

A political ecology of violence and territory in West Kalimantan

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Abstract: *This paper uses a political ecology perspective to examine relationships between violence and territory in West Kalimantan, focusing on the violent incidents of 1996–1997 and 1967–1968. Besides a regional account, the paper examines some of the ways residents of one village were drawn into and chose to participate in violence. The author concludes that while regional analyses can identify broad patterns, local analyses enable a greater understanding of both variation and the processes by which ethnic categories are constructed through violence.*

Keywords: *ethnic violence, political ecology, West Kalimantan*

Introduction

In late 1996 and early 1997, communal violence between Dayaks and Madurese exploded in the western districts of West Kalimantan, Indonesia. While many Dayaks lost their lives and property, ultimately most of the victims were Madurese. An early Human Rights Watch report on the incidents estimated that 25 000 Madurese were displaced from their homes (Human Rights Watch, 1997). Further violence and evictions two years later kept most Madurese from returning to live in the province's rural areas.¹ The turn of events, particularly the potentially permanent evictions, was eerily reminiscent of violence three decades prior. At that time, tens of thousands of rural Chinese were evicted from their homes, but under different conditions: through state-sponsored violence in which Dayaks, Madurese and Malays either participated or from which they benefited. The times had certainly changed, but after both periods of violent evictions, territories had been racialised in old and new forms.

How do we explain the interplay of ethnicity and resources – in this case territory and land – in violent conflict, including the reasons violence takes specific forms? Political ecology

typically looks to histories of interconnected 'macro' and 'micro' social relations and fields of power within which conflict might erupt, connecting scaled analyses of violence and ethnicity to an inherent concern of the field such as access to resources or territorialised power. Yet I found that resources per se were not the main reasons for ethnic conflict and violence. Rather, in these westernmost districts of West Kalimantan, the particular histories of land as *territory*, the expectations connected to territorial authority and the racialisation of such territories, suggest that the 'shifting legal geographies of power' (Sundar, 2001) have played an important role in generating tension. In this paper, I take this argument to a local level, examining some of the forms, patterns and processes of violence both in this region and in a single village involved in the 1967–1968 and the 1997 events. I argue that both local histories and scale of analysis matter when trying to understand the specific relations between communal violence and territory. The local-level data reveal the contradictory forces influencing participants and demonstrate variation in forms of participation in violence. I show that prior histories and geographies can mediate the forms, extents and even reasons for engaging in communal violence.²

Other analyses have either missed or ignored localised nuances and variation. Regional analyses, for example, have emphasised the large-scale *patterns* of violence encompassing West Kalimantan's westernmost districts of Sambas, Pontianak and Sanggau. Regionally focused research has tracked the courses of violence and hypothesised their immediate causes (e.g. HRW, 1997; IDRD, 1998; Suparlan *et al.*, 1999; Charras, 2001) or demonstrated historical parallels in the enactment of violence in earlier times (Harwell, 2001; Davidson, 2002). Some have provided a sense of the ways collective identities were being forged through violence (Peluso and Harwell, 2001; Peluso, 2003, 2006). However, regional studies by political scientists in particular have tended to overemphasise the role of elites in the violence of 1996–1997, implying or arguing that the violence was planned by power-hungry 'Dayak elites' who mobilised the masses at the first opportunity (Davidson, 2002; van Klinken, 2004, 2007). While 'elites' were surely involved in a variety of ways as the violence unfolded, these inferences assume a level of elite machinations and absolute power that has little historical basis among any Dayak subgroups, let alone all collectively.

Macro-political accounts as well as journalistic ones often make two additional assumptions without acknowledging the historical differences (linguistic, cultural, political-economic, gender) among contemporary actors who self-define or have been ascribed Dayak by ethnologists and ethnographers, colonial and contemporary government officials, journalists and other observers. Some are quick to jump on the recently fashionable 'greed or grievance' argument that, in an apparently resource-rich province, valuable resources must be involved in generating or motivating violence (Collier and Bannon, 2003; Ross, 2003). Yet, while timber and gold have been important historically in West Kalimantan, these resources are no longer found in significant quantities in the districts affected by violence. Further, many regional accounts have left the impression that acts of violence against property and participation in killing were ubiquitous and undifferentiated across the region, and derived from common motives which produced common outcomes. Although some accounts have suggested the creation of ethnic communities through expla-

nations using the theoretical lenses of either political-economy or cultural politics (e.g. Andasputra and Djuweng, 1997 and Yeremias, 1997), more localised accounts can often document *how* variation takes form. This paper attempts to unpack several of these dilemmas associated with scale of analysis and ahistoricity, demonstrating the *variation* in the ways violence engulfed, drew in, or unintentionally affected participants, and some of the ways violence helped produce a contemporary *and common* socio-political category of 'Dayaks'.

The term 'region' here is inclusive of the western districts of West Kalimantan: what in 1997 were called Sambas, Pontianak and Sanggau *Kabupaten*.³ By 'local', in this paper, I refer to the village I call 'Tembe',⁴ located along the Singkawang-Bengkayang road, a part of Sambas District in the 1990s.⁵ Tembe was not an originating site of violence or a site of known atrocities in either period, but villagers generally supported and some participated in the violence. Before presenting the village material demonstrating both variations in and parallels with regional accounts, I discuss the regional stories of violence in the two periods and what we learned from those about the production of territory and ethnicity.

Regional stories of violence in West Kalimantan, 1990s and 1960s

1996–1997: A (very) brief sketch of the Dayak–Madurese War

Various accounts of the 1997 violence agree on the basic story of the initial events. On 29 December 1996, at a pop music concert in Ledo, Sambas District, West Kalimantan, two Dayak youths were stabbed by a group of Madurese seeking revenge for being humiliated at a previous concert after 'bothering' a Dayak girl. Rumours spread that the two Dayaks had been killed, although actually they had been treated and released from the hospital that night. A mob of local Dayaks demanding legal and customary compensations stormed into Sanggau Ledo, where the Madurese were being held. When the police refused to produce the accused, the crowd rioted and burned Madurese houses. Many people went to Samalantan and other parts of Sambas where

Madurese lived, and did the same. Within a week, some 6000 Madurese from Sanggau Ledo had been evacuated and sheltered in police and military posts in Singkawang City (HRW, 1997; CPSM, 1997; Peluso and Harwell, 2001).

Within a week, police and local 'leaders' had calmed things down and a few peace ceremonies were held. As one KOMNASHAM (Indonesian Human Rights Commission) investigator stated later, many Dayaks were willing to accept the peace offering and stop fighting (CPSM, 1997). However, over the next few weeks in January, a number of Madurese actions enraged Dayaks, leading to accusations of Madurese not keeping the peace as agreed. Despite the peace agreements, Madurese had set up roadblocks on the main thoroughfares, pulling people they identified as Dayaks out of cars and buses to kill them. One man killed in this process was both the administrative head of a Tebas village and a customary (*adat*) Dayak leader. He had famously forbidden anyone from his mixed-ethnicity village to engage in violence at home or outside. The news of his murder and of killings of other Dayaks at Madurese roadblocks generated massive unrest. Groups of Dayaks responded by travelling long distances to Madurese neighbourhoods, burning houses and killing the occupants. They referred to these actions as retaliations for Madurese violence against Dayaks and as a way to preserve Dayak honour (HRW, 1997; Harwell, 2001) – even when 'Dayaks' of one linguistic group travelled to the traditionally recognised territories of other linguistic groups.

Again, in retaliation, at the end of January, a group of Madurese tried to set fire to the Pontianak office of a Dayak-Catholic non-governmental organisation. They also broke into an adjacent dormitory housing female Dayak students and stabbed two young Dayak women, though not fatally. Although police had arrested the alleged culprits, Dayak resentment over the accumulating and highly visible incidents grew (HRW, 1997; Harwell, 2001). Madurese roadblocks were ongoing and the Madurese assault on Dayaks' collective honour became thematic in discussions of what led to the subsequent communal warfare. Reporting on these incidents, whether journalistic, official, or by the people themselves, all used the ethnic terms of Dayak and Madurese to refer to the parties

involved, even though from time to time, some reportage would refer to someone as 'half' this or that.

On 2 February, enraged by what they saw as the government's unwillingness to stop Madurese violence against Dayaks, Dayaks passed the 'red bowl' (*mangkok merah*), a Kenayatan and Salako Dayak tradition for calling allies to war when a whole community feels threatened. Although who actually ordered it is unclear, the powerful symbol was no longer meaningful for only Salako and Kenayatan. As far away as Sarawak, Dayaks of all language groups, even Iban, their former 'enemies', were called and either came down to the sites of conflict or claimed to be 'standing by'. Salako and Kenayatan Dayaks went to the hills to undergo pre-war ritual protections unseen for 30 years – at which time they had been dredged up from the turn of the previous century to mobilise people to evict Chinese. Local shamans performed territorial protection rituals encompassing everyone in a region and people who might be engaged in fighting sought ritual protection of their bodies. Men and some women, many of them under 35 but some older, thronged into the main streets. Groups travelled across the region on foot, in vans and trucks, or on motorcycles, seeking out known Madurese settlements and shops. They set up 'command posts' in schools and at strategic intersections to protect the rural interior they had come to think of as Dayak territory.

The geography of violence was significant; territory was actively produced and indirectly emerged through actions and discussion. The sheer number of engaged Dayaks enabled them to control access to the interior, setting up their own roadblocks and checkpoints to 'sniff out' and kill Madurese attempting to travel through. Madurese operated from and within urban areas. Madurese made up only 2% of the province; most reportedly lived in cities (HRW, 1997). Some villages were perceived or constructed as 'more Dayak' than others. Dayaks living in Singkawang and in mixed villages along the road took refuge in Tembe and other interior villages east of the violently constructed rural-urban border. To local people the border's location was clear, mapped precisely at the spot beyond which Chinese had been officially forbidden to trade⁶ during the late Sukarno regime and to live during the Suharto era. That border

visibly marked off territories with violent histories with another violent symbol: the national military base located there.

The western districts of West Kalimantan became a war zone. The production of violent territories was explicitly 'Dayak' in the most gruesome ways possible. These 'Dayak' ways were not associated only with Salako and Kenayasn traditions from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when headhunting was more common throughout Borneo; headhunting was the practice that made them all 'Dayaks', according to colonial-era observers (e.g., Veth, 1854–1856; Roth, 1896). Dayaks from some areas were said to be in 'the killing trance', possessed by ancestral warrior spirits. Many carried amulets to protect themselves, hide themselves or give themselves courage to do things about which most had only heard stories. Crosses as well as other symbolic objects were carried for protection. At the same time, nationalist fervour was tied up with the performance of 'Dayak' violence. Crowds sometimes sang Indonesian revolutionary songs (*Bambu Runcing*) and demanded justice and retribution. Some demanded the Indonesian government heed their demands; others declared this was not the government's business.

For the next few months, Dayaks raged through the region. Although some Madurese retaliation continued, most Madurese fled. They were put up in makeshift camps and shelters in Pontianak and Singkawang. Some returned to Sambas and along the Singkawang-Bengkayang road several months after. Dayaks in that region said they had no problem with them returning in peace. Yet Dayaks in Sanggau refused to let any Madurese return.⁷ They built rough wooden structures on burnt-over land, and occupied the abandoned plots, which were visible signs of (re)-claiming. So were the swiddens beside them.

1967–1974: Racialised state violence – the war on Communism and Chinese-ness

The violent events of 1967–1968 took place in a much different political-economic era, but took remarkably similar forms. The briefest background on the events takes us to West Kalimantan in the mid-1960s as the primary staging ground for the low-impact war between Indo-

nesia and Malaysia, called 'Confrontation'. Denouncing the new nation-state of Malaysia (including the states of Sarawak and Sabah on Borneo) as neo-colonial, then-President Sukarno trained rebel communist troops from Sarawak known as the Sarawak Peoples' Guerrilla Army (*Pasukan Guerrilla Rakyat Sarawak* or PGRS) in camps around the international border (a strategic territory that extended to Sambas and Singkawang). PGRS included people of Iban, other Dayak, Malay, and mixed descent, but the army claimed they were Sarawak Chinese. They went to the forest along the international border to fight against Malaysian (and British and Gurka) troops.⁸

In 1966, after Suharto rose to power, he ended the Confrontation and shifted the politics of violence in West Kalimantan inward.⁹ Suharto did not oppose the Federation of Malaysia as Sukarno did, but rather allied with that new nation-state and its international supporters (US, Britain) to eliminate alleged communists and supporters from the border regions in particular. Communist and other left-wing parties and associations were criminalised and the troops in West Kalimantan were purged. The period was part of an Indonesian army operation, during which fresh troops were sent from Java, known as 'Operation Clean Sweep' (Soemadi, 1974).

All rural Chinese were essentially scapegoated for communist activity. Many Chinese immigrants over the past 200 years had intermarried with Dayaks and created a highly mixed populace. This confounded the army's ability to identify people as distinctly Chinese or Dayak, particularly in some districts such as those along the Singkawang-Bengkayang road. While some people demonstrated a predominant ethnicity through their everyday practices and political associations,¹⁰ some refused to be characterised as one or the other – and Javanese and Sundanese soldiers could not tell who was who.¹¹ The problem was that they were supposed to mobilise people who were Dayaks against those who were Chinese, to clean the region of both communist 'fish' and their 'waters'. One's ethnic identity, therefore, became a life or death decision.

The military used the categories 'Dayak' and 'Chinese' to indicate loyal citizens and communist enemies, respectively, during this period. An account in the *Far Eastern Eco-*

nomie Review, for example, reported that the summer months of 1967 were 'filled with panic' for the Dayaks who lived near the Sarawak border, due to PGRS violence against Dayaks and against military targets (Feith, 1968; see also Soemadi, 1974). In retrospect, it has been suggested that this anti-Dayak violence was staged, including an infamous, murderous attack of allegedly Chinese PGRS on Dayaks in Taum, a village near Ledo.¹²

Not long after the Taum killings, from October 1967 to January 1968, Dayaks 'demonstrated'. They evicted rural Chinese from their homes, fields, markets and businesses (Feith, 1968; Rachman *et al.*, 1970; Coppel, 1983). As they had been told to expect, the signal to begin was a Dayak symbol. It came in mid-October, when the former Dayak governor of West Kalimantan, Oevang Oeray, gave the order to send out the red bowl or *mangkok merah*.¹³ For the first few weeks, evictions were relatively peaceful. Later evictions became increasingly violent as they spread through Sambas, Pontianak and Sanggau, engulfing the hundreds of settlements where Chinese and mixed Chinese-Dayak settlers had transformed the rural landscape since the eighteenth century.

The early evictions in the Singkawang-Bengkayang area and in Pontianak-Sanggau were less violent than those subsequently enacted in the interior areas, east of the north-south coast road (Soemadi, 1974: 92–93; Van Hulten, 1992: 280–281); Author interviews, 1998). Some Chinese turned their homes and possessions over to Dayak or other Indonesian neighbours for safe-keeping, not knowing they would not be allowed to return.¹⁴ Others ran into the forests and plantations, fearful but hoping to maintain a watch on their land, homes and possessions (Peluso and Harwell, 2001). From November to January, crowds of Dayak men and boys, wearing red headbands and carrying elongated bush knives (*mandau*), homemade hunting guns and military-issue firearms, violently evicted all remaining 'Chinese' from the rural areas (van Hulten, 1992). As would be the case in the 1990s, the Demonstrations were intended to demonstrate Dayak-ness at its most fearsome and 'primitive' (Peluso and Harwell, 2001; Peluso, 2003).

Rachman *et al.* (1970) and other military and journalistic accounts claimed that the Dayak

Demonstrations were a 'fortunate turn of events', implying that they were spontaneous.¹⁵ A subsequent military report four years later reported otherwise, stating that 'some Dayak leaders were visited by the Pangdam of Tanjungpura Military Region XII and given . . . orders to attack PGRS-PARAKU' because 'they were communists without religion', and 'Sarawak Chinese threatening the Indonesian national security'. He said they told Dayak leaders, 'in any case . . . rather than become passive victims [of the inevitable conflict] better to be active victims [to go down fighting] and join [the army] in trying to crush PGRS and PARAKU' (Soemadi, 1974: 93). These statements match comments made by people today recounting those times and how they 'decided' to mobilise.

Most estimates of deaths ranged from 300 to 500 (*Kompas*, November 1967; Coppel, 1983: 145; HRW, 1997). Many thousands more became refugees: Feith (1968: 134) reported some 53 000 of them by the end of December. Later estimates go beyond those, with Soemadi (1974) estimating 75 000; Douglas Kammen (pers. comm., 2000) has estimated nearly 117 000.¹⁶ By early 1968, when the collective violence had subsided, only a few people with recognised Chinese heritage remained in the rural areas of West Kalimantan, generally hidden by other local people. Some PGRS were still hidden in the forest.

Militarised violence continued until 1974 and local people were forced to participate in it, as the military aimed to clear all PGRS – by definition now all Chinese – from their hiding places in forests and rubber gardens. Dayak ethnic symbols were used in this endeavour as well. More elite troops came to West Kalimantan, setting up camp in interior villages, often occupying rubber warehouses or former Chinese residences. Dayaks were taken as 'trackers' into the forest – they were racially glossed as 'forest (or jungle) people' – and forced to walk in front of and behind the troops searching for PGRS. The military appointed men from each village to decide who would go into the forest with the soldiers each day; others guarded prisoners and patrolled the villages at night. Under this rubric of racialised fear, it became critical to demonstrate a Dayak pedigree, even if it was being constructed on a daily basis. Despite all

this, interviews in the 1990s revealed that during the violence and its aftermath Dayaks hid some Chinese and mixed Chinese-Dayak villagers. One man, a village head from an interior site, told me his Chinese wife had hidden in a small attic, never revealed to the army by the other villagers. This was not an easy task throughout the six-year military 'occupation'. Feith (1968: 134) reported some 1500 of the earliest refugees returned to their regions in the early months of 1968, and were required to report to village leaders. The new conditions established their identities permanently as Chinese and the leaders as Dayak, though at times individuals in both groups would reveal their mixed Chinese-Dayak identities.

Territorialised violence

Figure 1 shows that the patterns of movement and sites of major confrontations across western West Kalimantan overlapped in the 1990s with those of the 1960s. Although the military was not involved directly in the 1990s violence, they were a shadow presence, from which Dayaks had learned some tactics from operations in the 1960s. As violence began and spread, they established 'command posts' (POSKO) as centres of information and patrolled the entry roads into their own villages. The tactic of travelling away from one's own village to participate in violence was something seen in both periods as well (van Hulten, 1992; Author interviews, October 1998).

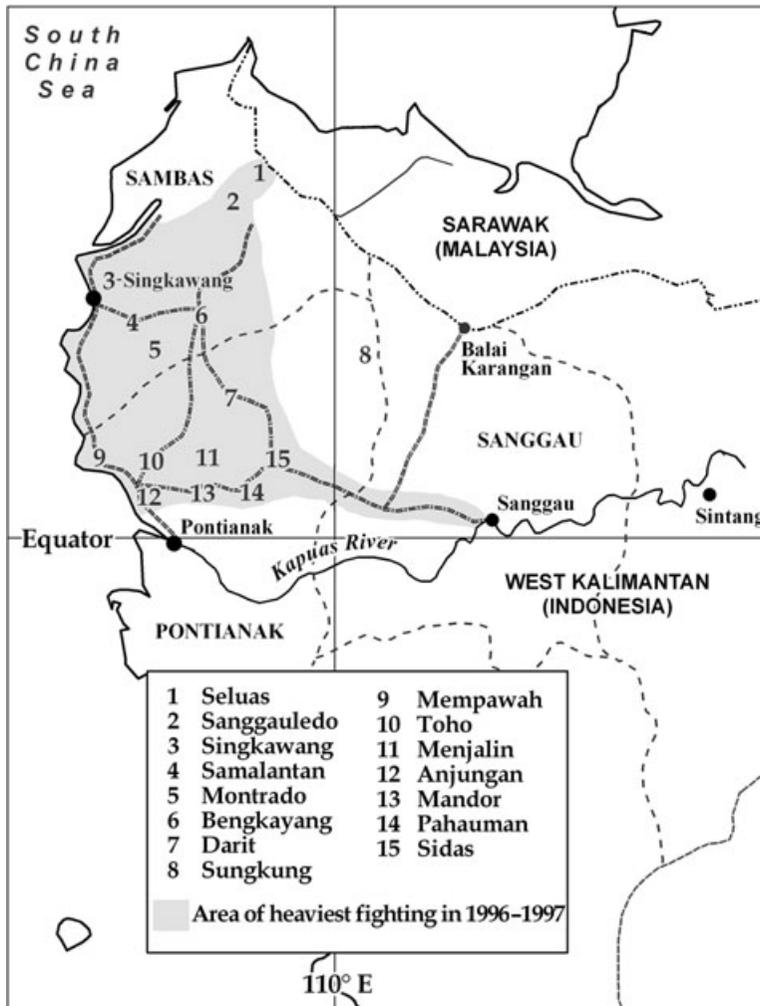


Figure 1. Sites of major violence, 1967-68 and 1996-97

Dayaks enacted no violence against the Javanese or Sundanese migrants who lived in and dominated the vast resettlement areas, though many of these transmigrants ran away during the events. Nor was violence used to challenge other state symbols of power, such as the forests, administrative offices, and so on during the events of 1996–1997. They only went after the group they had constructed as having perpetrated multiple acts of violence against the Dayak community – the Madurese – where they lived and worked in many of the same spaces that had been occupied by Chinese residents – 30 years earlier. Was the goal or the long-term effect of these evictions a desire to claim the once-Chinese land from the Madurese? Did their avoidance of ‘state spaces’ signal a continuing alliance with the state? Was the practice of violence believed to be ‘OK’ because of the ways the military had mobilised them in the same spaces before? The answers to these questions are too complex to answer here.¹⁷

What we do know is that majority and minority politics were being reconfigured geographically through the violence in 1996–1997, as they had been in the wake of the 1960s Demonstrations and through the structural transformations of the New Order regime.¹⁸ And in both cases, the performance of violence, or at least public support of it, illustrated one’s identity as ‘Dayak’.

Understanding regional violence as territorial politics

In the 1960s, the government’s justification for the violent evictions of the 50 000–100 000 or more rural West Kalimantan Chinese drew on two national policies. The first was the criminalisation of the left after Suharto’s rise to power. The second was the Presidential Decree, PP10/1959, that forbade Chinese from conducting trade or other business in ‘interior’ areas. Under Sukarno, this law had only been minimally implemented in West Kalimantan, indicating as much the relative indifference of local officials and non-Chinese residents to its enforcement, as the difficulty of enforcing it in rural districts with high Chinese populations (Heidhues, 2003: 234).

Nevertheless, the local history of Chinese and Dayak relations complicated these two tasks. The

army was ordered to evict tens of thousands of rural Chinese because they were assumed to be sympathetic to communist fighters from both Sarawak (PGRS) and West Kalimantan. Yet, local Chinese supported a variety of political parties and organisations. Some were citizens of Indonesia, some were not; some supported the KMT and Taiwan, others favoured the People’s Republic of China, and many were apolitical (Coppel, 1983). Their economic status ranged from very rich to middle class, to the poorest, propertyless, agricultural labourers and coolies. As mentioned previously, many had long-term connections and social relations with local Dayaks, with whom many had intermarried. Some, after generations of residence, spoke only a Chinese dialect, others were conversant in Chinese or Dayak languages, and some could operate in market Malay. They came from different parts of China. In other words, they were very diverse.

Farmers, rubber tappers and agricultural labourers, small shopkeepers and petty miners defined by the census as Chinese lived throughout the rural western districts and made up 17–25% of the province’s population (Heidhues, 2003: 212–213). The Singkawang-Bengkayang area had a far larger percentage – 40–60% – with nearly 74 000 people defined as Chinese living in the Singkawang subdistrict alone – more than any other subdistrict in West Kalimantan (Heidhues, 2003: 212). Although colonial law had not allowed them to ‘own’ land, many held long-term leases on irrigated rice land their ancestors had converted from peat forest or swamp; others farmed without formal papers (Heidhues, 2003: 158–160; see also (Cator, 1936; Ozinga, 1940); Author interviews, 1990–1998).¹⁹ After Indonesian independence, the status of their land was not clear, though one government report stated that all land leased by the Chinese was to be converted within five years of the passing of the Basic Agrarian Law in 1960. Yet, while Chinese made up a significant part of the rural population, they were not all communists, nor had all communists lived in the Chinese districts.²⁰

Beyond the military post at Koelor – the violently symbolised rural-urban border – most evicted Chinese living in urban camps or residences were not allowed to return to their rural homes and properties. Huge tracts of improved land were thus forcibly abandoned. Dayaks and

other locals – Malays and Madurese – claimed or were allocated the land. Even with literally free access, they could not fill all the abandoned territory.

The same year that violence against the West Kalimantan Chinese was mounted, 1967, the Indonesian Forest Act was passed, enabling the Indonesian government to reserve land as national forests for the first time. They neither researched nor settled property claims, but simply appropriated huge proportions of the provinces' land for the state. The government also passed laws enabling foreign investment. These laws changed the status of a great deal of land considered customary land, as local people had often planted, protected or otherwise managed these forests. They were allocated as timber concessions (for military and corporate exploitation), protection forests or nature reserves. Some were slated for conversion to tree crop plantations. Sambas was one of the first areas carved into working concessions, many allocated to military businesses. The government also established transmigration (resettlement) projects, bringing in thousands of Javanese, Sundanese and other colonists from the more heavily populated areas of Indonesia. Within a decade or so, these areas became not local but national spaces.

After 1967, both forestry and resettlement programmes brought large numbers of non-Dayaks into the region, making Dayaks more of a minority category in this region once again. By the time Dayak–Madurese violence erupted in 1996–1997, the major roads had been paved and more secondary and tertiary roads transected the former forests and swidden fallows, now largely converted to state-controlled and allocated monocultural or mixed plantations or to transmigration settlements.

In and adjacent to Tembe village, the government sited a police transmigration site (TransPol), an army transmigration site (TransAD) and a rubber plantation established for mostly Sundanese transmigrants, all on land abandoned by Chinese in 1967. Madurese who had been 'local', already resident in the 1960s, had also appropriated or been allocated Chinese houses and shops in the aftermath of the 1967–1968 evictions. Spontaneous migrants, including a surge of Madurese, came to West Kalimantan to work on the roads and other development

projects after 1967 in the booming timber economy, working as part of the great counter-insurgency/development effort that characterised Suharto's 'New Order'.²¹ Newcomers bought, borrowed or rented land from their Madurese relatives and predecessors, or from local Dayaks. By the 1990s, Madurese in rural West Kalimantan were small farmers, petty shopkeepers, transport operators and road workers.

While no comprehensive survey has been done, considerable anecdotal evidence and observations in the area between Singkawang, Montrado and Bengkayang suggest that Madurese patterns of land acquisition, sources of land and a common tendency for newcomers to cluster with family or friends, led to the establishment of predominantly or exclusively Madurese neighbourhoods within and between villages (Sudagung, 2001: 105). This was the pattern in Tembe. Given that rural land became available in this once-crowded region only after thousands of Chinese-occupied houses and lands were abandoned, this is not surprising. These localised territorial patterns fed into national aspirations, in that they inserted other Indonesians into the Dayak landscape.

Tensions around the multiethnic territoriality emerged, however. Dayaks claimed that even Dayaks from other areas, with different customary practices, were expected to respect the local *adat*. When asked the reasons for the violence, it was common for Dayaks to cite a long list of grievances consisting of unresolved violent wrongs inflicted on Dayaks by Madurese since the late 1960s, ending with the attacks on Dayaks in January 1997. The list covered 7–12 murders, rapes and stabbings, some of which had been tried in court and punished by the government and others which had not.²² None had been resolved by customary or *adat* restitution, a ritual settlement for the spiritual and symbolic imbalances caused by the murders. It was significant to Dayaks that local Javanese and Chinese were willing to respect customary Dayak practices when they were involved in a murder or accidental death – in car accidents, for example. While *adat* was more symbolic than religious in the 1990s, Madurese refusal to set things right in this traditional Dayak manner kept isolated violent incidents alive in people's minds and could be used to incite anti-Madurese action or feelings.

Madurese, on the other hand, claimed that it was neither appropriate nor necessary for criminal individuals to subject themselves to the customary practices of local Dayaks; criminality was a matter for the (national) police (HRW, 1997; Peluso and Harwell, 2001). As Indonesian citizens, they did not need to recognise customary rights and the practices of informal ethnic authority – these were no longer recognised in Indonesian land laws that had done away with colonial structures. Madurese did not view an abstract ethnic collectivity such as ‘the Madurese community’ as having authority or control over individuals’ behaviour. For Dayaks, these contrasting views and the willingness of Javanese and Chinese to respect local practice put the Madurese refusals into stark relief. Dayaks viewed government handling of Madurese murderers as trivialising, as murderers went to jail for only a few years. Oddly, some Dayaks – specifically those victimised by Madurese or the army – called on these same government authorities to enforce their human rights; as noted by KOMNASHAM investigators (CPSM, 1997: 16).

It needs to be remembered here that by the mid-1990s, new structural changes were being anticipated as Suharto aged – but they were not yet in place. The 1996–1997 violence happened *before* the regime changed, before the Asian Financial Crisis, and before the massive structural adjustments applied. Neither decentralisation nor democracy, nor the subsequent conflicts over district territorial control had been realised or envisioned as yet.

This section has shown that the politics of territory were being interpreted through lenses associated with opposing notions of regional and central authority, jurisdiction, and ethnic identity. The regional was not just spatial but culturalised. Madurese felt authorised by Indonesian state narratives, particularly those of the president, which saw non-Chinese Indonesians as ‘*pribumi*’, with ‘ancestral’ rights to live anywhere within national boundaries. Their view fitted and contributed to the creation of new conceptions of majorities, minorities, and territorial rights based on national citizenship. For Dayaks, as we see in the next section, their status as native or indigenous to Kalimantan did not go away, even if they were part of the category of Indonesian citizens. Indigeneity was connected to territorial claims.

Hardening ethnicities

Violence has helped naturalise and harden categories of ethnic difference in this situation in new ways. Ethnic difference was constructed – and lived – through government policies, colonial and contemporary law, through integration into a post-colonial national state, through scholarly and popular writing, as well as through explicit efforts to revitalise and reconfigure ‘culture’ (Harwell, 2001). Because ethnicity or ‘race’ was the basis by which territory, authority, and land rights were allocated under Dutch colonial legal pluralism, territory and ethnicity had become conjoined in new and unprecedented ways, most importantly in the ways individuals were allowed access to land or governed.

Notions of ‘majorities’, ‘minorities’, ‘indigenous’ and ‘migrants’ are territorially scaled. As citizens of Indonesia, Dayaks – even as a single group – are a minority, and their experience of national history has been as such. Within the province of West Kalimantan, Dayaks are constructed as a majority population – though they are not a numerical majority. They are one of the island’s two groups considered ‘indigenous’, in large part because of Dutch legal categories that defined Dayaks and Malays as *Inlanders* or natives. In much of the Singkawang-Bengkayang area, however, Dayaks have not always been a numerical majority; since at least the second half of the eighteenth century, Chinese and those of mixed Chinese-Dayak heritage were. Although I have referred to this situation several times in this piece, it will be useful to provide a bit more background on this critical aspect of the story of ethnic identity and its construction.

Tembe was on the edges of the most famous Bornean gold mining areas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sites of major gold rushes.²³ Working with their children, Khek or Hakka speaking Chinese converted most of the land that is today wet rice fields from forest and swamp, expanded the production of coconuts and copra well beyond that started by another migrant group (Bugis) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, turned pepper into one of the most profitable exports of the district, and planted rubber extensively after it was introduced into the area (Cator, 1936; Ozinga, 1940;

Yuan, 2000; Heidhues, 2003). Chinese migrants formed *hui* and later *kongsi* – political associations that effectively governed everyday life in much of the region that is today Sambas, Sanggau and Pontianak. Several Salako long-houses fell within an area encompassed by the Hang Moei Kongsi, with whom they had close relationships (Yuan, 2000; Heidhues, 2003).

For at least a hundred years of the initial migrations, the only Hakka to come were men. Thus, all children born to first-generation Chinese fathers were of mixed Dayak–Chinese parentage – with Dayak mothers. Subsequent generations were mixed as well. All around the Raya-Pasi mountain complex, in the heart of the old Hang Moei Kongsi, there developed a new word, *Bendi*, for those who were so ethnically mixed that they could not or did not want to be called either Chinese or Dayak (Veth, 1854–1856).²⁴ Identities were in practice much more fluid than the categories ‘Chinese’ or ‘Dayak’ could express. Colonial racial categories such as ‘Chinese’, ‘Dayak’, ‘Malay’ and others became ‘real’ and hardened through colonial practices of taxation, enrolment on land registers, the appointment of government authorities for each ‘group’: e.g. (Kapitan Cina for the Chinese and ‘Singo’ for the Dayaks, Sultans for the Malays), census categories, and so on.²⁵ And, of course, many everyday practices were taken to be Chinese or Dayak.²⁶

Under colonialism, the legal stakes of being defined Chinese or Dayak were high: Chinese was a legal definition to which no land rights were attached. Despite their presence long before the signing of short treaties and the establishment of colonial rule by the Dutch, once treaties were signed (1849) and the Agrarian Law of 1870 took effect, anyone defined as Chinese was considered permanently alien. But this legality did not affect everyday practice, as most people kept farming the land their ancestors had converted, perhaps because their access to it had long been recognised by local authorities of the time, whether by Salako or Kenayaln Dayak leaders or Malay sultans. ‘Natives’ or ‘Inlanders’ had different formal rights of access to land, and were subjected to indirect rule, which granted them ‘customary’ authority over their territories and lands. ‘Dayaks’ and ‘Malays’ were the only two

‘Native’ categories in this region. However, by a 1916 Regulation, Chinese were allowed/required to obtain long-term land leases for their farms, if they were resident in Native States, such as (the Sultanate of) Sambas.²⁷

Drawing on colonial legal and ethnographic practices, the differences between Madurese and Dayaks were constructed in relation to their different islands of origin, with different languages, cultural traditions and practices. In West Kalimantan, Madurese – even those born locally – are thus glossed as migrants and Dayaks as indigenous. These migrant and local categories in and of themselves are insufficient to explain violence, however. For example, Malays and Dayaks have historically had greater tensions between them even though both were defined as Natives, while Javanese, Sundanese and even Chinese are glossed as migrants but were not involved in the violence in the 1990s. Despite these obvious problems, writers who take ethnic identities for granted have depicted an almost naturalised ‘hatred’ between Madurese and Dayaks. This has led analysts to explain the violence between these two groups in terms of cultural incompatibility, just as it was claimed that Chinese were separate from and exploitative of Native interests. This acceptance of pre-existing, primordial ethnic identity leads to the conclusion that ‘ethnic elites’ fanned the smoldering hatred of racialised masses and mobilised them against each other.

Each of these analytics, found in western sources, articulates with local ideas and further contributes to the general hardening of ethnic identities. The differences between these ideas and their actual relationships with people, however, are significant. For example, some say, ‘Madurese do not want to adapt to our ways; they disrespect our adat. They prefer living by themselves and not joining in’. Yet when asked about (the few) Madurese they know who have married Dayaks or abandoned some of their religious practices, to eat pork or gamble, for instance, they acknowledge that some Madurese do adapt to local ways. Dayaks in Tembe, particularly the better-off ones, generally scoff at the idea that their ‘group’ might be jealous of Madurese (as some newspaper accounts stated) and point out that they have plenty of land. More importantly to them,

Chinese, Malays and Javanese occupy more positions of power than Madurese in government and business. Yet at an intersection along the Singkawang-Bengkayang road, not far from Tembe, where Madurese shops and eating kiosks had once occupied a profitable spot taken over from Chinese entrepreneurs of a few decades before, Dayaks have proudly pointed out that Dayaks are now running small businesses there. Finally, on the question of human rights, several people asked me in 1998 why no one from the Human Rights Commission had visited to document the violations of Dayak human rights, either historically by individual Madurese over time or by the army in the recent mass violence. These people, usually victims of crimes or families of victims, were unaware that Dayaks were being depicted as violators of human rights, not victims.

What locals said about Chinese, in reflecting on their pre-Demonstration relations, was that Chinese were *'sobat'* or close friends. It was the army that could not tell Dayaks and Chinese apart, and thus had to use tricks and violence.²⁸ The soldiers and Special Forces were outsiders, like the Indonesian government and the Indonesian public. The army, like the Indonesian government, imagined that *'pribumi'* – or non-Chinese Indonesians – would and should prefer living together. But local Dayaks knew the long intermingled histories of Chinese and Dayaks in the region, and that these had differed from Java and elsewhere in Indonesia. Madurese may have been *pribumi* but this was seen as irrelevant. Their failure to respect local practice was seen as a betrayal, just as during Operation Clean Sweep, the false accusation that Chinese PGRS had killed Taum Dayaks was seen as betrayal. On an even larger scale, the government stealing land and authority from locals was also a betrayal, as was its failure to appropriately punish violent criminals. So there has been a constant production and reproduction of *'us'* and *'them'*. Seemingly everything played into these binary conceptions, hardening ethnic categories. This did not cause violence *per se*, though it aggravated relations and is used in both the justification and analysis of violence. These ethnic categories both shaped the targeting of violence and helped produce the contemporary ethnic identities of the opposing *'groups'*.

The view from a village

The violence in Tembawang Besar

It is difficult to say exactly when people in Tembe learned of the stabbing incident in Seluas, or the mob scene a few days later, at the end of 1996. But the news likely arrived almost immediately. A number of young men from the village drove passenger vans along the Seluas-Singkawang route. Drivers would have passed on news of the mounting agitation in Seluas as soon as the early van returned from its morning run.

Within days of the first reports, other news, well-peppered with rumours, began to fly. As a precautionary measure, the men in the village set up a *'post'* (*'Pos'*) at the intersection of the main road and the hardened dirt road that led into the village. They set up iron drums to block unwanted visitors and posted 24-hour sentries. At the *warung* (kiosk) opposite the intersection, other men, young and old, hung around, keeping each other company and listening for other news.

Things grew tenser less than a week later when a large group of Madurese youths noisily rode their motorbikes into Singkawang, circling the market place. A crowd of Madurese went into several residential areas of Singkawang, including Roban, an ethnically mixed neighbourhood on the edge of town. Fearing the worst, some Dayak families and other Roban residents sought sanctuary at the Singkawang army post. Pak L's family, originally from Tembe, stayed at the police station for nine days.

Through January, the news at the Tembe intersection was of similar patrols of men protecting their villages, and of the places where Dayaks or Madurese were burning down each others' houses and killing people. Stories progressively brought violence closer to Tembe. Dayaks' houses in Singkawang were being attacked; Madurese *ojek* (motorcycle taxis) drivers kidnapped girls from the adjacent village. While most of these incidents were documented, they gained purchase through the addition of fearful rumours that truckloads or motorcycle gangs of Madurese were planning an onslaught along the Singkawang-Bengkayang road or that Madurese were targeting churches and chapels between Singkawang and Bengkayang. Months later, one

(Chinese) Singkawang priest lamented that the rumours were so powerful that he risked his own safety to dispel them, even when angry mobs gathered to act on them. The real events made the rumours more believable.²⁹

Thus, a great deal of fear burst forth when, in the early morning hours on 2 February, the security gongs sounded loudly in Tembe. Some people said that the *mangkok merah* (the red bowl) had arrived, but no one admitted to actually seeing it. The adults who could keep their wits about them collected their most important possessions (ID cards, land certificates, gold or small heirlooms), gathered up the children and elderly, and ran to seek refuge as far into the village interior as possible, just as they had when the melee in the 1960s began. Women, children and the more infirm older men stayed in the houses; men and boys gathered to discuss protecting the village. People brought rice and other food stores to the houses where they took refuge, or shared the food of their hosts. During January, local and 'higher up' shamans had already performed protective territorial rituals for the village and its surroundings, but some men wanted personal protection. Whether they were protecting the village or travelling to fight elsewhere, most underwent ritual protection performed at the ancestral graves on the hillside.

The gongs confirmed the established belief that imminent danger was upon the village. The day before, during another riot in Roban, the houses of Pak L. and other Dayaks related to Tembe villagers had been looted and burned. Roban residents ran to the police station for a second time, staying for nearly six weeks. Adding to the tense atmosphere was an incident that happened that morning. A van driver from Tembe was taking his children to school in Singkawang and a young Madurese in the marketplace threw a sickle through a back window of his van, nicking his daughter. The driver sped back to Tembe, left his children with his parents, and raced away to 'find people that he could hurt'.³⁰ Another woman from the village had been in the market the same day and reported seeing Madurese youths 'swinging sickles around their heads'. These incidents and their telling reinforced convictions that Madurese were about to attack Dayak villages. When the van driver returned from his rampage, he

exhorted others to join him in attacking a Madurese neighbourhood in another part of Roban.

After the ceremonies that morning, truckloads of Dayak men from interior areas, wearing red headbands and carrying whatever weapons they had, rumbled into the village. Some Tembe villagers jumped onto the trucks and headed towards Madurese settlements elsewhere; they did not want to burn down *local* Madurese houses. Several trucks turned up a road leading to Roban hill. The men jumped out and started to climb the hill behind the Madurese neighbourhood. Before they reached the houses, however, they were stopped by soldiers coming from the other direction. Some they knew by name; witnesses later said they all were Madurese. According to those who saw the confrontation from the hill, the soldiers stopped the group at gunpoint. Those who could run back up the hill, while the men in front were forced to stop. Following standard procedure, the soldiers told the men to put down their weapons, strip to their underclothes and kneel with their hands behind their heads. Once this was done – and against procedure – the soldiers sprayed them with bullets, killing all those in the front. The soldiers then walked over to the rice paddies and sprayed bullets where others had taken cover. The shooting did not stop until a group of Dayak soldiers ran up and told their colleagues 'Shoot us before shooting them [the village boys]'. The wounded and dead were then rounded up and taken away.³¹

Three young men from Tembe were killed in this incident, including the van driver who had gathered and led them. The violence was now felt by Tembe villagers as immediate and personal. Villagers felt threatened not only by the prospect of Madurese attacks on the village, but also as potential targets of the army. No one recognised the irony of their outrage that the soldiers had stopped them from carrying out their intended violent attack on a Madurese hamlet. Instead, Dayak stories emphasised the soldiers' Madurese identities, the context of being at war, and outrage at the 'interference' of the government, particularly when they had not sufficiently intervened when Dayaks had been killed or attacked.

Tembe Dayaks associated these killings with their own earlier experiences with Madurese

violence. In the early 1980s, three Madurese, some of whom lived in Tembe, killed a Dayak man from a closely related village,³² while he was in Tembe. The Madurese killers were captured, tried and sent to jail for a year and a half, after which time they returned. Not only were their sentences short but also they refused to sponsor 'atonement' or 'cooling' adat ceremonies for either the man's family or the village.

Knowing that many Dayaks held all Madurese accountable for the crimes of a few, Madurese villagers were also afraid when they heard the warning gongs on 2 February. Yet, some ran for protection to the Dayak village head's house. He and another prominent villager hid Madurese in their houses along the main road. Later they used a vehicle from the psychiatric hospital to transport the hidden Madurese to safety in the city. Another villager provided shelter for a Madurese man married to a Dayak woman living in the interior of the village.

One of these men described how he handled the situation:

I hid them inside a bedroom in my house. They had to stay quietly in there, and I had to go out into the street. I didn't want anyone coming into the house. When the trucks of people from the interior arrived, they stopped at the intersection near my house. I gave them [boxes of bottled] water from my sister's kiosk, and yelled 'Long live the Dayaks' (*Hidup Dayak*) while raising my fist. Once they left I could check on the Madurese. When [the village head] ordered the [hospital] vehicle brought around to my house, we snuck them into the back and went with them to Singkawang.

Local geography and personal connections had facilitated this situation. The sister of the man quoted worked in the psychiatric hospital, as had their late father. The village head lived a hundred yards from the hospital, on the edge of a cluster of Madurese houses. These men had both the physical access and political stature that enabled them to help those seeking refuge to escape.

All three of the men acting to hide or evacuate these Madurese would have to be categorised as 'local elites': a village head, a relatively well-off son of a prominent church leader (deceased) and a local employee of the forest

service. They brokered their 'elite' and Dayak identities to drive into the town without being challenged or stopped, avoiding fatal consequences. They had to show solidarity with the Dayak cause by helping evacuate villagers from the roadside to the village's interior, or expressing the solidarity (*'Hidup Dayak'*) with the truckloads of Dayaks passing on their ways to and from the interior.

However, they could not have protected these local Madurese without at least the tacit support of 'ordinary' villagers. Ordinary villagers hid the man in the interior, protecting him by their silence as he remained within their midst. Anyone could have given him away. The Madurese they hid had long been considered 'one of them' – married to a local woman, he worked with them, gambled with them, even ate pork with them – so there was no question, as they told it, that they would hide him.

These stories echo accounts of the circumstances in this village during the 'Chinese Demonstrations' of 1967–1968. Tembe villagers have always insisted that Chinese from their village were neither evicted violently nor killed. Once the military's programme seemed inevitable, they told local Chinese about the evictions. Tembe's Chinese residents had time to leave and to ask their Dayak neighbours to take care of their houses and property. While property was almost invariably never returned to the Chinese owners, and they were never able to actually sell the land and property left behind, Chinese who have returned or remarried in the village and others living now in Singkawang have corroborated this version of the events.³³

Despite the violence of the Demonstration period, some Chinese (or Bendi) had chosen to stay in the village and were hidden, still claiming that they felt too 'mixed' to leave. Some stayed because they were married to Dayaks or were children or grandchildren – or both – of mixed marriages. Those who stayed during the hunts for 'communists' in the forest had to make choices about how and whether they would participate, and this led to families being split up and worse. One man, for example, worked as a village patrol (*Hansip*), enforcing curfews and travel permits. His younger brother was arrested and interrogated, tortured. Both survived the period and still live in Tembe, the former man relatively well off, the latter among

the poorest. Some of the Chinese who had left in the 1960s as children or young adults returned to live in the village after 1984, when the rules were relaxed. Only one local Chinese was killed in the forest during the military's hunt for PGRS.

Although the violence in Tembe was not initiated in or near the village in the 1960s or 1990s, villagers in the 1990s felt it was personally and directly related to them because their families living elsewhere had been harmed. Once violence directly affected the villagers, participation or overt support seemed unavoidable. In the 1960s, failure to participate could have meant death or torture at the hands of the army; in the 1990s, it meant exclusion from the Dayak community. Participation in or support of violence thus both times helped create a Dayak community out of a very mixed environment.

Still, as we saw, violent and non-violent responses varied. Some men in the early days of conflict took part in burning houses and other violence against Madurese settlements far from Tembe, joining other Dayaks in response to Madurese threats or violent acts. The majority of men, however, stayed to protect the village. Some people actively or indirectly protected Madurese; none from this village were killed. When men/boys from Tembe were killed by the army in Roban, the structural violence (exclusion from access to resources and authority) of the New Order that they had experienced in times of relative peace was felt to have taken a new form. A few villagers may have continued to fight elsewhere, but the mood had now changed, and some of the most violently inclined men were dead.

The dilemmas and practices of participation

What happened in Tembe showed that participation took a variety of forms and simultaneously presented dilemmas, especially for men expected to participate in some way to demonstrate solidarity with a communal Dayak stance. As in other villages, Tembe villagers called on whatever resources they could muster for village and personal protection, including ritual protections, Catholic prayer, and physical movement to safer interior spaces. The preoccupations with territorial village defence solved some of the dilemmas of participation.

Regional analyses have discussed how anonymity and the veneer of broad participation facilitated Dayak violence. Blame became collective based on an assumed set of patterns of participation. But anonymity also facilitated the protection of Madurese. Madurese could be protected by Dayaks who simultaneously maintained a facade of solidarity – to anonymous Dayaks travelling through. The notion that the mass was omnipotent belies the avoidance of participation in the most violent activities.

If many Tembe villagers were not seeking to take part in mass killings or to be possessed by the ancestors, why then did they participate in ritual protection ceremonies? Why did people state that the rituals made them feel strong and brave? Whence the widespread belief that those who were killed at Roban hill had not drunk enough of the ritual water, or engaged in the appropriate protective practices? The answer may be that participation in or support of the rituals was seen as an affirmation of their collective Dayak identities, of a part they were playing in constructing both present and past affinities. I once overheard a conversation in which the speakers affirmed their village's reputed bravery, their solidarity with other Dayaks, even though they had never produced a *panglima*, or general. They recognised that Dayaks from other places were much more 'ganas' or 'brutal'. Protection or insurance, not 'possession', was the way they explained the need for the rituals.³⁴ Support of violence against Madurese helped affirm Tembe residents as 'Dayak', as did participation in the protective rituals. Although some believed it would lend them protection, others simply adopted an 'it can't hurt' attitude. Multiple levels of community building were taking place.

Women's participation has also been underplayed in regional accounts of this violence. But their participation helped produce this collective, more hardened identity. Tembe villagers emphasised that although Tembe women and girls did not participate in fighting, they were involved. They made bullets from copper sheeting and gun powder. They cooked and cared for those who took refuge in Tembe. One or two women were ritual specialists who knew how to protect the village and individuals, and to *naru sumangat*, or call back the souls of those who went to fight.³⁵ Telling these stories showed that

'everyone' did their part, 'everyone' was protecting the village and 'everyone' supported the 'brave' ones who went to fight. Since some women of other villages were renowned as *pan-glima*, the comments also put Tembe's women in a favourable – and Dayak – light.

In sum, once the violence was interpreted as a 'war' that endangered all Dayaks, a symbolic meaning produced early on through the *mangkok merah's* summons, *not* participating would have been interpreted as cowardice or antipathy. Dayak solidarity through the performance of ethnicity could be shown in a range of ways: through participation in protective rituals, hiding refugees and evacuees, guarding the village posts, policing the passing cars on the road, and cooking or helping manufacture homemade bullets. 'Possession' and aggressive violence were not the only culturalised options. Even the man who incited friends and neighbours to violence has been repeatedly described as someone 'who could not be controlled', 'a hothead', 'who really liked violence', and he made no bones about being possessed. This implies that people put up with his behaviour but recognised him as unusually violent. If Dayak villagers managed to hide and move local Madurese to safety, even some known to be responsible for killing a local Dayak, not everyone mindlessly despised the Madurese. Support for the perpetrators of violence served in a familiar way to build community. To explain this further, we need to look again to the history of social relations and identity politics in this region.

The effects of violence: Racialised territories

This skeletal explanation of certain factors in the local construction of ethnicity should partly demonstrate why it was so difficult for the military in the 1960s to mobilise 'Dayaks' against 'Chinese'. At that time, it was far from clear where territorial lines between 'groups' could be drawn. Across West Kalimantan, the rural-urban landscape was reconfigured, with most Chinese confined to urban areas. For a short time, Dayaks became a local majority. The rural areas that for at least two centuries had supported predominantly Chinese and Bendi now had but a few occupants labelled Chinese. The transfer of the land was meant to reward 'good Indonesian

citizens' who had expelled the Chinese. What it also accomplished was to redefine Dayak and Chinese in new territorial terms and hide the hybridities of bodies and places from public view. Yet even these new ethnic associations were revisionist – and obfuscatory. As mentioned previously, in the aftermath of the Chinese evictions, it was not only Dayaks who took over their land. Everyone who wanted land got some.³⁶ Madurese, Malays and others in Tembe and throughout the region took over Chinese land, houses and shops.³⁷ The Department of Agrarian Affairs issued 'Certificates of Land Registration' (*Surat Tanda Bukti Pendaftaran Tanah*), but not titles. These SPT could be used towards acquiring titles, which more than half the Tembe Madurese with allocations eventually acquired.

Figure 2 is not to scale but it illustrates several points. First, it shows which Chinese land was acquired by Madurese between 1967 and 1996. On the north side of the road, these were all areas of wet rice or irrigated production; on the south side, the closest areas to the road might be in wet rice production but the southernmost edges of the holdings were planted in rubber and fruit. Second, it shows that although Madurese holdings were within the bounds of the village, they tended to cluster.

Having formal land titles protected Madurese holdings from outright expropriation in the aftermath of the second major outbreak of violence (1999) (not discussed here). Of the 10 Madurese families who owned land in Tembawang Besar at the time of the violence, only one requested to come back after 1999. The village head discouraged him (saying he could not guarantee his safety) because he was one of the murderers of the local Dayak man in the 1980s. Other Madurese landowners worked through local people to sell their land to private or public buyers. Some was used to build a local church, some was bought by the state to build a new village (*kelurahan*) office; some was bought by the forest department to build a forest-fire-watch centre. Private buyers included a Singkawang Chinese long married to the daughter of a poor Dayak woman, and a local Dayak man who had recently struck it rich in 'wild' gold mining.

While acquiring land was not a preconceived goal or motive for Tembe villagers in 1997, land redistribution significantly contributed to a new

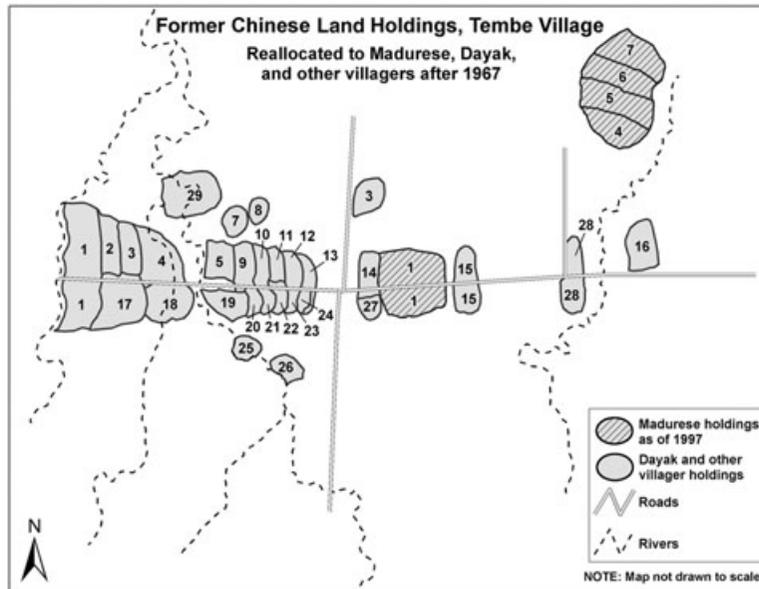


Figure 2. Chinese land holdings reallocated after 1967, Tembe Village

racialisation of the landscape. Even the uses of the purchased land for particular public purposes illustrates how land still represents local and national communities. As with the Chinese evictions, racialisation occurred through both exclusions and inclusions. As of 2004, only one man of Madurese origin remained – the one with a Dayak wife.

Conclusions

This paper has shown how territory can be produced through violence and how the specifics look different at different scales. At a local scale, we get a better sense of both process and unintended consequences. Local histories provide a means to avoid the naturalised and homogenising effects of regional stories, especially those that deal with outcomes rather than processes. Some regional accounts conflate geographically and historically specific experiences or homogenise diverse experiences, motivations and practices. People in various villages may regard themselves as part of a regional collectivity, but they show solidarity and experience community through a variety of mechanisms, even when violence underlies all of them.

Shifts in modes of rule, territorial authority and government policy – all constituting ‘shifting legal geographies’ – changed patterns of

racialisation begun under Dutch colonialism to new forms after independence. Regionally, we saw that violence was enacted in the same general sites and in many of the same ways in the 1960s and 1990s, in large part because of the territorialisations that came with the re-organisation of the landscape in the inter-war period. While Dayak–Madurese violence in the 1990s was not directed by the state, Dayaks deployed tactics and adopted justifications for their actions learned from the period of military-incited violence of the 1960s against Chinese. They acted on and moved through the landscape in much the same way, though that landscape had been radically transformed.

Some of the common outcomes of these two violent periods were the racialised redistribution of people across and outside West Kalimantan, the affirmation of broader communal identities beyond ‘local’ ones, and a faux purification and hardening of ethnic categories among people and places that had long been ‘mixed’ in one way or another. Even violent idioms and practices had their origins in a variety of disparate sources, from headhunting, to guerrilla warfare, to the Indonesian revolution and military counter-insurgency (Peluso, 2003, 2006). The Madurese–Dayak war in 1996–1997 extended and deepened the racialised landscape effects of the 1960s’ violence.

What did the view from the village tell us that differed from most regional accounts? History, geography and social relations shaped both the forms of violent participation and the patterns of interaction among people under threat during and after the violence. It showed that the villagers felt explicit personal and local connections to Madurese violence against Dayaks, which then created a connection and means of demonstrating solidarity with more violent Dayaks of the interior, even while Madurese from their own village were protected. This echoed their demonstrations of solidarity with the army in the 1960s. At that time, and to the extent possible, they tried to protect local Chinese or Bendi, hiding some and escorting others out.

The village material also showed that villagers participated in both because they believed the immediate security of the village was threatened and to show solidarity with other regional Dayaks. In the process they became 'more Dayak', illustrating how violence can help create broader ethnic communities, through varied gendered forms. For men to appear not to participate was literally impossible. Women also played active, symbolic and passive roles.

In general, the village history enabled a brief view of the reasons why ethnic subjectivities might change from relatively fluid and mixed to allegedly pure and hardened – at least in public fora. Finally, ethnic subjectivities became purified in the practice of violence, in particular through the masking of Chinese-Dayak genealogies in one era and the rejection of the Indonesian state's *pribumi* ideology in another.

Political ecology helps us understand when something is *not* the reason for conflict as well as when it is. Neither resource scarcity nor the resource curse had anything to do with Madurese–Dayak violence in this village. Moreover, elite politics were not some kind of driving force behind the participation of ordinary villagers. A more encompassing effect of the 1990s violence, which had its origins in the 1960s, was the constitution of a broad Dayak community. While the marginalisation of Dayaks during Suharto's rule may have contributed to the construction of a common Dayak identity and political community – subsuming smaller ethno-linguistic subgroups, it was their solidarity in violence that actually achieved it.

Territory and identities were produced through violence even though the violent forms were hybrid manifestations of multiple Dayak traditions, military and guerrilla practice, and violent acts of retaliation conceived in a moment. This finding raises questions about the unintended consequences of political alliance when the terms of 'alliance' involve violent authorities (the New Order state and its armed forces) constructing both their 'allies' and targets as violent ethnic actors.

Notes

- 1 I have argued elsewhere that the violence between the Dayaks and the Madurese was in part a consequence of the specific West Kalimantan experience of Suharto's New Order territorial politics – and a longer history of the region's violent politics (see Peluso and Harwell, 2001). I have also written about the particular ways that multiple incidents of violence produced ethnic territories (Peluso, 2006) and, building on the work by Harwell (2001) and myself (Peluso and Harwell, 2001), that the contemporary violence derived from the construction of violent Dayak and Madurese identities through images, texts, rumors and practices (Peluso, 2003).
- 2 This is not to say that events are predetermined by their histories, or that people do not act in ways that differ from what is expected or predicted. Rather, past events and subsequent local analyses, discussions and representations of these events both become constraints and create opportunities for what might happen in the future.
- 3 These districts have now been split up into smaller units. The same geographical region now includes the districts of Sambas, Bengkayang, Pontianak, Landak and Sanggau.
- 4 A pseudonym.
- 5 I have been working in and around this village since 1990. Subsequent to the first major violent episode, I returned to the village twice and conducted interviews directly related to it – in May 1997 and in October 1998. My last visit was in 2004.
- 6 Based on PP10/1959.
- 7 This changed with the 1999 incidents.
- 8 See Rachman *et al.* (1970) and Davidson (2002), for a more detailed discussion of the groups involved in these conflicts.
- 9 '*Demonstrasi Dayak*', '*Aksi Dayak*' and '*Demonstrasi Cina*'. The first and second of these were used in Rachman *et al.* (1970), and the latter used by virtually all informants I spoke with in West Kalimantan, 1990–2004 – in addition to *Demonstrasi Cina*, they also just called it '*Demon*'. Feith (1968) and Heidhues (2003) following Feith, called them '*Dayak raids*'.
- 10 This point is what has led many observers over the years to call people 'Chinese' in the region. For a detailed examination of Chinese political associations,

- divisions in the community and Chinese consciousness among the youth and others of West Kalimantan, see Heidhues (2003), especially chapters 6 and 7. Davidson and Kammen's (2002) otherwise scrupulously detailed work also accepts the Chinese label at face value.
- 11 This point has been asserted over and over by Dayak informants in this village and environs.
 - 12 An extensive discussion of Confrontation and the rise of the New Order government is beyond the scope of this paper. For details see Mackie (1974); Coppel (1983); Dennis and Grey (1996); Poulgrain (1998); and Kustanto (2002).
 - 13 Another indicator of the depth of hybridity in the area: the red bowl/mangkok merah was a small *Chinese* rice bowl, containing blood to symbolize war, a feather for speed, a piece of flammable tree resin to light the way, and a piece of iron for strength against the enemy's bullets and knives.
 - 14 This pattern of less violence against people and more against property repeated a pattern noted during the Kongsis wars of the 1850s and 'Troubles' of 1918 (Heidhues, 2003: 248, note 43; chapter 3).
 - 15 See the series of papers in *Kompas*, 1967–1968 by Widodo.
 - 16 Chinese refugees were housed in makeshift quarters – old rubber warehouses and barracks left over from Confrontation – in the towns of Singkawang and Bengkayang. Of those who reached Pontianak. Feith (1968: 134) reported some 15 000 were encamped in public buildings, schools and churches; 12 000 with families; and 21 000 still in the Singkawang area. Shortages of food, money, medical supplies and jobs led to further deaths (Widodo in *Kompas*, November 1967–February 1968; Poerwanto, 1990: 207–209; HRW, 1997: 11; Author interviews, 1993, 1997).
 - 17 But see Peluso (2003, 2006); Peluso and Harwell (2001).
 - 18 On the changes during the New Order, see Peluso and Harwell (2001); Harwell (2001); Davidson (2002) and extensive writings by Dove (e.g., 1988).
 - 19 A 1916 Regulation created the category of *Huur Over-encompst*, enabling Chinese to rent land; its effect was to formally recognize the registered pieces even though many had been 'owned' for a century or more before. See Cator (1936); Ozinga (1940); Heidhues (2003).
 - 20 Heidhues cites sources that say some 80% of the Singkawang region was left leaning but also points out that many Chinese were apolitical. The politically charged and volatile circumstances of the time make it nearly impossible to determine how 'left' or 'apathetic' anyone really was.
 - 21 It is often forgotten that 'development' was initially a counter-insurgency tactic, particularly in this part of the world. See Peluso and Harwell (2001).
 - 22 Three times between 1968 and 1996–1997, a violent incident between Madurese and Dayaks had erupted into a larger scale event, but these never reached the heights of the 1996–1997 incidents – the earlier ones were stopped by the military and the police before spreading.
 - 23 For a comprehensive treatment of this period, see Heidhues (2003); Yuan (2000); Jackson (1970). For statistics on population and additional analysis, see Ozinga (1940); Cator (1936); and the 1920 and 1930 censuses.
 - 24 In Mandarin Chinese, this means 'local' (Heidhues, 2007, pers. comm.).
 - 25 Later political developments contributed to the hardening of categories and the production of greater and greater difference between Chinese and 'natives' in these Chinese Districts. These included the rise of overseas Chinese consciousness, the KMT and Communist revolutions in China. See Heidhues (2003).
 - 26 See Peluso, n.d.
 - 27 Heidhues (2003) reported that some 25 000 leases were listed in 1925 in the Singkawang subdistrict's records – the administrative district under which a good portion of Hang Moei's lands had been subsumed.
 - 28 See also Peluso (n.d.).
 - 29 The story of the murdered village head had struck several poignant and symbolic chords: he had forbidden the people of his ethnically mixed village from participating in violence but was himself killed on his way home from his daughter's college graduation ceremony in Pontianak. The symbolic value of the father killed while celebrating his daughter's prestigious achievement and his efforts to prevent violence from coming into or going out of his village was huge and reverberated through stories of the violence even in 2004 (HRW, 1997; Author interviews, 2004).
 - 30 Author interviews, October 1998.
 - 31 Author interviews, October 1998, May 1997.
 - 32 In the 1930s, about half the people living in the hillside longhouses of Tembe had moved to this other village. The two villages were thus closely knit by history, family and language ties.
 - 33 One said, '*Kami diantara baik-baik ke Singkawang oleh orang Tembe – titip barang dan rumah dengan mereka*'. ('We were taken safely to Singkawang by people of Tembe, we left our things and our homes in their care.') This was corroborated by the written accounts of Heidhues (2003), Soemadi (1974) and Van Hulten (1992).
 - 34 If shamans and some others believed that the protective rituals enabled possession, many actors and observers claimed not to believe it.
 - 35 Again, this shows that different kinds of stories were told by people with different stakes. Women shamans who performed these rituals claimed to be calling back the souls of the ancestors who possessed the men and boys who had gone off to fight – once they came back to the village they needed to have their own souls replaced. But these very boys claimed never to be possessed – some said they felt braver while out in the crowd, but more often attributed this to strength rather than possession by warrior ancestors.
 - 36 Some did not, calling it 'Land filled with tears', see Peluso (1996).
 - 37 I was told this not only in Tembe but in nearby areas on the road between Singkawang and Bengkayang and on the road that now circles the Gunung Raya Pasi complex.

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