and Lukas Mbadi Kaborang was mentioned by the current district head in his welcoming speech at the inauguration of the village head on 26 November 2002. When asking for reconciliation from the voters for village head candidates, the district head joked, "In the election for district head in 2000,¹⁴ there was a difference of only one vote between me and the other

¹⁴ At that time the district head was elected by the members of the Regional Legislative Assembly.

candidate, Lukas Mbadi Kaborang. UD (Umbu Djangga) made such a small difference in the voting.”¹⁵ He meant that although at that time Umbu Djangga supported Lukas Mbadi Kaborang to extend his tenure for another term (2000-2005), the district head wanted reconciliation. By agreeing to attend the ceremony in Kamutuk, he acted in accordance with Sumbanese tradition that reaffirmed the importance of the relationship between the district head and the local leaders in Kamutuk. The district head’s presence at the inauguration ceremony effectively appeased the local elite who had been angry about the proposed low-income housing project. In accordance with their relationships with the elected village head’s clan, they contributed cattle, pigs, rice, hand-woven cloth, drinking water, and labour for the ceremony. After this, the government postponed the housing project.

Possession of livestock and occupation of positions of traditional power and authority have enabled the maramba to retain political prominence. By keeping regional officials at a distance, the maramba have been able to control the impact of the government programmes that did not offer them any advantage, such as the proposed low-income housing project, by constructing the argument that government programmes should be compatible with the local worldview and the existing social organisation of the community. They retained their authority to control the processes of change.

An agricultural extension officer at the sub-district level noted that the success of development programmes at the village level depended on the sub-district head. In his experience, if a sub-district head was unable to recruit the local clan leaders into the project, he would face many obstacles in implementing his programmes. Not many villagers would attend meetings, none would express interest in his plans, and several would question his projects. However, if a sub-district head was able to build a positive relationship with the clan leaders, everything would proceed smoothly.

¹⁵ Umbu Djangga was very proud that the district head mentioned his name in the welcoming speech. He claimed that the mention of his name in the speech meant that the district head respected him.

Some local leaders claim that they are the new pioneers in introducing modern elements in Kamutuk. They repeat stories about their roles in development programmes and new institutions in Kamutuk, such as school buildings, bridges, asphalt roads, churches, mosques, and electricity lines. When Umbu Djangga was the village head, he claimed that asphalt roads and a bridge connecting Kamutuk kampong and the main road between Mangili and Waijelu were the successful outcome of his negotiation with the district head. Umbu Mbani established a close relationship with Protestant ministers and has become a local leader in the Protestant community. Similarly, Umbu Habib is a leader of Islam in Kamutuk because of his claim that he helped to spread Islam in the region. Thus, when villagers speak about bridges and asphalt roads in Kamutuk, they mention Umbu Djangga. When they speak about Protestantism, they refer to Umbu Mbani. When they mention Islam, they refer to Umbu Habib. When they speak about other supra-local institutions, such as school buildings, electricity lines, or the arrival of Javanese migrants in Kamutuk, they refer to the roles played by the local elite. The roles of non-Sumbanese government officials, schoolteachers (*guru*), Protestant ministers, Catholic priests, and Islamic teachers are all diminished in light of the roles of the local elite in any village conversation.

Claims that boast the success of the local elite in maintaining their traditions and in assuming roles in supra-local institutions reinforce their authority. Several members of the local elite position themselves as the "gate keepers" who must be involved in the introduction of foreign elements into Kamutuk. They monopolise contacts and communications with outsiders. In this position, they are able to initiate and maintain distance with new elements and, thereby, control them. As mentioned above, the local elite occasionally construct fictive kinship affiliations with government officials to introduce an element of control into their relationship. They may choose to maintain a distance with the new elements if there is no possibility of taking advantage of or controlling them. Villagers have been able to keep their distance from Independence Day commemorations, as mentioned in Chapter Four, as they claim it is the government's duty, not theirs, to celebrate the event. In their

minds, the most successful way to retain their authority is by nurturing their traditional relationships among affiliated clans.

When supra-local elements are perceived as a threat to their positions as power holders, the local elite will search for approaches, whether traditional or non-traditional, that will enable them to retain their authority. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Umbu Djangga converted from Protestantism to Catholicism in 1990 because his Protestant minister publicly reprimanded him for having four wives in violation of church law. Having many wives symbolised his status as a member of a wealthy clan, however, accepting the church sanction threatened his authority. Hence, he converted to Catholicism. His relatives and his ata also converted. This mass conversion resulted in a decrease of Protestants, and a corresponding increase of Catholics, in Kamutuk.

C. Keeping the Ata in their Place

Many ata children began to attend elementary school in 1973, when the New Order government policy about basic education for school age children was issued. Many clan leaders supported this policy by sending the children of their ata to school. As mentioned in Chapter Two, before this policy was issued, there was only one elementary school in the Mangili region. Currently, there are twelve elementary schools and one junior high school in Mangili. The local elite claim credit for this development because they have allowed their ata the opportunity to change their lives through education. Rambu Tamu Ina explained that formerly many ata children were forbidden to attend school except when they were ordered to accompany their masters' children. She claimed, "We encourage all children of ata and maramba in our house to attend school. We do not treat them differently. They are able to strive to change their lives." After school, the ata children assist their parents by working in the fields, herding livestock, collecting drinking water, or cooking.

The local elite make explicit public claims that they support the government policy by permitting children of the ata to attend elementary school. However, many ata children do not finish their

elementary school education. Education is expensive because the government does not completely subsidise basic elementary education. Since their masters do not financially support the ata children, and their parents have limited financial resources, many are not able to complete or further their studies. It is difficult for the ata families to pay the costs of junior high school in Mangili (approximately Rp 6,000 – 8,000 per month) or senior high school in Waingapu (approximately Rp 25,000 – 35,000 per month).

When I first arrived in Kamutuk, some local leaders claimed that the maramba-ata relationship is similar to the relationship between elder and younger siblings. The reference to ata as "children of the house" or as "younger siblings" may be an attempt to obscure their existence. There is a tendency to deny the existence of ata by creating a semblance of relatively balanced relations between maramba and ata. This is not surprising since the maramba realise that state and religious institutions promote equal rights for all individuals. However, in reality, the distinctions between maramba and ata are constantly enacted and reaffirmed in daily life and adat practises and traditions.

Rambu Hamu Meha, the wife of the present village head, often said that she strongly objected to her son marrying the daughter of her brother, Umbu Petrus. Both her son and Umbu Petrus' daughter were studying at a university at Kupang, Timor. Although a union between Rambu Hamu Meha's son and her brother's daughter was acceptable by Sumbanese tradition, she said, "Even though Umbu Petrus sends his beautiful daughter to the university, I forbid my son to marry her because her mother is an ata. I do not want to have grandchildren who have slave blood. They will not be able assume important roles in the adat ceremonies."

This statement embodies ideologies that legitimise and reaffirm the position of the maramba. It also places the ata as subordinate to the maramba. Although it can be presumed that education should provide opportunities for social mobility, in reality, the ata still face many social constraints. It is not surprising that Umbu Petrus, whose first and second wives did not have children and whose his third wife was an ata, married a maramba as his fourth wife to assure the continuation of maramba status for his children and lineage.

When my Sumbanese friend and I were visiting a maramba family in the Umalulu region, I learned how descent lines of other (unfamiliar) Sumbanese were traced. I introduced my friend and myself to our host who wanted to know whether my friend was Sumbanese or not. Upon learning that he was Sumbanese, our host traced the descent lines of my friend by asking the names of his father, grandfather, and other relatives. After assessing my friend's status, our host addressed him in a different manner. A woman brought two cups of coffee with cup lids and one glass of coffee for us. She gave the two cups of coffee to our host and me, then she gave the glass of coffee to my friend. I realised that our host had classified my friend as an *ata*, while I was considered to be a guest from Java. I wondered, "Why did our host determine my friend's status by tracing his descent line rather than by just asking for his Sumbanese name?"

A Sumbanese name always incorporates the name of a male's grandfather or a female's grandmother. It is, thus, a relatively reliable reflection of the descent lines and social status of both maramba and *ata*.¹⁶ Sumbanese determine the social status of new acquaintances by inquiring about family names and decent lines, including those resulting from inter marriage between *ata* and maramba. In this way, social status can be reasonably determined, thereby defining appropriate behaviour and interaction.

By referring to local oral history about the arrival of their ancestors, some villagers claimed that their ancestors controlled *ata* when they arrived in Sumba (see Kapita, 1976a: 48). They claim that slavery is deeply rooted in Sumbanese tradition. Another explanation proposes that the original *ata* were captives in a clan war. Other stories warn that the descendants of a marriage between a maramba and an *ata* will become *ata*. In the past, the most faithful *ata* accompanied their master in death, as the traditional belief was that the *ata* would continue to serve the soul of the maramba in the afterworld, which resembles the world of the living.¹⁷ The horses and buffaloes slaughtered in

¹⁶ The most preferred names are those of the child parents' parents, i.e., father's father (FF) or mother's father (MF) for a boy and father's mother (FM) or mother's mother (MM) for a girl (see Forth, 1983: 655).

¹⁷ Traditionally, funeral rites aim to prevent the soul of the body from getting lost on its way to the after world (see Adams, 1966: 23).

the funeral ceremonies serve as vehicles for the soul to travel in on its journey to the afterworld. This practise of burying ata with their masters was discontinued about forty years ago when the government strictly prohibited it. Animals are still slaughtered and one or more couples of ata (papanggangu) wearing lavish traditional clothes and gold ornaments guard the body in mourning (see Keane, 1997a: 62). It is rumoured that in certain regions of Sumba, there are strong local leaders who still secretly bury ata with the body their master. These rumours are told to emphasise how the maramba-ata relationships in Kamutuk have changed. Some local leaders claim that they have allowed their ata opportunities to change their lives. These claims embody ideologies that construct contemporary obligations of ata for their masters.

Keeping the ata in their place in the social stratification system affirms the authority of the local leaders. Currently, many ata have opportunities to appropriate modern elements of life, as long as these new manifestations support and do not threaten the position and status of local clan leaders. After finishing their daily chores, many young ata are permitted to watch television, play guitar and sing songs, meet their friends, and sometimes relish alcoholic drinks late into the night together with young maramba. In this sense, the relationships between young ata and young maramba are relatively more egalitarian.

Most ata in Kamutuk have converted to either Christianity or Islam. However, most of their conversions were in the footsteps of their maramba and they rarely rise to fill important roles in the religious institutions. They appear to be involved, but practise religion only at a distance. In this sense, the universalist religions have not been able to release the ata from slavery.

When ata children are disobedient, the local leaders often admonish their parents and remind them about the obligations they have to the maramba who sponsor their marriages. A problem arises when their masters threaten to require them to repay the marriage expenses, plus a heavy fine.

Ngana's master often reprimanded her when her children chose to play with their friends rather than work in the rice fields. He constantly accused Ngana of not teaching her children how to serve their master. He reminded

her that he paid the bride price when her husband married her – forty animals (horses and buffaloes) – and he grumbled that her family did not acknowledge their debt to him. He said, "If your family gains their freedom, the refund me your marriage expenses with interest." Faced with her master's anger, she agreed to discipline her children. She knew about the payment and her family's debt. She also confided that although her master agreed to a payment of forty animals, in reality, he paid only twenty (puha).

Josep ran away when his master insulted him. His master did not attempt to find him, however, Josep's father tried to persuade him return. Josep's parents were concerned about losing the marriage and funeral payments their master was obliged to pay for their family members. Eventually, Josep returned to his master after he reconsidered his father's arguments. He said that his main reason for returning to his master was to avoid creating burdens for his family.

In the maramba-ata relationships, the maramba have the obligation to provide food, marriage expenses, and funeral ceremonies of their ata. In turn, the ata must respect their patron-client relationship in which they provide labour and services, and affirm the status and prestige of their masters. Since these relationships are entangled in a web of respective social and economic obligations, there are few opportunities to stimulate changes in the nature of the relationship.

The interests of local leaders often obscure the reasons maramba pay for marriage and funeral ceremonies of their ata. On the one hand, these obligations symbolise the close relationship between master and slave that will be publicly discussed as a manifestation of the master's status and prestige. The inability of maramba to pay for marriage and funeral ceremonies for their ata invites public questioning of their status and authority. Most local leaders in Kamutuk would be embarrassed to be seen as unable to support their ata. Although they may not be wealthy, they strive to fulfil their obligations in the interests of maintaining an image of their prosperity. They prefer to save on food in order to be able to fulfil their ritual obligations to their ata. On the other hand, these obligations represent a relationship of domination and dependence between master and slave. The cases discussed above reflect how these obligations effectively control the ata. They also indicate the failure of the national state in implementing social and land reform in Sumba.

The presence of the national state has actually strengthened the control of maramba over the ata. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the government requirements of all Indonesian citizens to have an identity card, birth certificate, marriage certificate, death certificate, certificate of land ownership, authorisation for travelling, and authorisation for migrating have become yet another means for maramba to control the ata. When the ata migrate or continue their studies outside of their village, they must obtain identity cards and authorisation for travelling or migrating. Without these documents, the ata will face administrative problems with the government in their new destinations. These documents are generated at the lowest level of government administration, i.e., the village. This means that the ata must obtain approval from the village head, a government official who has strong ties with the local leaders in Kamutuk, for approval to travel, migrate and marry.

D. Internal Cohesion and Conflict

When Umbu Pati needed a domestic servant for his house, he gathered his relatives in Kamutuk kampong together, including the village head and several members of his staff, to form a negotiation team. He decided to claim a female ata from his bride-giving clan in another region. The two clans negotiated to reach an agreement about how many animals and mamuli should be exchanged for a female ata. Finally, after three days of negotiations, during which the village head and several of his staff were absent from their official duties, they reached the exchange agreement. Villagers who had official business were forced to wait for the village head and his staff to return to the office. Village heads often give priority to their obligations as clan leaders over their official duties as government administrators. By maintaining their traditions, they retain an autonomous arena in which they can construct the unity and prestige of their clans and preserve their traditional authority. They retain their authority by using the main resources and strategies rooted in their traditions, such as reciprocal exchanges, network of affiliated clans, kinship ties, and maramba-ata relationships.

Direct involvement in the government administration has not been the most effective way for the local elite to increase authority. Several of them do not have strong ties in the system. The involvement of the local elite in the government bureaucracy has been manifested more often in the manipulation of government resources to reaffirm and strengthen their status and authority.

When a resident of Kamutuk kampong became the village head in November 2002, several local leaders began to discuss candidates for the village head's staff. Based on the government administrative system, the village head is assisted by a secretary (*Sekretaris Desa*) and several staff members, including the chief of government affairs (*Kepala Urusan Pemerintahan*), chief of public affairs (*Kepala Urusan Umum*), chief of agricultural affairs (*Kepala Urusan Pertanian*), chief of veterinary affairs (*Kepala Urusan Kehewan*), and chief of marine resource affairs (*Kepala Urusan Kelautan*). Some local leaders proposed that relatives of the village head fill these positions. Others suggested that they should involve at least one Javanese and one Savunese to occupy two of the positions because they also supported the village head in the election. No one, however, suggested involvement by anyone from any non-affiliated clan.¹⁸ Many of these clans live in other kampongs and have never been involved in reciprocal exchanges with the clans of Kamutuk kampong. Also, they supported their rival, the former village head, in the recent election. Based on these considerations, the village head and several local leaders choose a Savunese to become chief of marine affairs, a Javanese to become chief of public affairs, and four relatives of the village head to occupy the other positions.

The strategy of local leaders in placing their relatives in village staff positions represented an effort to flaunt their presence to the other clans. By monopolising these positions, the local leaders in the village head's clan and his affiliated clans assumed stronger roles in the village. Some local leaders claimed that after their village had been administered by a village head who disregarded their aspirations for more

¹⁸ In the perception of residents of Kamutuk kampong, non-affiliated clans are the later arriving clans and those who do not have marriage affiliations with their clans.

than seven years, it was time for them to assume stronger roles. Some of them said, discreetly, that by occupying these positions, they would be able to control the implementation of the development programmes. These statements indicated an understanding that the positions of village head and his staff could be used as vehicles to transfer power from the local village administration to strengthen their positions of traditional authority.

In view of their strong kin ties, although the village head represents the state at the lowest level of government administration, the village head and his staff usually place priority on their roles as local clan leaders in their community. If the administrative role supports their interests as traditional clan leaders, they will combine the two positions, however, if the government position is not advantageous to their community leadership status, they will separate the two roles. This is reflected in the contra-revolution movements of the local elite who employ a variety of strategies to resist liberation of the *ata*. They even use the presence of the state administration to maintain their own interests.¹⁹

By juggling alternative social identities, individuals strive to identify their best advantages in pursuing their goals. When they find themselves at a disadvantage in official matters (legal procedures), they apply alternative social identities in local terms (see Vel, 1992 and Keane, 1997a: 47). When Umbu Djangga was unable to defeat his rival on local terms, he attempted to employ an alternative social identity and legal procedures introduced by the state. Prior to the communist tragedy in 1965, Umbu Kilimandu's clan was wealthy, and owned many *ata*, land, and livestock. Umbu Kilimandu was the strongest local leader in the region, with many subordinates, and skilled in negotiating ritual exchanges. It was not easy for Umbu Djangga to compete with Umbu Kilimandu on local terms, even though he was the village head of Kamutuk at that time. However, he utilised an alternative procedure, in this case, a legal one introduced by the state to defeat his rival. Following the communist tragedy of 1965, Umbu Djangga, identified Umbu Kilimandu as a member of the communist party. His arrest and detention represented a victory for Umbu Djangga.

¹⁹ How the *ata* are kept in control, as well as their responses, is discussed in Chapter Six.

The presence of the state provides alternatives to be adopted and manipulated by the local elite to promote their interests. When the government introduced the legal procedure to register land property, many communal land plots (land belonging collectively to the clans) were transferred to private holdings. Traditionally, although the clan leaders managed the communal lands, the harvest supported all members of the clan, including the ata. When the communal land was converted into private ownership, the land should have been distributed evenly among all members of the clans, including the ata. However, the local leaders in Kamutuk dominated the certification process of land ownership. Not only did they secure the largest parcels of land in the distribution of communal land property, but they also paid to arrange for the certificates of land ownership. Most ata do not own any land. As mentioned in Chapter Three, when Umbu Djangga was the village head, he was able to certify the certificates of land ownership. As a member of the first clan that arrived in the Mangili region, he claimed that most of the land in Kamutuk belonged to his clan. He received larger tracts of land in the distribution of communal land properties than other local leaders in Kamutuk. He distributed this land to his close relatives thereby cultivating their support for his interests. By controlling the legalisation of land ownership certificates, Umbu Djangga left scant opportunity for his competitors within his clan to usurp his claims.

In many cases, the government development programmes have been used as vehicles to promote advantages for the local elite. As the "gate keepers" to the local community, the local elite are in positions to control the implementation of the development programmes (see figure 9 in Chapter Four). It is, therefore, not surprising that many local leaders become the first recipients of new equipment for agricultural development programmes from both the government and non-government organisations. Even the development programmes intended for the poor are manipulated by the maramba for their own benefit, such as in the case of the low-income housing project in Kuruwaki village in 2001 (discussed in Chapter Four). The maramba registered their ata for the programme, however they never intended for the ata to live in the new houses, as their participation in the programme was purely

a strategy to procure the cattle and food aid from the government. Similar tactics have been used to gain other benefits from government programmes, such as rice subsidies for the poor.

E. Summary and Conclusion

The Sukarno government's national bureaucracy did not reach Kamutuk until 1960. The Soeharto administration introduced development projects in the village at the same time that supra-local organisations entered Kamutuk with programmes that had potential impact on the social life of the villagers. Nevertheless, the local elite were able to maintain control of their traditional resources of power and retain their positions as village authorities. Control of these resources was not only the basis for political, cultural, social, and economic power over their subordinates, but also control over changes and relationships with outsiders. Strong influence is based not only on material assets, but even more on the skill of manipulating these assets to secure control of village life, including (a) closing ranks even though there may be occasional internal conflicts amongst the maramba, (b) preventing the ata to move outside their control, (c) incorporating regional officials to become their supporters, and (d) benefiting from all government funds made available for village development.

Based on reciprocal exchanges among their affiliated clans, the local elite guarantee the unity and prestige of their clans and reaffirm their traditional authority. Ownership of livestock as economic and political capital for maintaining status and authority has produced political prominence at the local level that is relatively independent and able to keep a distance from the presence of supra-local organisations. This situation provides the local elite with opportunities to manipulate modern elements as they enter Kamutuk. The local elite cultivate strategies to assume roles in the local offices of supra-local organisations. These tactics effectively strengthen their positions as local power holders.

When the presence of supra-local organisations threatens their positions as the village mighty, the local elite search for alternative

strategies, both traditional and modern, to retain their authority. As the village "gate keepers", they have opportunities to negotiate for their own benefits. At times, they will combine elements to support their political goals in the community, however, at other times, they maintain a distance with the supra-local organisations if it serves their purposes. They balance both traditional and modern elements in granting freedom and relinquishing control over their area.

The local elite are clever in developing strategies to construct relationships with outsiders and to cooperate with government officials. Occasionally, however, in tense competition, simple problems incite stealing, wounding, or killing of the livestock of their rivals. Confrontation has been used in expressing disagreement with government policy. In many cases, the presence of supra-local organisations strengthens the positions of the local elite. As Keane stated, the heavily centralised structure of government contributes to the perceived autonomy of the local politics (Keane, 1997a: 40-41).

In general, although there is differentiation amongst the maramba in terms of political influence, ownership of modern equipment, control of land and livestock, and precedence of their descent line, as a group, they retain power and authority to maintain their position in the socially stratified community.²⁰ Since Indonesian independence, many supra-local organisations have supported the power of maramba. Power is based not only on traditional resources, but also modern ones, including support from supra-local organisations. As the village "gate keepers", they have better access to development programmes and manipulating certificates of land ownership. With both power and property in hand, the maramba negotiate to secure their prestige.

²⁰ According to Weber, the primary significance of a positively privileged property class lies in the following facts: (i) its members may be able to monopolise the purchase of high-priced consumer goods, (ii) they may control the opportunities of pursuing a systematic monopoly policy in the sale of economic goods, (iii) they may monopolise opportunities for the accumulation of property through unconsumed surpluses, (iv) they may monopolise opportunities to accumulate capital by saving (see Eldridge, 1971: 87).

6

THOSE LEFT BEHIND: THE FATE AND ACTIONS OF THE ATA

One morning Jera's master became angry because Jera overslept. He should have been working in the rice fields by that time, but his friends had forgotten to wake him up. His master stormed towards his room brandishing a rattan stick and muttering angrily. Fortunately, Jera's mother woke her son up and he was able to escape. He stayed at his grandmother's house in a kampong near the open fields for ten days before returning to his master's house. He hoped that his master would have calmed down enough by then so that he would not receive a beating. It was common for ata to be reprimanded, but not to be beaten. A week after this incident, several of his master's pumpkins disappeared. Nobody knew who had harvested them. Some ata speculated that the culprits were their master's rivals. Others questioned, "Why did they only take the pumpkins and not kill livestock as is more commonly done?" Eventually, after the incident was no longer a hot topic of discussion, Jera admitted to his friends that he was the one who stole the pumpkins. Even though they had planted them, his friends were not angry. Some of them just smiled, while others approved of Jera's action. All of them promised to keep Jera's secret.

Jera's story describes one ata response to his master. Jera was able to avoid a beating by escaping for the moment, however he later returned to his master's house. Occasionally, the ata are able to escape or resist momentarily their masters' authority, however, the nature of the ata-maramba relationship remains ideologically embedded in oral tradition, oral history, marriage affiliations, reciprocal obligations, and social norms to maintain the perpetuity of these relationships (see Scott, 1985). Although the ata attempt to develop strategies of resistance,

they rarely succeed in achieving their goals because they face a myriad of controls that force them to accept the authority of the maramba. As a group that has minimal opportunity to control socio-economic capital, they lack power and the option to sever the relationships with their masters. They are entrapped in a system of nearly total vertical dependency upon their wealthy, powerful masters.

Following the discussion about the local elite in the previous chapters, this chapter focuses on the *ata* in Kamutuk. Although issues about decentralisation and autonomy have emerged recently, the *ata* still follow and obey the elite authorities. However, occasionally, they are able to develop counter strategies in facing oppression. What are the conditions that allow rebellion and how do they resist?

A. Vertical Dependency: Ideology and Reality

In justifying the existence of *ata*, some Sumbanese focus on the intimate relationship between the *ata* and their masters. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the oral tradition claims that the first arrivals to Sumba already controlled *ata* when they arrived on the island. The *ata* that are historically connected to clans are classified as "hereditary *ata*" (*ata memangu*) or, in Kapita's terminology, as "heirloom *ata*" (*ata ndai*) (Kapita, 1976a: 48).¹ *Ata memangu* and *ata ndai* are distinct from *ata bidi*, or "new *ata*".² The hereditary and heirloom *ata* are considered to be the higher rank of *ata* (*ata bokulu*), while the "new *ata*" constitute the lower rank of *ata* (*ata kudu*). In Kamutuk kampong, approximately 40% of the *ata* are of the high rank and 60% are of the low rank. According to some, if an *ata* of the high rank marries an *ata* of the low rank, their children will be classified as low rank *ata*. Because of this, marriages are usually restricted members of the same rank to ensure the integrity of their descent line.

¹ *Ata memangu* or *ata ndai* refers to the *ata* who can trace their descent lines back to the *ata* of their masters' ancestors when they arrived in Sumba.

² Hoskins explained that there are two kinds of slaves on Sumba: slaves who inherit their status or who are more or less permanently attached to a particular house ('original slaves'), and slaves who are captives of tribal wars or recently purchased ('bought slaves') (Hoskins, 2004:96).

Through construction of stories of the past, the Sumbanese describe the importance of the hereditary *ata*. Formerly, the *ata* accompanied their masters everywhere, bearing a pouch of betel and areca nut, symbolising the intimacy of the slave-master relationship. At the same time, the presence of the *ata* provided legitimacy to the status of the *maramba*. It is said that the hereditary *ata* can be transferred to another clan only if they accompany a bride from their master's clan as the bearers of the betel pouch for the bride (Hoskins, 1993a: 47). In Kamutuk, the hereditary *ata* who accompany noblewomen in marriage exchanges are referred to as "given *ata*" (*ata ngandi*).³ The close relationship between master and slave is reflected in the use of an alternative name in which the master takes on the name of his/her hereditary *ata*, i.e., "The Master/Mistress of X" (*Umbuna/Rambuna i X*) (see Tunggul, 2001: 43).⁴ By replacing their names with the names of their *ata*, the *maramba* not only symbolise their close relationship with their *ata*, but they also reinforce differences in status and power. Keane stated that the formulation of *Umbuna/Rambuna i X* does not simply suppress the *maramba*'s name, but dramatically points to its absence (Keane, 1997a: 63).

The hereditary *ata* represent ritual legitimacy of power more so than economic commodities. They perform a special function in the funeral ceremonies of their masters, i.e., one or more couples of hereditary *ata* wearing lavish traditional clothes and gold ornaments, guard the corpse during the mourning period (*papanggangu*). According to aboriginal religious beliefs, the afterworld is similar to the present life where people occupy the same positions as they do in their present lives in the world. It is said that in the past, the *papanggangu* agreed to be buried with their masters to accompany the souls of their masters and carry their betel pouches in the afterworld.

The new *ata* fulfil primarily economic duties rather than ritual ones. New female *ata* are often utilised to secure benefits through exchange agreements during difficult times. Occasionally, these *ata* are

³ *Ata ngandi*, the female *ata* who accompanies a noblewoman in a marriage exchange, will marry the *ata memangu* of the bridegroom.

⁴ Since the *maramba* in Kamutuk no longer use these names, they refer to stories of the past or the use of these names in other regions, including Nggongi, Parainggi Kareha, and Rindi.

exchanged for animals from other wealthy clans to pay for economic or ritual needs.

Generally, the maramba relinquish their ata to other maramba through reciprocal exchange. One maramba assumes the position of the bride-giver, while the other becomes the bride taker. The ritual exchange allows both parties to maintain their status and position in the society while addressing their economic needs. The first group may need livestock, desire to renew and reaffirm their position as a bride-giving clan, or create a new affiliation with an unlinked clan. The second group may need ata for labour, desire to display the status and wealth of the clan, or create closer relationships between the clans of bride-takers and bride-givers.

When an ata from the Kanatangu Uma Randi lineage (the poorest lineage of Kanatangu) became seriously ill, his master, Umbu Pala, became troubled. He was worried that his ata would die soon. This meant that he would have to pay for the funeral ceremony for his ata in fulfilment of his obligation in the maramba-ata relationship. However, he was not a member of a wealthy lineage. He did not have any horses that could be slaughtered for the funeral ceremony. Facing this crisis, Umbu Pala's son, Umbu Hala, suggested they trade his ata, Yunita, to Umbu Awang in exchange for at least two horses in preparation for his ata's funeral. Umbu Pala agreed to this exchange. Umbu Hala visited Yunita's father, Manggal, to discuss this plan with him. Although his wife was very sad about it, Manggal was not in a position to refuse the plan. Umbu Hala also visited Umbu Awang to propose the reciprocal exchange. After formal negotiations, Umbu Awang agreed to give Umbu Pala two horses for the funeral. Umbu Pala's ata died in December 2002. Although he was not wealthy, Umbu Pala was able to prove publicly that he was capable of fulfilling his obligations for his ata.

Horses and buffalo are slaughtered in the funeral ceremony to serve as the vehicles for the soul of the dead to reach the after world. Without assistance from their masters, the ata are not able to conduct this ceremony. Indeed, the funeral ceremony is the responsibility of their masters. It is, therefore, not surprising that the status and prestige of the maramba who are unable to pay for the funeral and marriage ceremonies of their ata are publicly questioned.

The distinctions between the hereditary and new ata are clear only in stories of their past. Although the ata are aware of their own positions, these distinctions are far from straightforward because explanations about their status are indirect. Recently, these distinctions have become ambiguous as the hereditary ata are also assigned the economic duties. Clan leaders still make explicit public claims about their status and position by citing the number of ata they have.

This form of slavery implies an obligation on the part of the master to assist his slave by finding them spouses and homes, paying their bride prices and (during the colonial period) their taxes, and providing clothing and food (Versluys, 1947 cited in Hoskins, 1993a: 47). In return, the ata have an obligation to honour their masters by representing and supporting their social status, performing ritual and ceremonial duties, and working in the house and fields. Keane pointed out that the ata, who are marked by a lack of honour, are bound to their masters by ties of material dependency, while their masters are bound in turn to the ata by honour (Keane, 1997a: 60). There are varying interpretations amongst the ata in Kamutuk regarding the nature of their masters' obligations. Some ata feel that their masters should provide all of their daily needs, marriage expenses, and funeral ceremonies; while some ata feel that their masters are obligated to pay primarily for their ceremonial expenses. Others claim that although their masters should provide their daily and ritual needs, these obligations sometimes remain unfulfilled.

Since basic social relationships are constructed through the possession of livestock, the ata are dependent on the wealthy maramba pay for their marriages. Wealthy maramba who have many female ata gain new subordinates of the ata husbands who do not pay the bride price.⁵ These new ata become bound in the system of obligations and duties of their new masters. They do not have the right to decide when

⁵ The wealthy clans that acquire many female ata through reciprocal exchanges eventually also acquire new male subordinates. The ritual exchange is considered to be equivalent of the female ata's bride price. Since a bride price is paid only once for each woman (and has been paid in the ritual exchange), the man who marries her does not pay another bride price, but he must relinquish his own clan membership and become a member of his bride's master's clan.

or with whom their children can marry because those decisions lie with the maramba. If they sever their relationship with their master, they must leave their wives and children. These conditions provide little opportunity for ata to escape from the tethers of the wealthy maramba. Economic failure is a trap for perpetuating slavery. The ata incur continuous debts over generations with their masters.

Those born into the high ranks of the social stratification system strictly maintain the integrity of their descent line by marrying only within their own rank. The amount of the bride price is determined in accordance with social rank, where higher rank requires higher prices and low rank require less. The value of women is measured through their bride price (see Hoskins, 1998: 59).

Although marriage is generally restricted to one's own rank, marriages between different ranks do occur and those involved must bear the consequences. As mentioned in Chapter Five, when Umbu Petrus married his third wife, who was an ata, he had to accept the reality that the children of this union would face difficulties in finding spouses suitable with the position of their high-ranking father.

When Kesa, an independent person, married an ata from Umbu Djangga's household, he became a subordinate of Umbu Djangga.

When he worked as a labourer repairing asphalt roads in the Mangili region around 1994, Kesa fell in love with an ata from Umbu Djangga's household. When he married her, he had to perform the duties of an ata. For many years, he lived as an ata with his family. Unfortunately, when his son was six years old, his wife died of a serious illness. Not long after her death, he decided to look for a job in Waingapu. His master allowed him to go because he did not have any reason to restrain Kesa since he was not bound to his master by ties of material debts or genealogical ties. However, Kesa was forbidden to take his son because he had married Umbu Djangga's ata without paying a bride price. Although he was torn, he accepted the decision and left for Waingapu. He said that the most difficult times for him were when he had to undertake the duties of an ata and when he had to leave his son. Whenever he visited his son, he had to perform the duties of Umbu Djangga's ata. He had to accept this situation as a consequence of economic failure because of a family dispute. When he left his family and decided to

look for work as a labourer in the road repair project, his brothers ignored him. It is said that Kesa's brothers were unable to protect and preserve Kesa's descent line.

Wilfred Lete, a native of West Sumba, had a similar experience with Kesa. When he has married a female *ata* of Umbu Pranggi's household without paying a bride price, his became a part of Umbu Pranggi's household.

When he decided to marry, Wilfred Lete was aware of the consequences of marrying an *ata*. He depended on the kindness of his master to assist his family. He worked in the rice fields and sometimes herded cattle for his master. Occasionally, during difficult times, his master provided food for his family. Since he was dependent on his master, he rarely had freedom to engage in his own economic activities to support his wife and their two children. They often ate only rice, and rarely had vegetables, egg, fish, or meat. He accepted these conditions as the consequences of life as an *ata*, and, in turn, expected assistance from his master in meeting their daily needs, paying for their *adat* ceremonies.

Kesa and Wilfred Lete placed their families in the material bonds of their masters. They became bond slaves by contracting marriage debts that they could not pay (see Hoskins, 2004: 97). This meant that their families were forced to accept the authority of their wives' clan leaders and their embedded ideologies. Although Kesa and Wilfred Lete themselves, were allowed to sever the relationships with their masters by moving to other places, their wives and children were not allowed to join them because their wives had continuous debts incurred over generations with their masters. After his wife died, Kesa decided to leave without his son, while Wilfred Lete preferred to stay with his family and live as an *ata*.

In general, daily needs of *ata* consist only of rice and, sometimes, vegetables without meat or fish. Even wealthy *maramba* often eat very simply. However, when they receive special guests or sponsor feasts and *adat* ceremonies, they must serve meat. Any public suggestion of inadequate service for guests would be a major cause of embarrassment.

Since the ata represent their masters, their actions reflect upon their masters.

I was caught in a dilemma over whether to wait for the meal to be served or ask to be excused to leave, when I realised that the wife of Runga, an ata, had slaughtered a chicken to serve me for dinner during my initial visit to his house. I knew about the family's economic condition. I thought that accepting his invitation to dinner together with his family would be an economic burden for them. However, refusing the invitation would be impolite. I visited Runga because I wanted to introduce myself as his new neighbour. But now, I was forced to accept an invitation to dinner at his house. Runga said that he had to serve me a proper meal, even though he was poor.

Runga's capability as a host was a reflection not only upon himself, but also upon his master. The sacrifice of a chicken in honour of a guest is a sign of respect not only to the guest, but also to the ancestors and spirits of the house receiving the guest (Renard-Clamagirand, 1992: 1). Thus, only reference to Runga serving a guest properly was a reflection on Runga's master. A poor welcome of a guest reflected negatively on both the host and his master.

Naha claimed that life, as an ata, was very difficult. She woke up early every morning to cook for her masters and the other ata. She had a myriad of chores, including working in the rice fields, feeding the pigs, goats and chickens, weaving, and collecting water from the river.⁶ Approximately seven years ago, her former master gave her to her present master through a reciprocal exchange intended to strengthen their relationship. She was exchanged for four horses and four mamuli. Her parents were not able to refuse their master's decision to give away their daughter. They not only had a long-standing debt with their master for their own marriage expenses, but they also expected his assistance in finding wives and paying the bride prices for their sons. Naha accepted her fate as a female ata.

⁶ In general, cooking, feeding the animals, weaving, caring for children, and collecting water from the river are women's chores.

Ritual exchanges that involve female ata (ata bidi) are common in Sumba. Upon her arrival in the new household, the ata bidi must adapt to her new environment, her new masters and her fellow ata. If she is pretty (manandangu), many maramba and male ata may be attracted to her and she may become the mistress of one or more of her masters. The parties involved will be safe as long as an adat resolution is not demanded. In many cases, the ata prefer to pretend ignorance of clandestine relationships. They are usually afraid to reveal these relationships in public if it involves a high-ranking maramba.⁷

Naha had a double burden as the consequence of her position in the stratified social system and as a female. She was forced to "receive" several maramba and other male ata when they came to her room at night. She was sometimes given money (uang sabun). Although she has never married, she has three children. Some ata suspected that her master would not find her a husband because he would be jealous of her spouse. Many ata were afraid of marrying her. She was resigned to her situation as a female ata.

As unpaid labourers, female ata depend on their master's consent and charity. They are available for abuse by male family members, and offspring resulting from these relationships add to the child labour reserve (Betke and Ritonga, 2002: 18). A female ata may occasionally utilise an illicit affair with her master to secure advantages, such as extra privileges and money.

When referring to ata, Sumbanese tend to identify them by their masters, e.g., an ata is identified as "an ata of Umbu X" or "Y (individual name), an ata of Umbu X". Occasionally, the display of a little finger symbolises a person from the lower social rank, while the show of a thumb refers to a highly respected maramba.⁸

⁷ People claim that in the past when the ata were got caught in clandestine relationships, they would be killed as punishment of their actions. This punishment is no longer enforced. The ata sometimes receive a physical punishment or an adat fine. The maramba will receive a social sanction or adat fine.

⁸ The thumb is designated as the 'mother finger.' While it is common in Indonesia to find the thumb and the rest of the fingers distinguished as 'mother' and 'child,' people in the Rindi region of East Sumba do not do so. Although people in Rindi have no expression that collectively refers to the (other) fingers in opposition to the thumb, they employ the terms of 'mother' and

These names and designations reflect a relationship of domination that is, at the same time, also reciprocal in nature. Hoskins stated that the notion of the *ata* as a displaced person, displaced from the 'house' by debt or from the domain by capture, is negated in the most honoured form of slavery, where the *ata* is so thoroughly encompassed by the noble's identity that they acquire a kind of nobility themselves by extension (Hoskins, 2004: 104).

The following example illustrates the explicit public claims on the status and position of a *maramba* by the display of his *ata* who serve to contribute to their masters' social status.

When I was invited to join Umbu Landu and his group attend a funeral ceremony of his relative in Melolo,⁹ I witnessed another aspect of how *ata* support the influence of their masters in ceremonial events. The invited guests came in groups bearing their gifts in accordance with their relations with the host, as either bride-takers or bride-givers. The arrival of one of the guests, the village head of Handang, was eagerly anticipated. Relatives speculated about the number of animals he would bring as exchange gifts and the size of his entourage, because not only had he married two daughters of the host, but he was also considered to be a high ranking *maramba*. When he arrived, his entourage of 56 relatives, including his four wives, and *ata* formed a single line approaching the house of mourning.

While the *ata* are subordinates controlled by their masters continuously over generations, slavery in Kamutuk is constructed on a relationship of mutuality between *maramba* and *ata*. Reciprocal relationships consist of obligations to give, receive, and return the gifts (Mauss, 1954). Individuals and families involved in these relationships enter into continuous reciprocal exchanges over generations. The *ata* are bound to their masters not only by ties of material dependency, but also by ties of ideological dependency designed to maintain the perpetuity of the relationships.

'child' in a number of other contexts to distinguish large and small (or superior and inferior, major and minor) objects or the same or a similar kind (see Forth, 1982: 232).

⁹ In this case, the body had been kept for two years in a special room of a traditional house. Since the funeral ceremony required the settlement of all family disputes, the ceremony was delayed until all disputes were settled (see Adams, 1966: 22).

The ata are dependent upon and bound to their masters. Many ata accept their situations unquestioningly. Nggaba never expected to send his children to higher education. He felt that life as ata did not require higher education. He said, "Even if we were highly educated, we would still have to accept the authority of the maramba. We were born as ata, we will die as ata." As the son of a "given ata", he allowed his daughter to be given to another clan when she accompanied his master's daughter in a marriage exchange. The ata fully acknowledge their positions, obligations, duties, and actions in relations to their masters. Many of them claim to be proud to be the ata of their masters (see Makambombu, 2001: 63).

Slavery functioned to translate relationships of economic domination into social claims, but it has always been haunted by the threat of slippage (Hoskins, 2004: 106). The ata are framed in the social transformation processes under the direction of maramba interests. As ata, they must honour and support their masters. Some ata willingly contribute their horses or pigs to the feasts or ceremonies conducted by their masters. By constructing belief in the norms, the ata have accepted the domination of the local elite willingly. The maramba often display their anger in reaffirming their positions as the power holders in the community (see Kuipers, 1998: 48). Generally, the local elite control their ata by internal authority, however, they sometimes resort to external expressions of power to reaffirm their status.

The local elite utilise current issues about decentralisation and autonomy to strengthen their positions.¹⁰ These issues create opportunities for the local elite to maintain the existing social boundaries. The ata, who lack power and resources, have limited access to these modern institutions. Although the maramba often claim that their ata are free to become involved in these institutions, they do so peripherally, if at all. As Kadu explained, "Actually, I have money to buy a satellite dish, but I have not bought one. It would be risky for me.

¹⁰ The elite have never nominated any ata as the candidates of the Village Representative Assembly (BPD, Badan Perwakilan Desa). Similarly, since then, no ata have been elected as members of the BPD in the election of BPD's representatives held on 1 October 2002.

The maramba will accuse me of being arrogant. They will say that I do not respect them anymore. I do not want to endanger my relationships with them.” The ata may dream about a life without their masters, however the generational debts their families have incurred with them have effectively reduced the possibilities of severing the maramba-ata relationship. Although they know that they live in a modern Indonesian world and have converted to universalist religions that promote equal rights of human beings, they choose to remain in the binds of their masters.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, the local elite also strengthen their authority by becoming involved in the government bureaucracy, religious institutions and other modern organisations. They reproduced and reinforced their authority by manipulating modernisation to their own benefit. The traditional ideologies have proven to be resilient enough to incorporate supra-local ideologies, i.e., the state and religion, to support and strengthen the positions of the local elite as the power holders in the community.

The ideology behind the maramba-ata relationship serves as its symbolic framework. As a cultural system, ideology provides, most distinctively, maps of problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of a collective conscience (Geertz, 1973: 220). It provides the framework for understanding the world and, at the same time, achieving the goals of life.¹¹

The ideology behind these relationships provides a system to the ata that perpetuate their lives of dependence on their masters. Severing that relationship may not represent a wiser, more practical, or more profitable way to achieve their goals of life. The reciprocal relationships do not mean that the exchange of gifts, responsibilities and obligations is balanced as it is in the market system. These relationships are constructed with an understanding about the imbalanced nature of the exchanges in relation to their respective bargaining positions. The ata

¹¹ As a road map transforms physical locations into “places,” connected by number routes and separated by measured distances, and so enables us to find our way from where we are to where we want to go (Geertz, 1973: 216).

must accept the authority of the maramba who remain the power holders in the community. As long as the maramba fulfil their obligations as patrons, their ata respect their authority. However, if the maramba do not fulfil their obligations properly, the ata may defer to tactics to remind them of their obligations.

B. Acts of Resistance

Occasionally, not all parties in the non-dominant group accept a consensus, as it only serves to marginalise them (Scott, 1985). "If, behind the façade of behavioural conformity imposed by elites, we find innumerable, anonymous acts of resistance, so also we do find, behind the façade of symbolic and ritual compliance, innumerable acts of ideological resistance" (Scott, 1985: 304). Not all ata have willingly accepted the authority of their masters. They do find means of resistance that tend to be non-confrontational and symbolic. Occasionally, they may communicate directly with their masters about unfair treatment.¹² Since they lack power and resources, these communications have never been collective (see Scott, 1986: 22). They attempt only to address unfair and improper attitudes of their masters, rather than severing the master-slave relationship. These actions are important channels of communication for the ata that, although expressing resistance to complete domination, are essentially intended to maintain their reciprocal relationships with their masters.

I was rather surprised when Mbira, an ata of the Kanatangu Uma Bara lineage, told me about his daughter who was working as a nurse on Flores. She had married a man from Flores. This was extraordinary because, according to the local tradition, Mbira's daughter should have been part of a marriage exchange because her grandmother was a "given ata". However, she was able to escape from the maramba-ata bind without any objections from her master and other local clan leaders. This was possible because of her father's effort to release his children from slavery began eight years

¹² Scott uses the term "everyday resistance" for strategies of marginal groups in facing the dominant groups (Scott, 1985).

ago. When his master did not have any children, her father found an opportunity for his children to escape from the generational debt with his master. Mbira willingly accepted his own situation, but he wanted to release his children from burdens of living as ata. He decided to have them continue their studies away from Kamutuk. After negotiating with his master, Mbira was allowed to send his oldest child to senior high school in Waingapu. The master refused to pay the school fees. This did not deter Mbira. After finishing senior high school in Waingapu, Mbira sent his daughter to a nurse-training programme in a hospital in Flores. She stayed there to work in the hospital as a nurse.

Unfortunately, Mbira's other children did not follow their older sister in breaking out of the maramba-ata relationship. Four of his children dropped out of school and have remained with him, while two others are still studying at an elementary school in Kamutuk. Sometimes Mbira feels he has failed to help his children in furthering their education. He grumbled, "Apparently, my other children do not have any other choice than living as ata. They have passed up one opportunity to escape from slavery; it is unlikely they will have another chance. Although I have income from weaving, livestock, and rice fields and can support their education, not all of my children have taken this opportunity seriously." He is, though, proud of his success in supporting his oldest daughter in establishing her new life. He said, "Of all my children, only my oldest daughter followed my secret plans. Now she is living as an independent person without any interference from a master and no longer marked as an ata."

Many claim that the ata are relieved from their duties to their masters when their masters die and there is no one suitable to replace them. This happens when the masters do not have any children and do not adopt any child of their relatives to continue their descent line. This also occurs when the relatives of maramba do not assist in fulfilling any ritual obligations for the ata of a deceased master. In this case, the ata are no longer tied to the relatives of their master when their master dies. However, this almost never happens because many local leaders prefer to adopt a child of their relatives if they do not have any children of their own. In many cases, the other leaders in the clan assist each other in maintaining the status and prestige of their clan.

Mbira developed a strategy to free his children from lives as *ata* when his master did not have any children.¹³ Although the children of the *ata* may be released from *maramba-ata* relationships when their masters die, they may still be marked as *ata* in their social relationships. They must rely on other local leaders for assistance because of their position. It is, therefore, not surprising that although only one daughter was able to break out of the system, Mbira was very proud of his success. Mbira's daughter's escape from the system and employment at a hospital in Flores upset local customs and hierarchies (see Forshee, 2000: 16).

The *ata* often gossip about improper attitudes and actions of their masters, both in the context of daily life and *adat*. Normally, respect is shown to each other based on the relative positions in the relationship. The *ata*, with a lack of power and resources, never make direct comments and protests to their masters. Even when their master relates an improper story to other people, they tend to keep silent, smile, or nod, and sometimes affirm the story by saying, "Whatever umbu says is correct." However, when they meet other *ata*, they gossip about their master's story. "Our master is a cunning person (*panjulu kotuk*), he is clever to make up an untrue story about us," said Mbulu to his friends. Mateus responded, "If we are equal to him, why doesn't he work in the rice fields during the day like us?" Josep said, "If it is true, I will also eat delicious meals everyday like our master". Then they laugh together and joke about their responses to their masters. The light interaction releases the tension underlying the relationship in which they are usually subdued and submissive. In describing reactions to *adat* situations, Hoskins described responses in which they may narrate events with a certain gallows humour, sometimes imitating animals' movements or laughing derisively at people who scramble to escape their path (Hoskins, 1993b: 161).

When discussing the inadequate provision of food, most *ata* refer to Umbu Habib. He is well known to be a wealthy *maramba* who always contributes his cattle for clan and village feasts, rituals, and ceremonies. However, many *ata* gossip about how poorly he provides food for his

¹³ These cases are rare. In Kamutuk, I found only one case, i.e. Mbira's master.

relatives and his ata. The ata say that eating only rice every day is common for the ata of poor maramba, but it is not acceptable when their masters are wealthy. They claim that Umbu Habib is very miserly, as not only his ata, but also his relatives eat only rice and vegetables without meat. They use the term *kaba mata* (lit, "the face or front side") in reference to a claim to status and prestige based on public display, such as contributions for feasts, rituals, reciprocal exchanges, and ceremonies, while not providing proper food and clothing for his family and ata. There is also gossip that the sources of his wealth were not purely legitimate. Similar to Umbu Diki Dongga (discussed in Chapter Five), Umbu Habib is suspected of having "magical powers" from the sea (*tama la kuru duna la libu muru*) that increase the size of his herds. Based on this rumour, it is predicted that his herd will not last very long after his death because the cattle are considered to be 'hot' (*mbana*).

Insufficient payments for marriage and funeral ceremonies for ata invite gossip and insinuations regarding the status and authority of the masters. As mentioned above, Umbu Pala paid for a funeral ceremony for his ata by slaughtering two horses that he received from Umbu Awang in exchange for his female ata, Yunita.¹⁴ Although he was able to show that he could pay for the funeral ceremony, it became a topic of discussion amongst his ata.

When a horse was slaughtered in the initial stage of the funeral ceremony (*pahadangu*),¹⁵ Lili, an ata from a kampong near the open field, asked her friends, "Where did they buy such horse?" Most of them answered, "We do not know." Even Njula, Yunita's uncle claimed ignorance. However, later when they had an opportunity to talk safely, Njula revealed that the horse was obtained from Umbu Awang. "That horse was exchanged my niece, Yunita," said Njula. The other ata who did not know about the agreement between their master and Umbu Awang were surprised. Some of them thought that their master was clever, but some of them felt that the exchange was

¹⁴ This type of exchange is considered to be the equivalent of the bride price for the female ata.

¹⁵ *Pahadangu* is the first striking of the gongs that symbolises the beginning of the funeral ceremony. During the week(s) of the preparations before the body is buried, gongs are played upon the arrival of each party of guests (see Adams, 1981: 80).

improper and should not involve honourable people, especially because the horses were delivered in secret before a reciprocal exchange ceremony was conducted. Others claimed that their master avoided his obligation to pay for the funeral ceremony of his ata. Pala stated, "The case of Yunita reveals the reality that on behalf of our master, it is we, the ata, who actually pay for the funeral ceremony of our friend. It is unfair." Several people spoke about a former agreement between their master and Rambu Maja who asked that Yunita be given to her through a reciprocal exchange. "I have already told Njula that this case will cause a dispute between Rambu Maja and Rambu Nola, a wife of Umbu Awang," explained Landu. Njula responded, "It is not our problem. It is their problem, so let them solve it."

Some ata respond rationally with clear arguments to improper and unfair treatment by their masters. However, they keep these comments to themselves. Their silence itself is an act of resistance in the face of unfair or improper treatment.

Some ata willingly contribute their pigs for the adat feasts and ceremonies for the other members of their clan, both fellow ata and their masters. This reflects their solidarity and the strategies to maintain positive relationships with each other and their masters. At other times, ambitious local leaders request their ata to give them their animals for their adat needs.

When I asked Ngana why she did not raise pigs, her answer was, "No reason". On another occasion, however, she told me about her experiences raising pigs. Formerly, when she had enough money, she would buy small pigs. She thought that she would use the pigs for paying for adat needs, and she would also be able to sell them when they were mature. However, her master often asked for her pigs for a variety of reasons, such as not having a proper pig for an adat ceremony, not finding anyone who sold pigs in that season, or needing a pig as soon as possible. Although she would be upset, she was not able to refuse these demands. She said, "They were just excuses to take my pigs. The other masters rarely did such things." She was never able to sell her pigs for her own profit because her master always took them. Although he sometimes paid for her pigs, the amount was not equivalent of the price of a pig. She no longer wants to raise pigs.

By refusing to continue to raise pigs, she has rejected the domination of her master. Dependence on masters who are ambitious and not wealthy requires a different strategy in maintaining maramba-ata relationships. In many cases, the ata in these situations prefer not to raise pigs, cattle, horses, or buffaloes. It is not just because of a lack of power and resources, but it is also a strategy of ata to avoid unfair treatment by their masters in manipulating their relationships.

For many ata, work in the rice fields is both hard labour and relaxing. When they work in the rice fields, gardens, rivers, ranches, and open fields, they have more room to escape momentarily from the shackles of society. In contrast, living in the kampong, attending ceremonies, being involved in adat ceremonies, or visiting other maramba requires the ata to behave in accordance with the norms of maramba-ata relationships. They must show proper respect and a sense of obligation amongst themselves as reflected in their respective positions.

Most ata know where and when they can construct their strategies to face the burdens of their daily life. Ismail preferred to work in the rice fields rather than do his chores at home. He felt that working in the house was more tiring than working in the rice fields. He was not able to rest at home because his master assigned him a seemingly endless string of chores. In contrast, when he was ordered to work in the rice fields, he would stay there the entire day. He was able to work there without pressure and direct control from his master. He managed to rest when he was tired, work slowly, and even sleep in the heat of the day. If his master came to check on him, his friends woke him up so he could pretend to work hard in front of him.

In many cases, the ata develop their subversive strategies while working in the rice fields or herding cattle in the fields. Some ata gather dry twigs for cooking or to be sold for extra money, while others go to beach to look for abalones (*mata tujuh*, *haliotis asinine*) and sea urchins (*tawoda*, *Diadema setosum*). During the planting and harvest seasons, they can earn money as labourers in the rice fields that belong to Javanese families.¹⁶ Some of them claim that their masters do not know

¹⁶ The Javanese families often request permission of the local leaders who have many ata for labour during the planting and harvest seasons. Occasionally, they are not able to refuse the request of ata who want to work for them without permission of their masters.

about their work, however others claim that their masters do know about their extra work and allow their ata earn the extra income.

These examples illustrate how the ata communicate with their masters about how they survive without cash. The maramba provide their ata with non-monetary supplies, although there are some who do not provide clothing and food after the ata get married. Although their masters occasionally give them money in the harvest season, many of the ata are unable to cover their basic needs, including sugar, soap, coffee, coconut oil, kerosene, betel and areca nuts, and cigarettes. Furthermore, without cash, they are unable to pay for health care for their family and school fees for their children.

In general, the resistance strategies of ata have never produced the effects necessary to change the maramba-ata relationships. Ideologically, most ata have accepted these relationships based on domination/subordination and reciprocal obligations. Many resistance strategies are intended to address improper attitudes or actions of the maramba in fulfilling their obligations as patrons. Most of these responses are indirect, in the form of gossip, slander, rejection of imposed categories, indirect protest, and the withdrawal of deference, rather than direct rebellion against their masters (see Scott, 1986: 22). By resorting to these strategies, the ata are able to respond with their masters without severing their relationships. Jera's harvesting of his master's pumpkins did not mean that he wanted to rebel against his master. He only wanted to take revenge through an indirect confrontation to protest the improper behaviour of his master. When Jera's master provided only rice for dinner, he refused to eat it. Instead, he threw his rice into the garbage grumblingly that he had worked hard in the rice fields the entire day, but his master did not provide him with proper food. His brothers only grumbled amongst themselves about their dinner, but then they caught their master's chicken and ate it together with their friends.

C. Summary and Conclusion

The ata are bound to the maramba not only by ties of material dependency, but also by ties of ideological determination designed to

perpetuate these relationships. The ata have little opportunity to live without relying on their masters. They live in "cages" constructed by the society. To escape the "cage" is very difficult and achieved only by leaving Sumba, as Mbira's daughter was able to do. The local elite has manipulated the possibilities for escape from these "cages" that lie in the ideologies embedded in the universalist religions and the state. In this situation, the ata tend to accept the authority and power of their masters. Many ata choose to endure their relationships with their masters rather than sever them. They tend to resort to indirect expressions of disapproval and resistance to their masters' unfair attitudes and behaviour, rather than direct rebellion. These rational choices are more practical for the ata because they do not have any other options that guarantee better lives than their present ones. If they were "released" from their masters' domination, they would have no land, job, house, or livestock. The position of the ata remains extremely weak. Although the impact of television has reached the discourse of their daily lives, they still face many constraints in adapting and assimilating this information and applying it to severing their relationships with the maramba.

C

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on how the local elite on the easternmost tip of Sumba have maintained control of resources and appropriated the benefits of socio-economic and socio-political changes in the past decades. It aims to understand the dynamics of state formation and the interaction between national states and local communities by focusing upon the agents involved in that interaction. The study is focused on the role the local community, and in particular their protagonists, the local elite, play in this setting. The case of the dispute between the sub-district head and the village chief in the introduction of this thesis reflects the interplay of local and national power as expressed in the local language or discourse. The sub-district head applied for an official sanction to the village chief in accordance with the “modern” Indonesian bureaucratic system. The village chief, however, managed to avoid being incorporated into the government system. This brings us to the research questions of this dissertation on how the local elite in Kamutuk have been able to maintain and strengthen their positions, as well as pursue their own interests, despite the pressures from supra-local elements, changes in the community, and the presence of educational institutions, modernising agencies, and mass media. This question covers the changes in the local community, the national and regional policies of incorporating the local politic into its system, the tactics of the local elite in facing changes, and the responses of ata to domination of the local elite.

The position of the local elite in a highly stratified society like that of East Sumba is based on their ability to control power, property and

prestige. Traditionally, power is related to descent line, “precedence,” history of origin, superiority, supernatural powers, and inheritance, while property is determined by controlling land, livestock, and *ata*. Prestige is determined by descent line, negotiation of reciprocal exchanges, labour recruitment, and contributions for animal sacrifices in *adat* rituals. In possession of resources, the local elite are often placed in positions of power and authority in the community. They also act as the appropriators of external influences by monopolising the political and economic sectors, socio-cultural landscape, and relations with non-Sumbanese. In other words, they act as the appropriators of modernity which comes from supra-local institutions, such as the state, church, and market.

The presence of supra-local organisations, such as the national government, religious institutions, non-government organisations, and the media, often creates tension between local and non-Sumbanese social structures in terms of change and authority. These new elements place pressure on the traditional social structure. However, the pressure is somewhat limited because the supra-local institutions must cooperate with the existing monopoly on local power and authority for the implementation of their policies and programmes. The sub-district and district heads, as the local government officials, have little opportunity to implement government policies without support from the local leaders. They must constantly negotiate with the local leaders. In this sense, the state and other institutions do not have absolute power.

The relationship between the modern state and the local community is not one-way. Neither is it of a purely hegemonic nature. Government policies must adapt to the local conditions. This means that although the government policies aim to eventually homogenise and incorporate local communities into its system, the efforts to apply these policies at the local level are dynamic. In other words, state intervention aimed at creating a unified nation state with a uniform bureaucracy by eliminating competing power structures has not succeeded in completely incorporating and homogenising local communities into its system. The elite in Kamutuk have retained their positions as power holders and authoritative leaders at the local level. The theoretical

framework of the role of the national state must be adapted to the local situation.

For the elite, strong influence is based not only on their material assets but even more on their skills at utilising these assets to secure their control of village life, including (a) uniting with the other local leaders, even though there are occasional internal conflicts amongst them, (b) preventing the *ata* to move outside their control, (c) incorporating the regional government officials into the social structure, thereby effectively redefining them from competitors into supporters, and (d) benefiting from government funds appropriated for village development. Based on reciprocal exchanges among affiliated clans, the local elite construct the unity and prestige of their clans and reaffirm their traditional authority. Possession of livestock and land as economic and political capital for maintaining status and authority combine to produce political prominence at the local level which are relatively independent and able to keep supra-local institutions at bay. These conditions create opportunities for the local elite to incorporate modern elements into the existing social structure. When supra-local institutions that are supported by the political policies of the state cannot be avoided, the local elite develop tactics to assume roles within these organisations. This tactic acts to strengthen their positions as the local power holders.

If the *ata* were able to access these new elements, the local elite could lose their monopoly of power. To prevent this possibility, the *maramba* cleverly formulate tactics that play the *adat* symbols. It is not surprising that the local elite strive to monopolise the access to the supra-local institutions in an effort to maintain their status and authority in the village. They are able to enlist elements of the state presence to strengthen their positions rather than allowing the state to incorporate the people of Kamutuk into its system. Although the state and other interventions have been strong, the local society has managed and developed a distinctive local culture. They reinforce their distinctive character and cultural autonomy while assimilating the supra-local institutions that have entered Kamutuk. The local elite have managed to maintain control of social and economic resources while achieving a balance with new factors in securing their political goals.

The local elite, in comparison to the other groups in the traditional social stratification system, have benefited the most from the presence of the state administration. The maramba who combine the benefits of their existing traditional positions of leadership with the benefits of their more recent positions as key persons in the development programmes are the most successful. Since the number of tau kabihu is declining, the social differentiations between maramba and ata have become wider. The ata have little opportunity to benefit from the development programmes in Kamutuk without the maramba's involvement. In this sense, state presence has effectively strengthened local hierarchies and elite control.

Although efforts of the state to incorporate local communities into its system proceeded in a fixed direction, people in Kamutuk like other local communities, such as the Baduy, Kubu, and Dayak, did not comply with this process. This response is a cultural tactic that balances between accommodation and resistance, adopting supra-local elements and reinforcing their own traditions. They respond in different ways to the methods employed by the state in exercising its power, through constructing relationships with outsiders and cooperating with government officials. Occasionally, however, in tense competition, simple problems incite stealing, wounding, or killing of the livestock of their rivals. Confrontation sometimes has been used in expressing disagreement with government policy.

During the past fifty years, although there have been pressures from supra-local organisation, changes in the community itself, and the introduction of education, modernisation, and mass media, the local elite have been able to maintain their position as the appropriators at the village level. It is not clear whether they will be able to maintain this position in the future. Since the maramba are unable to control all of the information from television programmes and other media, personal relationships with non-Sumbanese and other organisations, the Kamutuk villagers construct a Sumbanese image of the outside world. Presently, the ata still face many constraints in assimilating and adapting this new information into the existing relationships with the maramba, however, eventually this situation will surely effect changes in the traditional social structure.

From the perspective of the *ata*, the complex combination of modern and traditional discourses that are manipulated by the elite to maintain their power at the local level inspires a question: Will this social structure change in the future? As described in Chapter Six, migration away from Sumba is an important alternative for *ata* in the process of severing their relationships with their *maramba*. Some *ata* have left Sumba in search of a different life, however many *ata* choose to stay in Sumba and continue their lives as *ata*. Many are entrapped in relationships of reciprocal exchange or generational debt that are based on reciprocal obligations.

Social and political action is needed to improve the living conditions of the *ata*, however, these actions will be successful only if they are well informed of the actual conditions and the socio-cultural milieu embedded in these extreme forms of social inequality. Revelation of this information may be able to affect cultural change. In fact, state intervention does not succeed in changing traditional social structure. Ironically, by contrast, it actually strengthens local hierarchies and the positions of the elite. Similarly, non-government organisations and religious institutions also have not achieved cultural change. Change in traditional social structures does not happen easily.

Insights into the mechanisms of social control practised by the local elite are necessary before any initiative towards intervention can be considered. The conditions in East Sumba are very well suited for designing interventions, which, if successful, can be applied to other societies in Eastern Indonesia. Sumbanese communities are characterised by a rigid hierarchical structure in which nobility rule over land, natural and human resources, and control the other classes, in particular, a majority of slaves. Even though their legal position differs from that in classic slave-owner societies, in practise, the rights of the slaves are highly restricted because their masters control their social and economic resources.

Changing traditional social structure creates a dilemma. On the one hand, changing the traditional social structure will result in a loss of traditional culture. However, on the other hand, the traditional social structure is beneficial for only a specific group, in this case, the

maramba social class. The traditional structure must change to improve the living conditions of the ata. However, for the ata to be appropriated and experience the trappings of modernity, the instigation for change must originate from the ata themselves; it cannot be imposed upon them from sources outside the society.

B

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G

GLOSSARY

Indonesian terms are marked (I), Dutch (D), Japanese (J), Latin (L); the unmarked terms are Kambera-Mangili or Kambera.

adat (I)	custom
adik (I)	younger brother or sister
afdeling (D)	administrative region, section of residency as administrative region in the Dutch colonial administration
ahu	dog; <i>Canis familiaris</i> (L)
akte van erkenning (D)	official document
ama bokulu	big boss, prominent and influential figure
ana kawini	bride-taking kabihu (clan)
anak-anak dalam rumah (I)	children of the house, ameliorative expression for slave
anakidang kuru uma	children of the house, ameliorative expression for slave
apu	grandmother
ari	younger brother or sister
ata	social class that is attached and subordinate to a maramba family, determined by birth; "slave"
ata bidi	new ata
ata bokulu	high ranking ata
ata kudu	low ranking ata
ata memangu	hereditary ata

ata ndai	heirloom ata
ata ngandi	female ata who accompanies a maramba bride in a marriage exchange; given ata
aturan adat (I)	customary law
aya	elder brother or sister
badan koordinasi keluarga berencana nasional (I)	Coordination Board for National Family Planning; BKKBN
badan perwakilan desa (I)	village representative assembly or village council during the “reformasi” period; BPD
bahasa Indonesia (I)	Indonesian language
banda	animate and inanimate property
banda la marada	animate property in the fields (livestock)
banda la uma	inanimate property in the house
bandungan belanda (I)	dam constructed during the Dutch colonial administration
bandungan nenek moyang (I)	dam built by the ancestors
bengkel (I)	machine repair shop
bestuurder (D)	chief of a landschap in the Dutch colonial government
boku	grandfather
bokulu	great
bisa bergaul (I)	able to maintain a good relationship
bos (I)	boss
bupati (I)	head of a district
camat (I)	head of a sub-district
cendana (I)	sandalwood, Santalum album (L)
controleur (D)	district commissioner; junior Dutch official who supervised the collection/purchase of agricultural produce under the culture system
dangangu	procession of horses and buffalos Sumbanese adat ceremonies

denda adat (I)	adat fine
dendiha hamangu	ritual for restoring the soul
desa (I)	village, area administered by a kepala desa
dewan perwakilan rakyat daerah (I)	regional legislative assembly; DPRD
ditikam (I)	slaughtered
divide et impera (L)	Dutch policy of divide and rule
djia halla ma ya wana	
i umbu	whatever umbu has said, is alright
dusun (I)	hamlet
gereja bethel (I)	Bethel Church
gereja kristen sumba (I)	Protestant Church of Sumba; GKS
gezaghebber (D)	a power holder in a region in which there is a pacification programme and rule intensification
golongan karya (I)	official government party of former President Soeharto, a political party in Indonesia; Golkar
gubernur (I)	governor
gula sabu (I)	palm sugar
guru (I)	schoolteacher
guru injil (I)	gospel or religious teacher of the Protestant church
hak penguasaan hutan (I)	forest exploitation rights; HPH
haluku lulungu	plaited gold or silver chain representing male genitals, a symbol of male sexuality
hapi	cattle, Bovis sp (L)
heiho (J)	auxiliary soldiers organised to carry supplies for the Japanese troops and to perform other unskilled tasks
idul adha (I)	Islamic holy day commemorating Abraham's sacrifice
juru tulis (I)	secretary

kaba mata	prestige; used to describe public display of status and prestige to achieve public esteem
kabani-mbani	angry men
KABELA (I)	acronym for kami benci lapar, we hate hunger
kabela	chopping knife
kabihu	exogamous patrilineal kinship group or patrilineal clan
kabihu merdeka (I)	independent or free people
kaborangu	courageous person
kabupaten (I)	district, area administered by a bupati
kafir (I)	pagan
kaigun (J)	Japanese navy
kain (I)	clothes
kain tenun (I)	hand-woven cloth
kakak (I)	elder brother or sister
kakek (I)	grandfather
kaliti njara	riding a horse
kalurahan (I)	area administered by a lurah
kameti	sacrificial animal for the ancestors
kamimi	goat; <i>Capra</i> sp (L)
kampung (I)	hamlet; kampong
kanataru	unplaited gold chain representing male genitals, a symbol of male sexuality
kandunu	star
karambua	buffalo; <i>Bubalus</i> sp (L)
kartu hewan (I)	livestock identity card
kartu tanda penduduk (I)	resident's identity card; KTP
katoda	stone or wood monuments used as altars for worshiping and placing offerings to the ancestors
katoda kawindu	katoda located in front of each kampong house

katoda latangu or woka	katoda located in the rice fields or gardens
katoda mananga	katoda located in estuaries of rivers
katoda padangu	katoda located in the fields or savannahs where the livestock are herded
katoda paraingu	katoda located in front of the head of the paraingu or kampong
katoda patamangu	katoda located on the edge of forests used as hunting grounds
katoda pindu	katoda located at the gate of the paraingu or kampong
katoda purungu mihi kawin masuk (I)	katoda located in coastal areas marriage in accordance with customary law in which the bridegroom relinquishes his clan membership and becomes a member of his bride's clan
kayu arang (I)	ebony wood; <i>Dyospyros celebica</i> (L)
kayu cendana (I)	sandalwood; <i>Santalum album</i> (L)
kayu gaharu (I)	aloe plant; <i>Aquilaria malacensis</i> or <i>Aquilaria microcarpa</i> (L)
kayu kemuning (I)	myrtle; <i>Muraya paniculata</i> (L)
kayu kuning (I)	fustic; <i>Maclura cochinchinensis</i> (L)
kecamatan (I)	sub-district, area administered by a camat
keladi (I)	taro; <i>Colocasia esculenta</i> (L)
keluarga berencana (I)	family planning
kepala daerah (I)	regional head
kepala desa (I)	village head chosen from amongst themselves by the villagers
kepala dusun (I)	hamlet head
kepala kampung (I)	kampong head
kepala urusan kehewananan (I)	chief of veterinary affairs
kepala urusan kelautan (I)	chief of marine resource affairs
kepala urusan pemerintahan (I)	chief of government affairs

kepala urusan pertanian (I)	chief of agricultural affairs
kepala urusan umum (I)	chief of public affairs
kerja paksa (I)	forced labour
kobulu	invulnerable person
kolot (I)	person who holds strictly to traditional beliefs, unbending
koninglijke nederlands	
indies landweer (D)	Royal Dutch Indonesian Army; KNIL
korte verklaring (D)	political contract between local rulers and the Dutch East Indies administration which required local rulers to recognise the sovereignty of the Netherlands
kudu	small
kuliah kerja nyata (I)	obligatory rural social action internship for advanced university students
laiya	bride-taking kabihu (clan)
la lei tama	marriage in accordance with customary law in which the bridegroom relinquishes his clan membership and becomes a member of his bride's clan
landschap (D)	administrative region, section of onderafdeling in the Dutch colonial administration
latang	wet-rice fields
las (I)	welding shop
lembaga pembangunan	
masyarakat (I)	society development institution, LPM
londa kawini	female drainage
londa muni	male drainage
lontar (I)	palm; Palmae (L)
luku	river
lulu amahu	plaited copper ornament representing male genitals, a symbol of male sexuality

lurah (I)	village head appointed by the government; village chief
maju (I)	progressive
makaborangu	hero; refers to the war commanders in the past
mamo	sister of the father
mamuli	gold, silver, or copper ornament representing female genitals, a symbol of female sexuality and reproductive powers
manandangu	pretty
mangu tanangu	pioneer clans, first settlers in a region who have the authority to distribute the land in the region
manu	chicken; <i>Gallus domesticus</i> (L)
maramba	elite social class, determined by birth; nobility
maramba kandunu	local leader who received a silver star from the Dutch colonial administration
maramba tokungu	local leader who received a gold baton from the Dutch colonial administration
marapu	divine ancestors, gods and goddesses, spirits, pioneers of a clan, original settlers of a region; the indigenous religion of the Sumbanese
masa lapar (I)	time of hunger
masih bodoh (I)	still ignorant
masih Marapu (I)	still adhere to Marapu
mata tujuh (I)	abalone; <i>Haliotis asinina</i> (L)
mbana	hot
mbintangu	star
medebestuurder (D)	vice-chief of a landschap in the Dutch colonial administration
memasuki desa Kamutuk (I)	entering Kamutuk village
muda (I)	young

musyawarah (I)	discussion meeting
na lindi papa kalangu, na ketu papajolangu	reference to ancestors (marapu) as the intermediaries for human beings to achieve their desires
na mapa turukungu lii na-na ma parapangu pekada	reference to ancestors (marapu) as the intermediaries who convey all human messages and desires to the almighty God
Nederlands Indische Civiele Administratie (D)	Netherlands Indies Civilian Administration; NICA
Negara Indonesia Serikat (I)	Federal State of Indonesia; NIS
negara kesatuan (I)	unified state
negara serikat (I)	federal state
nenek (I)	grandmother; for Sumbanese, grandfather and/or grandmother
ngaba wini	bride-taking clan; term used in Anakalang, West Sumba
njara	horse; <i>Equus caballus</i> (L)
nyuta pakalimbing	we are relatives
onderafdeling (D)	administrative region, section of afdeling in the Dutch colonial administration
opperhoofd (D)	trade representative regional head of VOC
orde baru (I)	New Order, reference to Soeharto administration
orde lama (I)	Old Order, reference to Sukarno administration
padang (I)	open field
pahadangu	first striking of a gong in a funeral ceremony
pahomba	katoda located in the fields outside kampong

panaraci	palm wine
panjulu kotuk	cunning person
papanggangu	people who guard the dead body during the mourning period
paraingu	traditional settlement or kampong, preferably built on a hill top
paraingu bungguru	associate of kampong
paraingu marapu	the world of marapu, the after world in Sumbanese belief
parang (I)	chopping knife
Partai Komunis Indonesia (I)	Indonesian Communist Party; PKI
patembi	paying respect each other
pawala	staying awake all night after the first striking of a gong at a funeral ceremony (not based on bride giver and bride taker relationships)
pemilihan kepala daerah langsung (I)	direct elections for head of a region during the “reformasi” period; pilkada
penyuluhan pertanian (I)	agricultural extension
periuk belanga (I)	earthenware
pinang (I)	areca nuts; Areca catechu (L)
piring mangkuk (I)	porcelain plates and crockery
pisau (I)	knife
program pembangunan (I)	development programme
puha	tactic for postponing payment of livestock, or not paying in full in accordance with a negotiated agreement
Pulau Cendana (I)	Sandalwood Island, colonial name for Sumba
pusat kesehatan masyarakat (I)	community centre for public health, Puskesmas
raja (I)	ruler who is appointed by the Dutch colonial administration

raja bantu (I)	vice-chief of a landschap in the Dutch colonial administration
raja bintang (I)	ruler who receives a silver star from the Dutch colonial administration
raja tongkat (I)	ruler who receives a gold baton from the Dutch colonial administration
rambu	title used to address women of high social rank, sometimes used to address a person even though they do not belong to a high social rank
rambuna i X	mistress of X (ata)
ratu	head priest (marapu priest)
reformasi (I)	political and social policies to modify a political practice or aspect of social legislation without changing the fundamental political and social structure. In Indonesia, this term refers to the period of student movements that forced President Soeharto to resign in 1998 and the period immediately after his resignation when the focus was on modification of political practices and aspects of social legislation concerning decentralisation and regional autonomy.
rencah (I)	preparing the soil of paddy fields by using buffalos for trampling the earth
rikugun (J)	Japanese army
romusha (J)	forced labour during Japanese occupation
rukun warga (I)	neighbourhood association, section of dusun; RW
rumah adat (I)	traditional house
rumah menara (I)	house with a minaret; house with a triangular peak or tower built in the centre of the roof

rumah panggung (I)	house built on stilts
rumput alang-alang (I)	coarse grass; Imperata cylindrical (L)
rupiah (I)	Indonesian currency; Rp
sadar (I)	conscious
sambutan (I)	welcoming speech
sawah (I)	wet-rice field
sawah baru (I)	new rice field
sawah lama (I)	old rice field
secara adat (I)	according to tradition (adat)
Sekolah Dasar (I)	Elementary School; SD
Sekolah Menengah Atas (I)	Senior High School; SMA
Sekolah Menengah Pertama (I)	Junior High School; SMP
Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi (I)	Academy of Economics; STIE
sekretaris desa (I)	village secretary
selamat datang (I)	welcome
sertifikat tanah (I)	certificate of land ownership
sinetron (I)	soap opera
sirih (I)	betel fruit; Piper betle (L)
suco (J)	section of Sumba bunken, an adminis- trative region in the Japanese occupation administration
sudah masuk gereja (I)	already entered church
sultan (I)	hereditary ruler of an Islamic state
Sumba bunken (J)	section of Sumba ken, an administrative region in the Japanese occupation administration
Sumba ken (J)	section of residency, an administrative region in the Japanese occupation administration
sunda kecil (I)	Lesser Sundas, an administrative region of provincial level in East Indonesia between 1946-1954

surat bebas G30S PKI (I)	certificate of non-involvement in 30 September 1965 communist coup
surat jalan (I)	authorisation for travel
surat kelahiran (I)	birth certificate
surat kelakuan baik (I)	certificate of good behaviour
surat kematian (I)	death certificate
surat perkawinan (I)	marriage certificate
surat persetujuan penjualan hewan (I)	authorisation of livestock sales
surat pindah (I)	authorisation for moving residence
swapraja (I)	administrative regions (district) that are “special territories” and “autonomous areas” in the early period of Indonesian independence or the former landschap, administrative regions during the Dutch colonial period
tama la kuru duna la libu muru	entering the deep sea; having magical powers from the sea (usually for increasing the number of animals in a herd)
tama la patuna	entering to the spirit world; having magical powers
tana	district, domain
tana humba	Sumba Island
tanggu marapu	place for keeping sacred regalia of the clan, the cult of marapu
tapa	plaited mat
tau bara	white people (Javanese, Balinese, etc.)
tau halang	converts to Islam
tau harani	converts to Christianity
tau kaborangu	great courageous persons; feared because of their criminal tendencies, invulnerability, dangerous anger, magical skills, cruelty, power, and courage

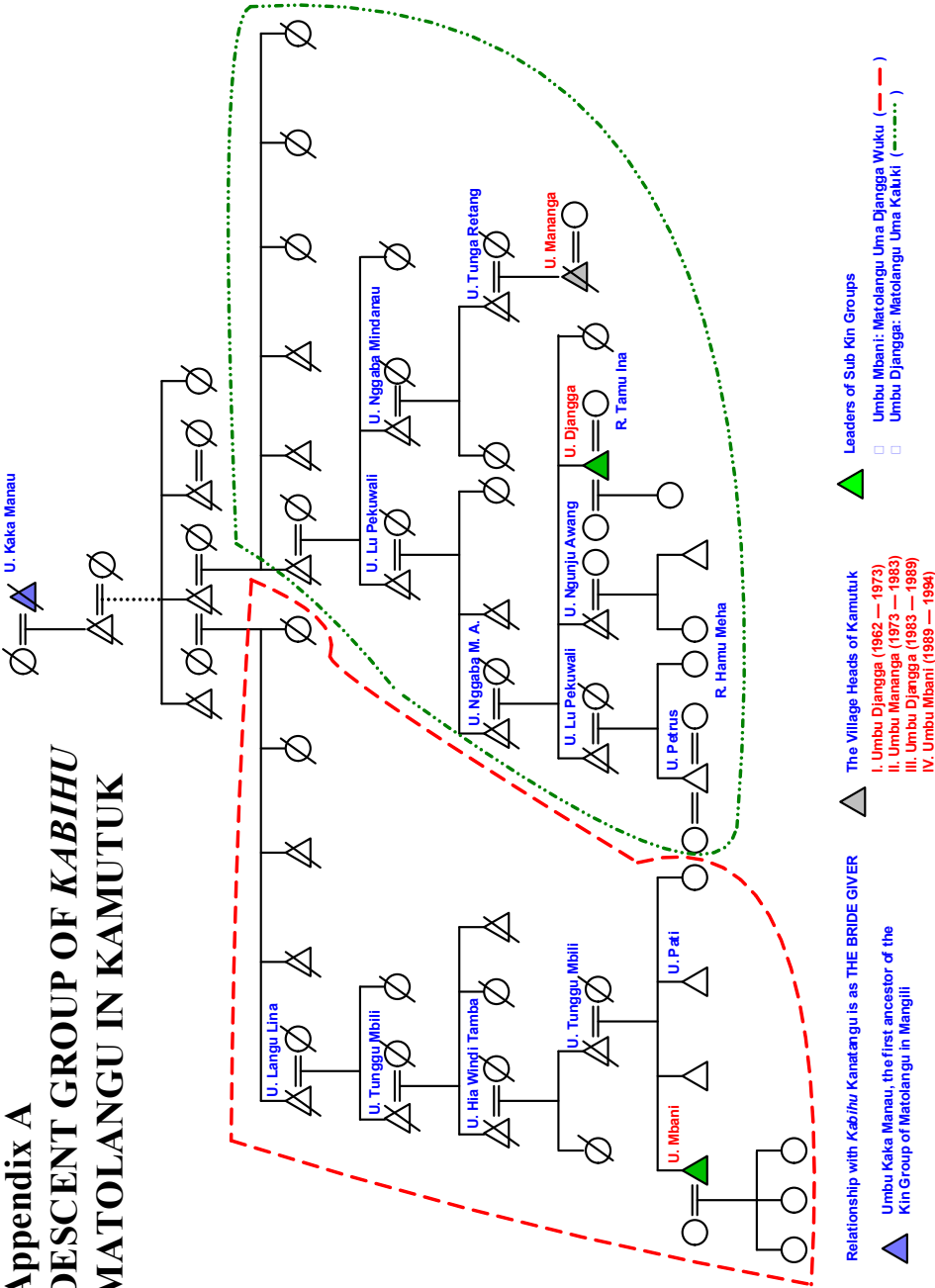
tau kapir	believers of indigenous religion (Marapu)
tau kobulu	invulnerable persons
tau hau	Savunese
tau kabihu	independent people, not ata or maramba
tau la uma	people of the house, ameliorative expression for slave
tau patembi	respected persons because of their heroism, wisdom, authority, power, and courage
tawoda	sea urchin; <i>Diadema setosum</i> (L)
tempat matahari terbit (I)	place of sun rise
teripang (I)	sea cucumber; <i>Holothuria scabra</i> (L)
tokoh adat (I)	important person in traditional adat milieu
tokoh masyarakat (I)	important person in the community
tokungu	baton
tolk (D)	interpreter
tongkat kerajaan (I)	ceremonial staff; regalia symbolising legitimacy of power presented by the Dutch colonial administration to a local ruler in a particular region
tua (I)	old
tuya	mother's brother
uang sabun (I)	additional money
uhu	rice; <i>Oryza sativa</i> (L)
uhu jua	only rice
uma	house
uma djangga	high house
uma injungu	injungu house. People call injungu house because there was a big injungu tree in the yard of house in the past. Injungu is a kind of tree with edible, but fibrous, sour, plumlike fruits sometimes eaten

	cooked (kedondong); <i>Spondias cytheria</i> sonn (L)
uma mbatangu	house for convention; this house has a triangular peak or tower built in the centre of the roof construction.
umbu	title used to address men of high social rank, it is sometimes use to address a direct call to other persons although they do not come from high social rank
umbu makadingu	silent umbu
umbuna i X	master of X
ura manu—eti waî	chicken intestines and pig livers
urusan adat (I)	adat concerns
ustad (I)	Islamic teacher
Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (D)	Dutch East India Company; VOC
waî	pig; <i>Sus domesticus</i> (L)
woka	garden
wotu tau	serving a meal (pork or meat of sacrificial animals) after reaching an agreement in the negotiations of exchange
wunangu	speaker for ritual ceremonies and skilled negotiator for adat ceremonies, the representatives or delegations of families in adat ceremonies
yera	bride-giving clan
zending (D)	Protestant mission

A

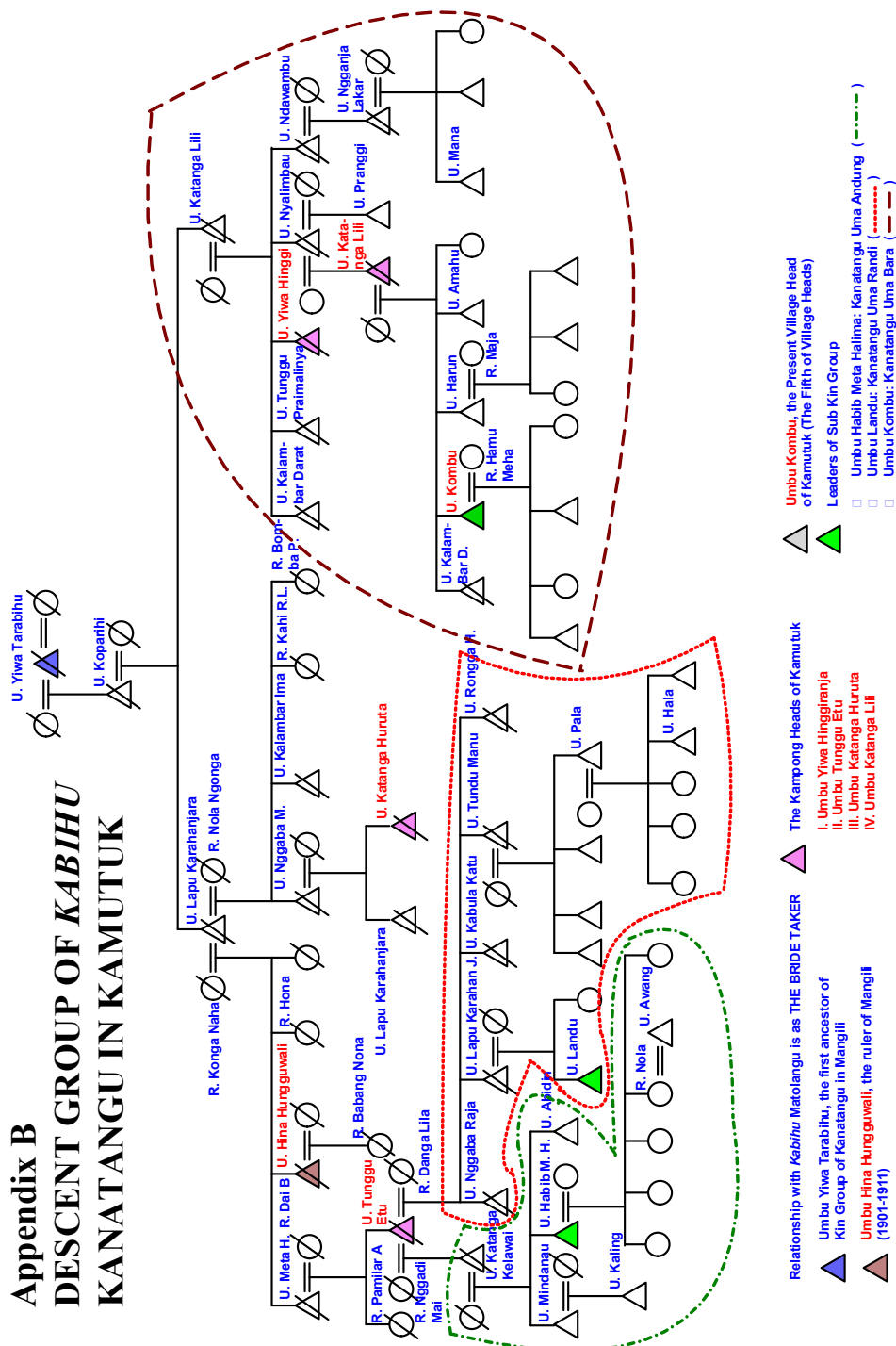
APPENDICES

Appendix A
DESCENT GROUP OF *KABIHU*
MATOLANGU IN KAMUTUK

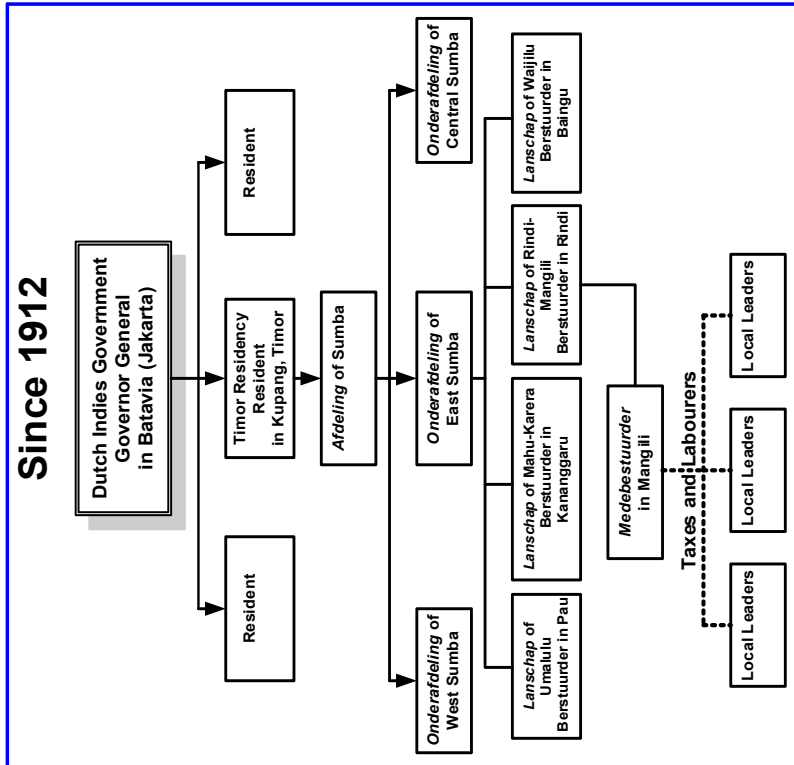
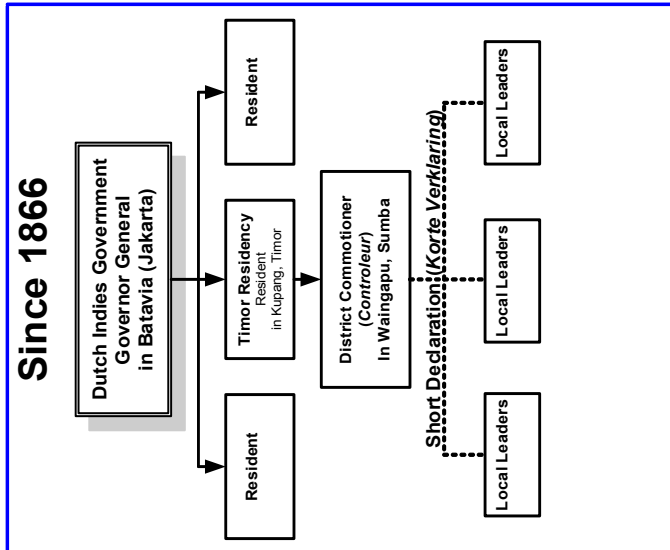


Appendix B

DESCENT GROUP OF *KABIHU* KANATANGU IN KAMUTUK

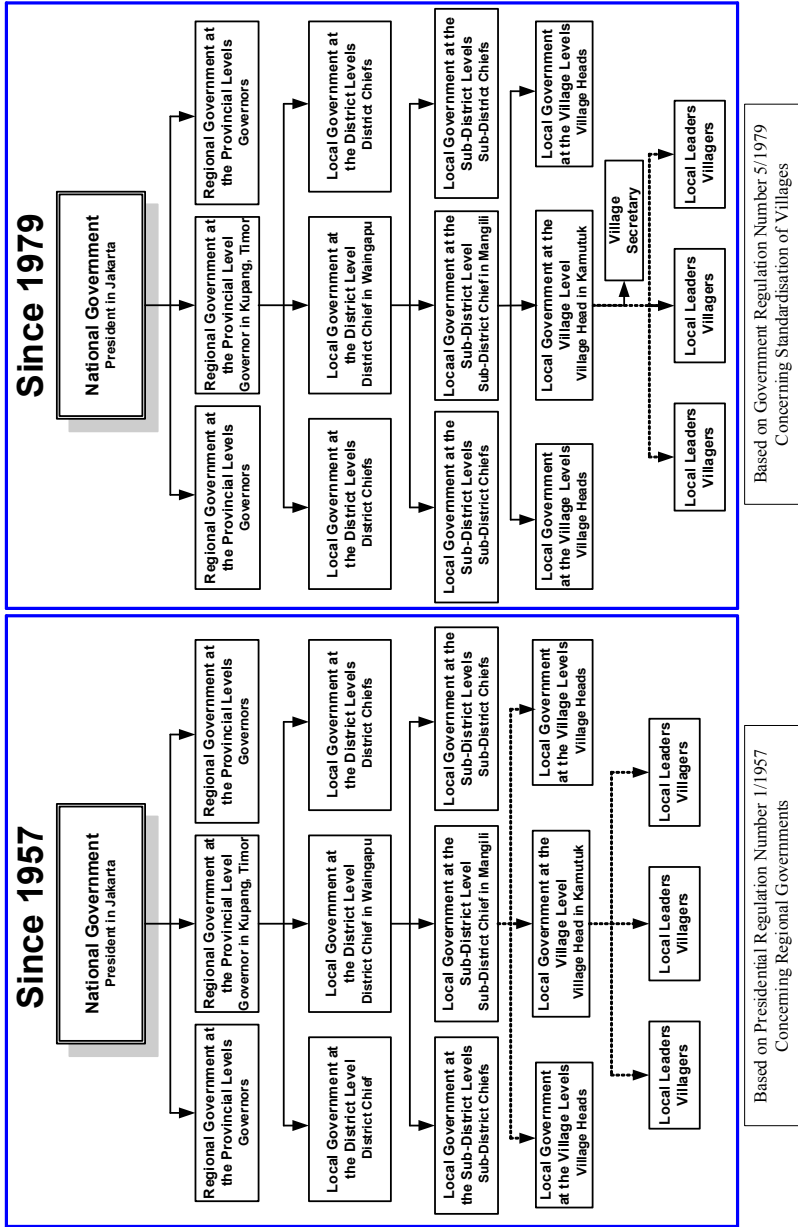


Appendix C Government Administrative Systems in Colonial Periods



Appendix D

Government Administrative Systems in Indonesian Periods



C

CURRICULUM VITAE

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- Persepsi dan Perilaku Kesejahteraan Hidup Rakyat Timor Timur (Perception of Well-Being and Behaviour of the East Timorese).

- Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, September 1995 (158 pages). With R. Maryatmo and P. Didit Krisnadewara.
- Gelandangan Yogyakarta: Suatu Kehidupan dalam Bingkai Tatanan Sosial-Budaya "Resmi" (The Homeless of Yogyakarta: A Life in the Frame of "Official" Social-Cultural Order). Yogyakarta: Atma Jaya University Press, Yogyakarta, March 1999 (viii + 62 pages).
 - Pemulung Jalanan Yogyakarta: Konstruksi Marginalitas dan Perjuangan Hidup dalam Bayang-Bayang Budaya Dominan (The Nomadic Scavengers of Yogyakarta: Construction of Marginality and Struggle for Life in the Shadow of the Dominant Culture). Yogyakarta: Media Pressindo, September 1999 (xii + 288 pages).
 - Ratu Kidul (Queen of the South Seas). Yogyakarta: Bentang Budaya, April 2000 (x + 152 pages).
 - Tragedi Udin: Bingkai Kebusukan Kekuasaan dan Kekerasan (The Udin Tragedy: A Frame of the Decay of Power and Violence). Yogyakarta: Galang Press, August 2001 (xxvi + 216 pages). With Lukas S. Ispandriarno.

In May 1998, he graduated with a Masters of Arts degree in Cultural Anthropology from Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines. His thesis was entitled "In the Shadow of a Dominant Culture: The Construction of Marginality among Nomadic Scavengers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia".

The research for his PhD dissertation, which was conducted in East Sumba, Indonesia, from August 2002 until July 2003, and focused on how the local elite manipulate links between the state and the local society, was a part of a research programme of the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research.

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SUMMARY

This study aims at understanding the dynamics of state formation and the interaction between national states and local communities by focusing upon the agents involved in that interaction. While most studies in this field analyse the role of government bureaucracies and national policies, I focus on the role local communities, and in particular their protagonists, the local elite, play in this setting. For many years, it was thought that modern states, and in particular the post-colonial states, were strong enough to eradicate the political and cultural autonomy of small, often called "traditional", communities within their national boundaries. Recent history, however, has taught us that many of these communities show a remarkable resilience against outside interference and pressures to relinquish their autonomy, not necessarily through outright opposition to the state, but often through cleverly manipulating personal relationships with government officials at the regional and local levels. In some cases, modern nation-states have reinforced, rather than weakened, "traditional" local power structures as local power-holders were able to find a *modus vivendi* with regional state bureaucracies, as well as with other "modern" institutions and ideologies that arrived in the local communities in the course of time.

I chose to base this study on a small village community in Eastern Sumba. Sumba, as part of Eastern Indonesia, is in a region that, for years, was only marginally integrated into the colonial, as well as the independent, state. This does not mean that the island was in any sense isolated, forgotten or unexplored. For centuries, Sumba supplied horses and sandalwood to a network of inter-insular trade. In 1866, it was

nominally incorporated into the colonial state of the Netherlands East Indies, and in 1880, Dutch missionaries started to spread the gospel, primarily in the Western part of Sumba. Nevertheless these supra-local elements did not penetrate deeply into the social and political structure of the local communities.

The colonial state maintained a policy of indirect rule, leaving local power in the hands of the existing elite clans who already dominated the rural communities. It was only after Indonesian independence in 1945 that the government, with its policy of national unity, began to implement a bureaucratic system that aimed at creating uniform local government structures. In the case of Sumba, this meant that regional officials had to cope with a strongly hierarchical system in the communities in which the leaders of noble (maramba) clans held absolute power of human and natural resources. The majority of the population belongs to a class that is referred to as *ata*. They are, literally, slaves, but in practice, dependent servants of their masters (maramba) who control all major means of production (land and livestock) and reproduction (as owners of the means to observe traditional rituals and ceremonies, including marriages and burials).

Although during the past century, many people from neighbouring islands have migrated to and settled in Sumba where they play an important economic role, they are still considered newcomers and outsiders who are tolerated but are unable to interfere with local politics. In my fieldwork, I concentrated on one hamlet, or *kampung*, whose residents are almost completely members of Sumbanese clans. The majority of the non-Sumbanese residents of the village were Savunese. In Kamutuk *kampung* at the easternmost tip of the island, hierarchical structures are still very much intact, notwithstanding a fifty-year period of increased pressures to be incorporated into the national market, interventions by the national state, the Christian mission, educational institutions, and the media. The maramba have been able to retain their political power, control of nearly all land and livestock, and a near-total command of the *ata* labour force, and as members of the dominant pioneer clans, they have become inevitable partners of regional government officials who are charged with the duty of implementing national policies in Sumba.

The community of Kamutuk, like many other East Sumbanese villages, has proven to be very resilient to interference from outside parties. It boasts a distinctive local culture with its own Marapu religion that under the veneer of Christianity (and partly of Islam as well) still provides the major framework for understanding and interpreting the world, as well as a set of guidelines that structure behaviour and practices. Marapu becomes particularly visible in life-cycle rituals (births, weddings and funerals) and in agricultural practices. At the same time, it is closely related to a kinship system consisting of exogamous descent groups ("clans") that relate nuclear families to other inhabitants both in the kampong itself and the wider region. Hierarchy, or as Fox coined it, "precedence", is a major feature of this kinship network, as the bride-giving clan is in a superior position vis-à-vis the bride-taking clan. Inequality permeates all levels of social life in Kamutuk and has not decreased in recent decades.

This observation provided the starting point for my research: how can we explain why such a small-scale community did not collapse under the combined power of a centralistic state bureaucracy that aims at abandoning "feudalism", newly arrived religions that stress equality, educational institutions that provide a window to the outside world, and "modernity" in general that is delivered by the mass media, as well as NGOs that have found their way to this rather remote part of Indonesia? And more specifically, how have the local power holders in Kamutuk maintained their political control over the local population, their ownership of the major means of production, as well as their prestigious positions as the legitimate masters of their world?

With these questions in mind, I set off to do fieldwork in Kamutuk from August 2002 until July 2003. I returned several times for brief periods to collect additional data. I used, basically, a qualitative approach and a variety of research methods, ranging from observation, active participation, in-depth interviews, genealogical surveys, oral history, and a study of written sources (government and church documents, local and national archives, and statistical reports). The collected data provided an insight into the way of life in Kamutuk - its politics of culture, as well as its culture of politics.

The outcome of my research confirmed my first impressions of a very resilient community that has been able to survive during the past fifty years and keep supra-local forces at bay by clinging to its local adat and by avoiding direct head-on confrontations, while at the same time, incorporating whatever benefits state and church could provide. Presently, the community remains strongly hierarchical and the ata, the majority of the population, has barely seen any improvement in their living conditions. They have no means of escaping the pressures imposed upon them by the maramba. Their lives are still very much dependent upon their masters without whom they cannot have access to local and supra-local resources to sustain their livelihoods, and without whom they cannot find a spouse or even be properly buried because all of these rituals require sacrificing animals or exchanging valuable goods, which they do not possess themselves.

On the other hand, "modernity" has reinforced the position of the local power holders. First of all, they have been the ones who reaped the benefits of development plans initiated by the regional government or the churches, as they are accepted as the representatives of the community. Money flowing into the village comes through them and nearly always stays with them. In that sense, development programmes have enlarged their already rich resource base. Secondly, they have become the village "gatekeepers", as they hold the key to contacts between the kampong and the outside world. No ata can pass by them to find employment outside Kamutuk or to send their children to elementary or secondary schools. Social mobility of the ata is, thus, strictly controlled and allowed only in miniscule, occasional steps. Even when ata children who have been able to attain secondary education return to the village, they return to their old positions as servants of their masters. In this way, the maramba have been very successful in sealing off the social and economic boundaries of the village. They have been able to do so because at crucial moments in time, they have unified (although upon occasion, they compete with each other) to prevent potential fissures in their formation. They also have skilfully handled regional government officials by incorporating them into their networks either through marriage or close personal relationships.

Through a combination of all of these strategies and tactics in which they linked "traditional" and "modern" legitimisation of authority, they have maintained their politically central positions, their wealth and their monopoly of the ritual life of the community.

Although a small number of ata have improved their livelihoods with the consent of their masters, they have not extended their economic mobility to the domain of politics, let alone that of cultural prestige. Even those who can afford to buy modern commodities refrain from doing so as not to offend the maramba, or to be deemed arrogant and "ignorant their place" in society. The majority of ata, however, still live in near-complete dependence and poverty. Occasionally, they may protest against extreme forms of exploitation by their masters, but they will do so only in a subdued way, through mockery and gossip amongst themselves or through secretly destroying maramba property, i.e., through what Scott has called "everyday forms of resistance". They adroitly avoid any open form of protest because they know that such behaviour will bring upon them fierce revenge from their masters who will also deny them access to a minimal livelihood. Any effort either by the government, the churches or NGOs to improve the lives of the former "slaves", therefore, must take into account that the ata will take a very reserved stance towards such efforts as they may rob them of the only, be it very limited, security that they have.

S

SAMENVATTING

- Summary in Dutch -

Deze studie beoogt het begrijpen en analyseren van dynamische processen van staatsvorming en de interacties tussen nationale staten en lokale gemeenschappen. Centraal staan de actoren die een cruciale rol spelen in deze interacties. Terwijl de meeste studies in dit onderzoeksveld zich richten op overheidsbureaucratieën en op nationaal beleid, richt ik me op de rol die lokale gemeenschappen spelen, en in het bijzonder op de hoofdrolspelers, de lokale elite. Jarenlang werd gedacht dat moderne staten, en in het bijzonder de postkoloniale staten, sterk genoeg waren om de politieke en culturele autonomie van kleine, vaak als ‘traditioneel’ aangeduide gemeenschappen binnen hun grenzen uit te wissen. De recente geschiedenis heeft ons echter geleerd dat veel van deze gemeenschappen een opvallende weerstand laten zien tegen interventies en druk van buitenaf gericht op het opgeven van deze autonomie. Die weerstand wordt niet zozeer geboden in directe oppositie tegen de staat, maar vaak door slimme manipulatie van relaties met ambtenaren en bestuurders op regionaal en lokaal niveau. In sommige gevallen hebben de moderne natiestaten ‘traditionele’ machtsrelaties eerder versterkt dan verzwakt omdat lokale machthebbers in staat waren een *modus vivendi* te vinden met zowel regionale staatsbureaucratieën als met andere ‘moderne’ instituties en ideologieën die de lokale gemeenschappen in de loop van de tijd bereikten.

Ik heb ervoor gekozen om me in deze studie te richten op een kleine gemeenschap in Oost Sumba. Sumba, onderdeel van Oost Indonesië, is een regio die jarenlang marginaal geïntegreerd was in zowel de koloniale als in de onafhankelijke staat van Indonesië. Dit betekent niet dat het eiland in enige zin geïsoleerd, vergeten of onontdekt is gebleven. Eeuwenlang leverde Sumba paarden en sandelhout binnen een interinsulair handelsnetwerk. In 1866, werd Sumba nominaal geïncorporeerd in de koloniale staat van Nederlands Indië, en vanaf 1880 verspreidden Nederlandse missionarissen en zendelingen, vooral in het westelijke deel van Sumba, er het evangelie. Deze bovenlokale invloeden drongen echter niet diep in de sociale en politieke structuur van de lokale gemeenschappen door.

De koloniale staat hanteerde een beleid van indirect bestuur dat de macht in de handen liet van de bestaande dominante elite en clans binnen lokale gemeenschappen. Pas na de onafhankelijkheid in 1945, begon de overheid, met haar beleid van nationale eenheid, een bureaucratisch systeem te implementeren gericht op de creatie van lokale overheidsstructuren. In het geval van Sumba betekende dit dat regionale ambtenaren en bestuurders geconfronteerd werden met een sterk hiërarchisch systeem in de gemeenschappen alwaar de leiders van adellijke (maramba) clans absolute macht over menselijke en natuurlijke hulpbronnen hadden. De meerderheid van de bevolking behoort tot de sociale klasse van de ata. Dit zijn letterlijk slaven, maar in de praktijk eerder afhankelijke knechten van meesters (maramba) die alle belangrijke productiemiddelen (land en vee) en reproductiemiddelen (als handhavers en bewakers van de traditionele rituelen en ceremonies, inclusief bruiloften en begrafenissen) beheersen.

Hoewel in de afgelopen eeuw veel inwoners van nabijgelegen eilanden migreerden en zich in Sumba vestigden, waar ze een belangrijke economische rol spelen, worden zij nog steeds beschouwd als nieuwkomers en buitenstaanders die weliswaar worden getolereerd, maar die zich onmogelijk kunnen bemoeien met de lokale politiek. In mijn veldwerk concentreerde ik me op een gehucht, of kampong, wiens inwoners vrijwel uitsluitend bestaan uit leden van Sumbanese clans (in het grotere dorp waarvan de kampong deel uitmaakt, is de meerderheid

van de bevolking niet-Sumbanees maar oorspronkelijk afkomstig van het nabij gelegen eiland Savu. In kampong Kamutuk, gelegen op het meest oostelijke puntje van het eiland, zijn de hiërarchische structuren nog grotendeels intact. Ondanks vijftig jaar toenemende druk van incorporatie in de nationale markt, interventies door de nationale staat, de christelijke zending, onderwijsinstituten en de media zijn de maramba in staat geweest hun lokale machtspositie te handhaven, controle te houden over land en vee en het ata arbeidspotentieel bijna totaal te blijven beheersen. Bovendien, zijn ze, als leden van de dominante pionier-clans, onvermijdelijke partners geworden van regionale bestuurders belast met het implementeren van nationaal beleid in Sumba.

De gemeenschap van Kamutuk, net als vele andere Oost Sumbanese dorpen, is bestand gebleken tegen inmenging van externe partijen. Ze is trots op haar bijzondere lokale cultuur met haar eigen Marapu religie die onder het vernis van Christendom (en gedeeltelijk ook van Islam) nog steeds richtlijnen biedt die opvattingen en gedrag structureren en het belangrijkste raamwerk vormen om de wereld te interpreteren. Marapu is vooral zichtbaar in de belangrijke rituelen rond geboorte, huwelijk en begrafenissen en bij bepaalde landbouwkundige praktijken. Ook is ze nauw verbonden met het verwantschapssysteem dat bestaat uit exogame afstammingsgroepen ('clans') die zich verhouden tot huishoudens en anderen zowel in de kampong als in de regio. Hiërarchie, of zoals Fox het typeerde, 'precedence' (prioritering) is een belangrijk kenmerk van dit verwantschapssysteem omdat de bruidgevende clan zich in een superieure positie bevindt ten opzichte van de bruidnemende clan. Ongelijkheid kenmerkt alle niveaus van het maatschappelijk leven in Kamutuk en deze ongelijkheid is de afgelopen decennia niet afgenomen.

Deze observatie vormt het begin van mijn onderzoek; hoe kunnen we verklaren dat deze kleine gemeenschap niet bezweek onder de combinatie van een centralistische staatsbureaucratie die afschaffing van 'feodalisme' tot doel had, nieuwe religies die gelijkheid prediken, onderwijs-instituten die een wijdere blik naar de buitenwereld gunnen, en 'moderniteit' in het algemeen zoals gepresenteerd door de massame-

dia en NGO's die hun weg vonden naar deze behoorlijk afgelegen hoek van Indonesië. En specifiek, hoe hebben de lokale machthebbers in Kamutuk hun politieke controle over de lokale bevolking en over de belangrijkste productiemiddelen behouden, en hun prestigieuze positie als legitieme meesters van hun wereld?

Met deze vragen in mijn achterhoofd, heb ik van augustus 2002 tot juli 2003, veldwerk gedaan in Kamutuk. Ik ben diverse keren voor korte perioden teruggekeerd om additionele informatie te verzamelen. In het veldwerk heb ik voornamelijk gebruik gemaakt van een kwalitatieve benadering met een scala aan onderzoeksmethoden variërend van observatie, actieve participatie, diepte-interviews, genealogische onderzoeken, oral history, en de bestudering van geschreven bronnen (overheids- en kerkelijke documenten, lokale en nationale archieven, en statistische rapporten). De verzamelde informatie bood diepe inzichten in de manier van leven in Kamutuk, in haar cultuurpolitiek alsmede in haar politieke cultuur.

De uitkomsten van dit onderzoek bevestigden mijn eerste indruk van een zeer veerkrachtige gemeenschap die de afgelopen vijftig jaar in staat was om te overleven en die in staat was bovenlokale krachten op afstand te houden door vast te houden aan de lokale adat en door directe confrontaties uit de weg te gaan, terwijl ze tegelijkertijd alle mogelijke voordelen van kerk en staat dankbaar incorporeerde. Tot op de dag van vandaag blijft de lokale gemeenschap sterk hiërarchisch georganiseerd en de ata, de meerderheid van de bevolking, ziet amper enige verbetering in hun levensomstandigheden. Ze hebben geen mogelijkheid te ontsnappen aan de opgelegde druk van de maramba. Hun leven en levensonderhoud is nog steeds in grote mate afhankelijk van hun meesters zonder wie zij geen toegang hebben tot lokale en bovenlokale hulpbronnen en zonder wie zij geen partner kunnen vinden of zelfs maar een fatsoenlijke begrafenis kunnen krijgen omdat al deze rituelen het offeren van dieren vereist of het uitwisselen van waardevolle goederen die ze zelf niet bezitten.

Aan de andere kant heeft de 'moderniteit' de positie van de lokale machthebbers juist versterkt. In de eerste plaats waren zij het die vooral de voordelen plukten van de kerkelijke en door de staat georganiseerde

ontwikkelingsprogramma's omdat zij door exetrne instanties worden beschouwd als vertegenwoordigers van de gemeenschap. Geld voor de gemeenschap vloeit via hen en blijft bijna altijd bij hen. In die zin hebben ontwikkelingsprogramma's hun, toch al ruime, bestaansmogelijkheden alleen nog maar vergroot. Ten tweede zijn zij de poortwachters van de gemeenschap geworden omdat zij de sleutelcontacten tussen de kampong en de buitenwereld onderhouden. Geen ata kan buiten hen om werk vinden of kinderen naar het voortgezet onderwijs sturen. Sociale mobiliteit van de ata is op die manier streng gereguleerd en alleen sporadisch toegestaan in minuscule stapjes. Zelfs als ata kinderen in staat zijn geweest om voortgezet onderwijs te volgen, keren ze naar de kampong terug als dienaren van hun meesters. Op deze manier, zijn de maramba uitermate succesvol in het afschermen van de sociale en economische grenzen van het dorp. Ze hebben dat bereikt doordat ze op cruciale momenten in staat waren samen te werken en scheuren in de hechte onderlinge formatie voorkwamen (hoewel ze verder regelmatig concurreren met elkaar). Ook hebben ze handig regionale overheidsfunctionarissen aan zich weten te binden door ze op te nemen in persoonlijke netwerken via huwelijken of door het aangaan van persoonlijke relaties. De combinatie van al deze strategieën en tactieken, waarin 'traditionele' en 'moderne' vormen van legitimatie samenkomen, hebben hen in staat gesteld hun politieke centrale posities, hun rijkdom en hun monopolie op het rituele leven in de gemeenschap te handhaven.

Hoewel een klein aantal van de ata, onder goedkeuring van hun meesters, hun bestaan hebben weten te verbeteren, heeft dat geen gevolgen gehad voor het domein van de politiek of van cultureel prestige. Zelfs diegenen die zich moderne goederen kunnen permitteren beperken zich in de aanschaf daarvan om de maramba niet voor het hoofd te stoten, of om te voorkomen als arrogant afgeschilderd te worden als mensen die 'hun plaats in de samenleving niet kennen'. De meerderheid van de ata leeft echter in een bijna complete afhankelijkheid en armoede. Af en toe protesteren ze weliswaar tegen extreme vormen van exploitatie door hun meesters, maar ze zullen dit altijd op een onderdanige manier doen, door onderlinge spot en roddel,

of door heimelijk bezit van maramba te vernielen. Het zijn vormen van verzet die Scott 'the everyday forms of resistance' noemde. Ze vermijden handig elke vorm van openlijk protest omdat ze weten dat zulk gedrag tot zware repercussies van hun meesters zal leiden die hen ook de toegang tot een minimaal bestaan zal ontnemen. Elke poging van de overheid, de kerk, of van NGO's om de levensomstandigheden van de voormalige 'slaven' te verbeteren, moet zich rekenschap geven van het feit dat de ata een zeer gereserveerde houding zullen innemen tegenover zulk soort initiatieven omdat deze hen kunnen beroven van de enige zekerheid, hoe beperkt ook, die ze nog hebben.

R

RINGKASAN

- Summary in Indonesian -

Studi ini bertujuan untuk memahami dinamika pembentukan negara dan interaksi antara negara nasional dan masyarakat lokal dengan memfokuskan pada agen-agen yang terlibat dalam interaksi tersebut. Sementara sebagian besar studi dalam bidang ini menganalisa peran birokrasi pemerintahan dan kebijakan nasional, saya memfokuskan pada peran masyarakat lokal, khususnya pelaku utama yang bermain dalam latar ini, yaitu elit lokal. Selama bertahun-tahun telah dibayangkan bahwa negara modern, khususnya negara pasca kolonial, cukup kuat untuk menghapuskan otonomi budaya dan politik dari masyarakat kecil atau sering disebut masyarakat "tradisional" dalam batasan-batasan nasional mereka. Akan tetapi sejarah akhir-akhir ini telah mengajarkan kepada kita bahwa banyak masyarakat menunjukkan suatu gaya pegas luar biasa melawan intervensi dan tekanan dari luar yang ingin melepaskan otonomi mereka, tidak perlu melalui oposisi langsung terhadap negara, tetapi sering melalui manipulasi cerdas hubungan pribadi dengan pegawai pemerintah di tingkat regional dan lokal. Dalam beberapa hal, negara nasional modern telah memperkuat, bukannya memperlemah, struktur kekuasaan lokal "tradisional" seperti pemegang kekuasaan lokal dapat menemukan suatu kompromi dengan birokrasi negara regional, seperti halnya dengan institusi dan ideologi "modern" lain yang hadir dalam masyarakat lokal dari waktu ke waktu.

Saya memilih untuk mendasarkan studi ini di suatu masyarakat desa kecil di Sumba Timur. Sumba, sebagai bagian Indonesia Timur, berada di suatu daerah yang selama bertahun-tahun hanya secara marginal terintegrasi ke dalam negara kolonial, seperti halnya negara merdeka. Ini bukan berarti bahwa Pulau Sumba merupakan wilayah terasing, terlupakan atau belum tereksplorasi. Selama berabad-abad, Sumba menyediakan kuda dan kayu cendana dalam jaringan perdagangan antar pulau. Pada tahun 1866, Sumba secara resmi menjadi bagian dari negara kolonial Belanda dan pada tahun 1880, misionaris Belanda mulai untuk menyebarkan ajaran Injil, terutama di Sumba bagian Barat. Meskipun demikian unsur-unsur supra-lokal ini tidak merasuk secara dalam pada struktur sosial dan politik masyarakat lokal.

Negara kolonial menerapkan suatu kebijakan pemerintahan secara tidak langsung, menisakan kekuasaan lokal di tangan elit marga (kabihu) yang telah mendominasi masyarakat pedesaan. Ini hanya setelah kemerdekaan Indonesia pada tahun 1945 bahwa pemerintah, dengan kebijakan kesatuan nasionalnya, mulai menerapkan suatu sistem birokrasi yang bertujuan untuk menciptakan struktur pemerintah lokal yang seragam. Dalam kasus Sumba, ini berarti bahwa pegawai pemerintah daerah harus mengatasi kuatnya suatu sistem hirarki dalam masyarakat yang mana para bangsawan (maramba) sebagai pemimpin kabihu memegang kekuasaan mutlak terhadap sumber daya manusia dan alam. Mayoritas populasi menjadi bagian dari suatu kelas yang dikenal sebagai ata. Secara harafiah, mereka adalah budak, tetapi dalam praktek sebenarnya merupakan para pelayan yang bergantung pada para tuan mereka (maramba) yang mengendalikan semua sarana produksi utama (tanah dan ternak) dan reproduksi (sebagai pemilik sarana untuk menjalankan ritual dan upacara tradisional, termasuk perkawinan dan penguburan).

Walaupun satu abad yang lalu, banyak orang dari pulau tetangga telah bermigrasi ke dan menetap di Sumba di mana mereka memainkan suatu peran ekonomi penting, mereka masih dianggap sebagai pendatang baru dan orang luar yang dimaklumi tetapi tidak dapat ikut campur dalam politik lokal. Dalam penelitian lapangan (fieldwork) saya, saya berkonsentrasi pada satu dusun kecil atau kampung yang mana

penduduknya hampir sepenuhnya anggota kabihu Sumba. Mayoritas penduduk desa yang non-Sumba adalah orang Sawu. Di kampung Kamutuk di ujung paling timur pulau Sumba, struktur hirarki masih sangat banyak yang tetap utuh, meskipun dalam periode 50 tahun terakhir tekanan meningkat untuk disatukan ke dalam pasar nasional, intervensi oleh negara nasional, misi kristen, institusi pendidikan, dan media. Maramba mampu mempertahankan kekuasaan politik mereka, kontrol terhadap hampir semua tanah dan ternak, dan suatu perintah yang mendekati total terhadap tenaga kerja ata, dan sebagai anggota kabihu dominan yang datang pertama kali di wilayah tersebut, mereka menjadi mitra yang tidak bisa diabaikan oleh pegawai pemerintah daerah yang ditugaskan untuk menerapkan kebijakan nasional di Sumba.

Masyarakat Kamutuk, seperti masyarakat di wilayah Sumba Timur lainnya, telah terbukti menjadi sangat pegas menghadapi campur tangan pihak luar. Membual tentang suatu budaya lokal dengan agama Marapunya sendiri dalam lapisan Kekristenan (dan sebagian Islam juga) masih menyediakan kerangka utama untuk memahami dan menginterpretasikan dunia, seperti halnya suatu perangkat petunjuk yang mendasari perilaku dan praktek. Marapu terutama sekali menjadi kelihatan dalam ritual lingkaran hidup (kelahiran, perkawinan dan penguburan) dan dalam praktek pertanian. Pada waktu yang sama, hal ini berhubungan erat dengan suatu sistem kekerabatan yang terdiri dari kelompok keturunan perkawinan antar kabihu ("clan") yang menghubungkan keluarga-keluarga inti dengan penduduk yang lain, baik di kampung itu sendiri dan daerah yang lebih luas. Hirarki, atau seperti istilah yang digunakan Fox, "precedence", adalah suatu ciri utama dari jaringan kekerabatan ini, sebagai kabihu pemberi pengantin wanita berada dalam suatu posisi yang superior apabila berhadapan dengan kabihu penerima pengantin wanita. Ketidaksamaan merembes ke seluruh tingkat kehidupan sosial di Kamutuk dan belum berkurang dalam dekade terakhir.

Pengamatan ini memberikan pijakan awal untuk penelitian saya: bagaimana kita dapat menjelaskan mengapa masyarakat berskala kecil seperti itu tidak hancur ketika berada dalam kombinasi kekuasaan dari

suatu birokrasi negara sentralistik yang mengarah pada pemutusan "feodalisme", kehadiran agama-agama baru yang menekankan persamaan, institusi pendidikan yang menyediakan jendela terhadap dunia luar, dan "modernisasi" pada umumnya yang disiarkan oleh mass media, seperti halnya Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat (LSM) yang telah menemukan cara mereka bagi bagian wilayah Indonesia yang agak terpencil ini? Dan lebih spesifik, bagaimana pemegang kekuasaan lokal di Kamutuk memelihara kendali politik mereka terhadap populasi lokal, kepemilikan mereka atas sarana utama produksi, seperti halnya posisi bergengsi mereka sebagai penguasa yang sah atas dunia mereka?

Dengan pertanyaan-pertanyaan ini dalam pikiran saya, saya mulai untuk melakukan kerja lapangan di Kamutuk dari Agustus 2002 sampai Juli 2003. Saya kembali beberapa kali dalam kunjungan singkat untuk mengumpulkan data tambahan. Saya pada dasarnya menggunakan suatu pendekatan kualitatif dan berbagai metode penelitian, berkisar antara pengamatan, partisipasi aktif, wawancara mendalam, survei genealogi, sejarah lisan, dan suatu studi terhadap sumber-sumber tertulis (dokumen pemerintah dan gereja, arsip lokal dan nasional, dan laporan statistik). Data yang dikumpulkan memberikan suatu pemahaman mendalam terhadap pandangan hidup di Kamutuk-politik kebudayaannya, seperti halnya budaya politiknya.

Hasil penelitian saya memperkuat kesan pertama saya terhadap suatu masyarakat yang sangat pegas yang telah mampu bertahan selama 50 tahun ini dan menjauhkan kekuatan supra-lokal dengan tetap bertahan pada adat lokalnya dan dengan menghindari konfrontasi beradu muka langsung, sementara pada waktu yang sama mendapatkan manfaat apapun yang bisa disediakan oleh negara dan gereja. Sekarang ini, masyarakat menyisakan hirarki sedemikian kuat dan ata, mayoritas populasi, telah hampir tidak melihat peningkatan apapun dalam kondisi kehidupan mereka. Mereka tidak punya sarana untuk melepaskan tekanan yang dibebankan kepada mereka oleh maramba. Hidup mereka masih sangat banyak bergantung pada tuan mereka, tanpa tuan mereka, mereka tidak bisa mendapatkan akses pada sumber-sumber lokal dan supra-lokal untuk mendukung kehidupan mereka, dan tanpa tuan mereka, mereka tidak bisa menemukan

pasangan atau bahkan penguburan secara pantas karena semua ritual tersebut memerlukan hewan korban atau pertukaran barang-barang bernilai, yang mana mereka tidak memilikinya.

Pada sisi lain, "modernisasi" telah memperkuat posisi pemegang kekuasaan lokal. Pertama, mereka telah menjadi seseorang yang menuai keuntungan-keuntungan dari rencana pembangunan yang diprakarsai oleh pemerintah daerah atau gereja, seperti mereka diterima sebagai wakil masyarakat. Uang yang mengalir ke desa datanginya melalui mereka dan hampir selalu berhenti di tempat mereka. Dalam konteks ini, program pembangunan telah memperbesar sumber daya mereka yang sebenarnya telah kaya. Kedua, mereka telah menjadi "penjaga pintu" desa, seperti mereka memegang kunci hubungan antara kampung dan dunia luar. Hampir tidak ada yang dapat melewati mereka untuk menemukan pekerjaan di luar Kamutuk atau untuk mengirimkan anak-anak mereka ke Sekolah Dasar atau Sekolah Menengah. Jadi mobilitas sosial atau dikendalikan secara kuat dan diijinkan hanya kadang-kadang dalam hal-hal kecil. Bahkan ketika anak-anak atau yang telah mampu mencapai Sekolah Menengah Pertama kembali ke desa, mereka kembali ke posisi lama mereka sebagai pelayan para tuan mereka. Dengan cara ini, maramba telah menjadi sangat sukses dalam menutup batasan-batasan sosial dan ekonomi desa. Mereka mampu melakukannya karena pada saat-saat yang kritis, mereka bersatu (walaupun kadang-kadang mereka bersaing satu sama lain) untuk mencegah celah potensial dalam formasi mereka. Mereka juga sudah trampil menangani pegawai pemerintah daerah dengan memasukkan mereka ke dalam jaringan mereka baik melalui hubungan perkawinan ataupun hubungan kedekatan personal. Melalui suatu kombinasi dari semua taktik dan strategi ini di mana mereka menghubungkan legitimasi otoritas "tradisional" dan "modern", mereka telah mempertahankan posisi sentral mereka secara politik, kekayaan mereka dan monopoli mereka terhadap kehidupan ritual masyarakat.

Walaupun sejumlah kecil atau sudah meningkatkan kehidupan mereka dengan persetujuan para tuan mereka, mereka belum dapat memperluas mobilitas ekonomi mereka ke wilayah politik. Bahkan mereka yang mampu untuk membeli barang-barang modern menahan

diri sehingga tidak melukai perasaan maramba atau dianggap sombong dan "tidak tahu tempat keberadaan mereka" dalam masyarakat. Akan tetapi mayoritas ata masih hidup dalam ketergantungan yang hampir penuh dan kemiskinan. Mereka adakalanya bisa memprotes bentuk ekstrim eksploitasi dari para tuan mereka, tetapi mereka akan melakukannya hanya dalam suatu cara lunak, melalui olok-olok dan gosip di antara mereka sendiri atau melalui pengrusakan secara diam-diam terhadap harta milik maramba, yaitu melalui apa yang disebut Scott "bentuk perlawanan sehari-hari". Mereka dengan cerdas menghindari bentuk protes terbuka apapun karena mereka mengetahui bahwa perilaku seperti itu akan menghadapkan mereka pada pembalasan dendam yang dasyat dari para tuan yang akan juga meniadakan akses mereka terhadap suatu kehidupan minimal. Oleh karena itu usaha apapun yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah, gereja atau LSM untuk meningkatkan kehidupan mantan "budak", harus mempertimbangkan bahwa ata akan mengambil suatu sikap mental yang sangat diam terhadap usaha semacam itu sepertinya mereka mungkin merampok satu-satunya keamanan yang mereka miliki, biarpun sangat terbatas.

N NAKAWONGUNA

- Summary in Kamberan -

Nama paihiku lapa palakunya yiana, kata pataunya rukuna tumbuna pareta nggabarungu, dangu natau mia manggu lahou- hau tana na ngiara pitina waingabana, parihinggu dama ninja la batangu. Taka narihi dangu maipa lapa kanandinya tungguna napangadanguna nama pareta, Nyungga duku kurihi paturukungu ninggu la ana tana mia manggu dama palikuurungu kanadu, ba landau-ndaungu duyaka lapa patauya na langgu pareta. Rihi amaka na langguna na pareta jawabara, nama ndauku ka pinggatuya, lapa puadahuyana hori lawiti dangu namanggana na tau kudu bana padiranggu. Taka larehi nahu, hili ajaru banandai, kanadu badangu bana nyapa natau nama paitanya. nangguada nggaduku lawananya nama welingu la hambeli nama mbuhangu pa kuaruha. Ndajia pakuyia kada paturukunya la nanggara taka da wangu kaminaku palindi mahingguda bada panggolulanya nama ninggu kapiha kungu la pareta jangga hamanbunai lapareta kuru kotaku. Ninggumai la pareta nggabarun matamba paka pandukuha. Ndapawawa andanyai na wanggu lakunguna na kuaha amanggu, hama tuna dama katangu kuaha bada hungguya na bantangu dangu pareta nahu. Berihamana nakabungguru dangu nahu nama ninya latau miamangu weli nunga lundunu-nu-.

Nyungga kupindiya lapa patakaninya napa rama yiana, latau ndeha kudu, lahumba pahunga lodu. Kanadu bawelinungu maka bana pahadodingu lapareta jawa bara bahama tuna ma marandekabiaya.

Ndajia ayai nu natana humba kalama hudiya ndia lama indikuya hi hama tuna pamarombanguya lapa hamataya. Taka welinungu jia bayai nama ningu banda jarangu dangu ainitu dapa danggangu lahou nuha - hau nuha. Landaungu harata walū ngalu nomu kambulu nomu (1866), na humba bana pamaungu lapareta. Landaungu harata walū ngahu walū kambulu (1880), dama ngandi pulungu welingu la jawa bara, pakiringu danyaka pawewarungu pulungu. Dapa kiringu ningu welingu lahumba patama lodu (humba mbaratu). Oha batu anai nu, ndalalu mahiningu ana lapa kei panuwanguna dangu namanggana na latau ana tana miamangu.

Na hili pa purunyai na hori pareta na na tau jawa bara, na manda hara wuku pabinya kuaha ndumada daama bokulu mapangora laka bihu, dama yapa ulingu Nakuru ndeha. Jia mbabada marandeka anaka na indonehia landanungu harata hiwa ngahu patu kambulu lima (1945) napareta napangadanya naha kahaungu nggabarungu. Napa wukuna hikiri patumbu nanya nuna; mata kana pahama halama a nawanggu na napa palakuna napareta welinungu. Ruku ba tumbu tuna nuduka lahumba, jiaduyaka dama pareta parihungu dama pareta ndaerah, da pawawaduyaka badi nalanggu pareta napawana nakabihu bokulu (da maramba). Banyuda aka dama yapaya nakuaha latau, hamanai jaka nggaraya nama ninya la ihi tana paraingu. Natau pali'i wawangu ata bawandanya taka lati ba jiaha dama pahei purunja da maramba, kaba marambadu makatanya mbu-u halana na kuaha : hama tuna labanda dangu ngarangia tanambu kaba nyudahala duka badi mapa lakuya nangarangia hamayangu, lundu lahari lii la lei, lii mangoma hamanai la lii meti.

Apakala ngahu ndau kadunanya natau namu lapa tama pandadiku lahumba, tau tama aha, tau taka aha dangu tau mamai pahimbu luri aha wadanja lai nudu ya ka hinda peku tama adanya namanggana na tau ana tana. Napa hama tanggu baku palakuya naparama yiana, nyungga kurihi pindi niya landuhunu kudu. Lakotaku hawiangu napa korungu kadangu tau hau. Na kotaku kamutuku apa bana ngiangungu kadulahupu tana humba, ndedi nawaruangu ahalau horina. Jiamayai bambada lima kambulu ndauna kawangu nahu nama weliditangu haka haunya bawana, welingu lapareta laka renja dangu lalahakola dangu lahuratu

pabobaru. Dama maramba dama kama papa undunya nakuaha dangu mangganada langiara datana dabanda hamanaï dama tanggu rama tika pala wunggu lima ndabada nyuda maaha. Naka bihu nama kawunga taka aiuna lainu beri angu piara adaha.

Damaningu paramangu lapareta ai u da dapawuangu nggaba lainu papatakanya na wanggu pareta, nggabarungu ndapeku budai lapatuka njiaya na tau laka mutuku, hama tuna na tau la hau pangia la humba ningumahadana marihi paihikunguna lapa hangganya nama welingu lahambeli napa kawana na lahari mia mangu lamarapu-laharani, tubu nai lahalangu. Nahawanjiru manyapa duna pamadapa wanya napa ihikunguna napinu tanah, hama tuna nggara ya nama rihi tanjiku lamarapu. Tarihi ita niya laka laratu luri dedi tau lii la lei lii mangoma tubuna lahari rama wuaka. Larehi nubunapanuwangumai na pangolu na la hori lii la lei lii mangoma na kabihu nama bidingu lakurukotaku dangu lama rihi nggailaru la tana nuwa watu lihina.

Jiadya nama kawunga tumbu lapa ngadangunggu nduma na lapa hamatawanya. Kanggiki pakuna na tau nama hakudu ana, hi ndana mbiaratanyalangua. Apakaninya kai napakili kuaranguna nakuahapareta lapa padiranya na horimiamangu, nimanya nama bidingu, naharani nama pawawaya nama ninya la anguna mahakolakai. Datumbunyi ka tuangana nahori hadada nyuda, baberi hama tuna lahupu mahudiha. Parihingu dama katangu kuaha lakamutuku mayapaya narapa ulingu mangganada la hangga madangu. Baberi manguda nyuda halama aha nggara biaya nama dedi lainu. Kamangia dita ma aha kaihi? Hida miahabianya pakuahaya mbuluhalanya?

Tumbu nanyaka napa arangu laka nandingnggu, hikupalakuya napa rama lakamutuku. Wellingu lawulangu walu ndaungu dua rata dambu (2002) lundu taka lawulangu pihu ndaungu dua rata tailu (2003). Kupa mbira belingu palonggamai paha mataha, papauhingu bajaran, pabuanja wanya napa bada ngalanggu. Kuwangu pahamataha ndia kai kuwangu pambabaku danja. Bada pabanjaru wanya nama ninya lahuratu mapareta karenja dangu napa patakada dama diha kuru uma (statistik). Nabanjaru napa pauhinggu jiaduyaka nama jadi pangadanggu matajiku nangiara lurina lakamutuku dangu napinguna hori.

Na pandambulangu kana tau nama ha kuduana hidaingu tong-guru bana lapa pamandunya na hori umbu apuna lima kambulu ndaunaka wangu nahu (50 tahun) bana halairi wilingu lapa nggaba matangu. Taka laiti larehinu ningu pahawanjiru nanja welingu lapareta dangu welingu lakarenja. Taka nahu nyuda, nibanyapa nahada luri pa undu danya na hori miamangu natika parihi dangu na ata panda itaya nakalunga lurida. Ndaninguha nyuda, papahala wada wikida welingu laduku mbotu la maramba. Nalurida nyuda, dangu mananyapa napa nedinguda welingu lamirida. Jaka ndama welingu lamiridanya ndapeku ada ka nggara biaya nama ninya lamanguda dangu lama welinamungu kai. Lapa kabubulu wanya na lurida. Nda peku mbudai papa kuru uma, jaka ndama welingu lamiri danya. Ndapa peku mangilu buda la papa-hepangu banda mapa wilingu.

La wanggu luri bidingu ai, paka panduku badanyai nakuahada da tau pangora. Nyuda ma a dama utu mangilungu yaka ngara biaya napa pahadana namapareta dangu nakarenya banyuda dama peka taku ama bokulunya na tau mbulu halana. Da amahu ndui dama tama la ndeha, bada laku lii lainyuda pa dangu datika patandapu ma a lainyuda. Jaka ta itaya yiana nggaraha dama welingu lama pareta nduma paka bubulu wanya naluri nama dangu tamba bobudaha nalurida nyuda a datau pekuluri. Banyuda ma aka dama ngiangungu langaru pindu ndeha, beri hama nyuda ma a dama katangu kuhi panuwangu lakuru kotaku dangu welingu lahambeli. Tika pandaningu ata manjadi papangga langaja nyuda lapa himbu parama la hambeli kuataku hama manai lapa hakolaha da anada. Barani pamandu madahaka uda dangguada nggadu kuda na tau ata. Bata langa ana hipulinya taka la ngiara lii kudu ai badi jaka da toma kika lahakola maharangu janggada anada, bapa belimakidanja la deha pamandapu lapa ngia mia mada. Ruku tunanu duka da maramba, hinyuda a dama peku lurida lakuru ndeha, apa kaningu kai pahilinguda dangu anguda taka padaingu kahaungu belimada, kabada mangga dunyaka nawilida bamarambaha. Da pingu mai papa oringu lapareta. Dira kataku hamu madaha. Dapa kei pa wuangu tau kai, jakandia dapakalembingu ruku pingu. Tudanu duka hida panuabiaya nahori pareta miamangu dangu nahori pareta bidingu lapapamandunya na uhukuda nyuda, wangu pingu mangganada. Dawulu palindi mahingu mai lahari kanandi nguda welingu la luri tau dangu.

Jiaka ningu ai ana tau mapira ata maharangu kabutuku lurina, dapa hama hamu mapa budi dangu mirida. Ndapeku budai lapairu ngandi anguda lapa palakuya na pinguda. Apa dama harangu maka pakei malanja hamu ai, darani mapa wikida. Kanadu, bada manggadunya panakanandi nguna namirida. Da jangga etida-ndada pingu a uhu kudu wada a mandaika lama dangu bawaada. Mbulu halana na ata na luri tiwalu manyapa na mayilana. Jiaka mbuhangu ai papatayaku danga da mirida, dawangu ma loyangu bada panyenyi dangu bada paruda dangu anguda. Jaka ndia daparuha hakudu patuda da mirida. Batu a nai nu, damanggangu hamu maipa badi wikida kanadu nawai belingu dunyaka tai nama rihi haritu welingu la mirida lundu ndangara bapa payapuda la lurida. Lainuduyaka kaapanda ngganggara kaduya kanapa palakuna nama pareta-nakarenja hamangu maina LSM, lapa kalunga wanya nalurina na ata, dira patanda pahamumu mada nyapa, kanadu na ata jika dapiti ngabada wangu manda nguda badi kaba nu ayaka nangiapa pekuna napa wada.



The Local Elite and the Appropriation of Modernity

A Case in East Sumba, Indonesia

This study aims at understanding the dynamics of state formation and the interaction between national states and local communities by focusing upon the agents involved in that interaction. While most studies in this field analyse the role of government bureaucracies and national policies, this book focuses on the role local communities, and in particular their protagonists, the local elite, play in this setting. For many years, it was thought that modern states, and in particular the post-colonial states, were strong enough to eradicate the political and cultural autonomy of small, often called “traditional”, communities within their national boundaries. Recent history, however, has taught us that many of these communities show a remarkable resilience against outside interference and pressures to relinquish their autonomy, not necessarily through outright opposition to the state, but ever so often through cleverly manipulating personal relationships with government officials at the regional and local levels. In some cases, modern nation-states have reinforced, rather than weakened, “traditional” local power structures as local power-holders were able to find a *modus vivendi* with regional state bureaucracies, as well as with other “modern” institutions and ideologies that arrived in the local communities in the course of time.

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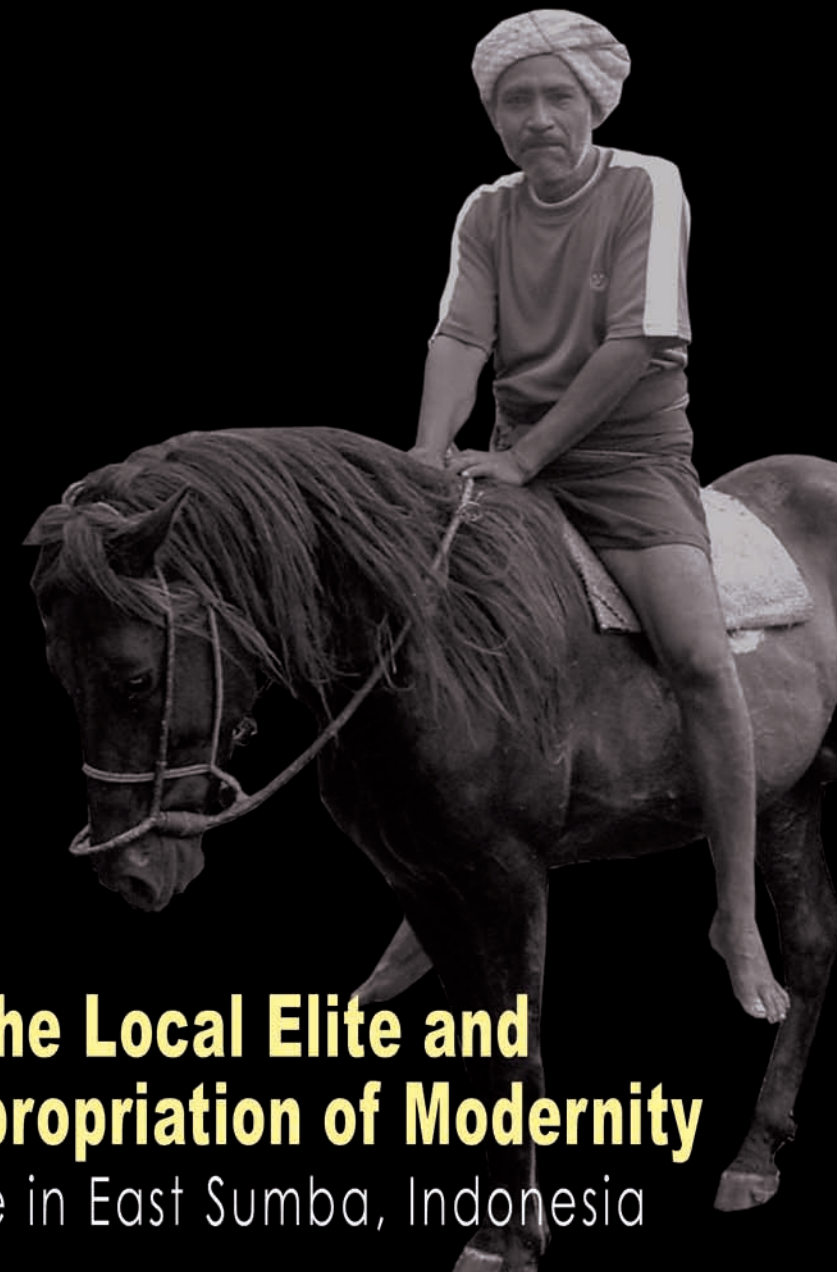


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