

Remaining Poor on Natural Riches: The Politics of Environment in West Papua¹

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The focus of this paper

'The references in President Soeharto's Budget Speech of January 1990 to the importance of developing the eastern region of the archipelago represented an important departure in post-Independence Indonesian thinking about the nature and composition of the state.' (Chauvel 1996:61) Today, after 10 years of intensified state efforts to regional development, the response in the region again is not unlike after the Malino and Den Pasar Conferences, 'where Van Mook anticipated that the principal danger to be confronted ... was "local patriotism" and the demands for the creation of smaller states'. (ibid.:62,69)

In this paper I do not primarily focus on the national and provincial 'environmental politics' (Hirsch and Warren 1998). Instead, I focus on the 'politics of environment', that is the everyday practices of natural resource use, and the valuation of their social-economic and cultural impact by social groups in the context of an increased global competition for the natural riches of Papua. In the current industrial resource management system indigenous peoples' needs and concerns are still marginalised (Timmer and Visser 2000), and they are treated as external to the main game of resource-based national development (cf. Howitt 1996:20).

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It is my impression that there is a wide gap of information from the bottom of Papuan society to the top (Pemda Tkt. I), resulting in a serious gap of knowledge from the top to the bottom to the detriment of the development of a strong society. Therefore, this paper provides some information and the analysis of two cases of natural resource exploitation in kecamatan Teminabuan, kabupaten Sorong.²

Anthropological concepts, like 'local knowledge' are dangerous to apply here because of the variation in content and meaning. Knowledge is here meant to relate to the two-way process of, on the other hand, the re-formulation and re-interpretation at provincial government level of what is they perceived to be the experience and perception of villagers concerning (inter)national social-economic and political developments, and their participation therein. On the other hand, knowledge also relates to the processes of accommodation and re-contextualisation by the Papuan society of information from Jakarta and provincial level power holders, and the experiences, perceptions and reflections upon the situation at hand, as communicated orally or through the media. In different discourses, the same word may thus be used differently, and deliberately given a different meaning. Particularly interesting in this respect is the new integrative, positive, and future-oriented meaning given to the word adat by the people of tanah Papua.

Local practices, perceptions, and perspectives

During a few months in 1995, and 1999, I stayed at the villages of Waigo and Konda/Wamargege of kecamatan Teminabuan, kabupaten Sorong which are among the most rapidly developing in the Southern part of Kepala Burung.

The land area of kabupaten Sorong covers 5.064 km², and has a population of 11.586 inhabitants. This results in more than 2 inhabitants per square km, which is but 1 % of the total number of people per square km in Sorong city where some 202 inhabitants per square km are living (Sorong dalam Angka 1997:39). But it should be noted that large parts of kecamatan Teminabuan are covered by water, or by land unsuitable for agriculture. The administrative unit of the kecamatan of Teminabuan counts 2 kelurahan, Kaibus and Kohoin which together constitute Teminabuan town, and 20 desa. Until 1997 the kecamatan included 29 desa (cf. Lautenbach 1999), but recently nine Sawiat villages were split off to form a separate kecamatan. In the 1994-1997 World Bank sponsored IDT (Inpres Desa Tertinggal) program, all Teminabuan villages were acknowledged to be 'backward', thus formally eligible to receive IDT funds. Under the present UNDP funded Program Pengembangan³ Kecamatan (PPK) a first selection of 7 villages has received infrastructural and economic development funds.

² Field research was carried out in the villages of Waigo and Konda/Wamargege during two months in 1995, and three months in 1999. I am indebted to the Bupati and Head of Bappeda Tkt. II, Sorong, as well as the kepala desa of the above mentioned villages.

The economically advantageous position of Waigo and Konda became already clear in the 1950s. The road connecting the hinterland of Ayamaru, Aitinyo, and Aifat with the sea, and with Sorong, which passes through Waigo, was already constructed in 1958. In Konda the Protestant Mission started in 1928⁴ The majority of the population of kabupaten Sorong are Christian (Protestant).⁵ The inland village of Waigo is well accessible by land, as it lies on the road from Teminabuan to the hinterland of Ayamaru, as well as by water through the river Kaibus. It has about 480 inhabitants of both Tehit and Ayamaru, Aitinyo, and Aifat origin. Staple foods are sago and tubers, while the people have recently become actively involved in the cutting and transportation of logs for the plywood industry in Central Halmahera (Sidangoli).

The second research site consists of the villages of Konda and Wamargege, which are built on a low sand ridge along the left bank near the mouth of the Kaibus. Their population are mainly fishers, living of sago and fish or molluscs. Recently they have become increasingly active in shrimp fishing for Sorong-based export industries. Konda and Wamargege have some 450 and 400 inhabitants respectively, who are of Tehit and Ogit (Yaben, originally from Yahadian/Inanwatan) origin.

The following examples from the logging industry in Waigo and the shrimp trade in Konda/Wamargege may show how culture, communal resource use and modern capitalist economic enterprise are intertwined.

Logging

On 15 June 1999 the bupati of Sorong, using the discretionary room provided by the UU 22, 1999 on Regional Government, sent a written statement informing the sub-district heads, on the recently issued Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 6,1999 and Keputusan Menteri Kehutanan dan Perkebunan Nomor 310/KPTS-11/99, concerning the Ijin Hak Pemungutan Hasil Hutan (IHPHH). This regulation gives the right to an established Indonesian institution (PT/ CV or village co-operative of forest users) to extract by non-mechanical means, on a maximum area of 100 ha and for a period of 1 year, logs of specified tree species for sale⁶. In the Birds Head, given the poor development of indigenous economic institutions above family or keret level, the implementation of the IHPHH regulation, for example in Teminabuan, means that a group of relatives belonging to a particular family who have access to adat-land, constitutes a 'co-operative' with the help of a bapak angkat. This patron, often a non-indigenous person but who was born here or who has lived here for many years, is trusted by the villagers

During my stay I was taken well care of by Papuan school teachers, P3W staff, and the women who shared their food crops with me in exchange for a bit of labour, some goods and cash, and much laughter.

³ Note the Era Reformasi jargon of pengembangan, in stead of the Orde Baru use of pembangunan.

to become the middleman between them and the 'third party' who buys the logs, like the plywood factory. He provides the necessary capital, arranges for the transportation by ship of the logs collected at the mouths of the waterways, and he finally pays the laborers in the village. With the active support of officials of the Department of Forestry, he thus acts as a 'boss' towards the indigenous co-ordinator, the mandur, and the men and women who constitute the labor force extracting the wood from their own land for a cash income.

The area from where the wood is usually extracted does not extend more than 2 km from a water course, because beyond this distance it simply becomes too difficult to haul the logs to the place where, at high tide, they can be floated down the stream to a point where they are assembled and tied together, until they can be loaded onto a ship for export. So, for several years the damage to the lowland forests can probably remain restricted to these broad strips along the river banks. From an environmental point of view, these restrictions in both human and natural resource use are a 'blessing in disguise'. Further inland the trees can not be transported, except by mechanical means. Yet, it is evident to all parties involved that the wood will be depleted within a few years.

In Waigo and surrounding villages where families have access to fertile land close enough to the river system, most men and many women are presently involved in this 'domesticated' logging industry. They have mixed feelings about it. On the one hand, they obviously earn more cash than ever, which is much appreciated by both younger and older people for it provides them with the means of access to material goods, hence a 'modern' status. It also provides them with the cash needed to pay retribution (denda) in an increasing number of cases of (allegations of?) adultery. I witnessed one case of a widow who had to engage in the exchange of kain timur to pay the fine for the son of her deceased elder sister. This robbed her of the money which she had earned in logging. During the 1990s, the increased monetarisation of village life not only seems to have inflated the number of accusations of witchcraft and sorcery, but also the number of (allegations of) adultery by (parents of) secondary school and higher educated youngsters. Obviously, material profit and status increase are expected here (Timmer and Visser 2000; Visser 1999), at the expense of the boy's family.

⁴ The church was renovated in 1999 with financial support of the non-pribumi fisheries patron.

⁵ The population distribution of kabupaten Sorong (1997) according to religion is: Protestant/Catholic: 87 %, Islam 11 %, Buddhist/Hindu 2 %. In kecamatan Teminabuan the distribution is: Protestant/Catholic 93 %, Islam 7 % (Sorong dalam Angka 1997:133).

⁶ For example in East Kalimantan, the recent deregulation has resulted in the burgeoning of semi or entirely fictitious KUDs and KT's 'helped' by the timber business to open the forest area (Obidzinsky, Progress Report CEFOR, 1 May 2000).

On the other hand, especially secondary school leavers who do not obtain access to the regional labor market, and who are forced to return to their villages, have grown conscious of the marked imbalance between the economic return of the middleman and they themselves, who are the majority of the village labor force engaged in logging, and also the people who 'sell' the wood on their adat-land to this middleman. But, apart from this externally directed uneasiness, there is also internal jealousy within the villages, between and within families and keret who are presently organising themselves in terms of forest work groups. In september 1999 when I was staying in Waigo, this became clear even from debates in the church after the Sunday service. The extraction of logs is organised by means of workgroups or kru of about 12-15 men/women who are relatives or in-laws (*ipar*) of the mandur, who also is the person who acts on behalf of the land'owning' group (ratabam) or tuan tanah. Above every 3 to 4 mandur stands a koordinator, who himself is dependent upon a manajer. These last few individuals all belong to the village elite: they have the status of (the son of) a raja or nakohok, have better education and knowledge of the outside world.

The manual transportation of the logs is extremely heavy work. It is not surprising to people who are familiar with subsistence based societies like in Papua, that women are as actively involved as men in hauling the trunks. (The trees are cut with a chainsaw (*sensor*); the man operating it is hired externally by the co-ordinator, and is not a member of the work group.) Per full day's work some 7 – 12 logs can be hauled out of the forest; each trunk having a minimum diameter of 60 cm and a length of 6 m.

The income from the selling of logs is divided between the non-pribumi middleman and the Papuan workgroups with their managers, coordinators, mandur, and the laborers. After the logs have been measured and counted by an official of the district Forestry Department, the work group receives through the middleman approximately Rp. 30,000/m³ for their logs. Also, some Rp. 15,000/m³ is said to be distributed to village institutions for the support of the church, the village administrative board, the health of the laborers, and the secondary or higher school education of their children. The ratabam from whose land the logs are exported, also gets paid separately. The mandur, who is the driving force at the work place, and who himself is involved in the heavy physical job of hoisting the log into the proper position to be hauled to the waterside, receives more than the laborers. I have tried to calculate the cash payments (per day per laborer) which apparently vary from one work group to another, but they range from about Rp. 18,000 to Rp. 36,000 per day (Sept. 1999). The mismatch between the burden of their work and their earnings, and the imbalance between the small compensation they receive for their physical labor, but also for the value of their trees, as compared to the profit of the village elite and 'the outside world', create much discontent

and conflict both within the villages and between the villages and the state.

Shrimp fisheries

In the villages along the river Kaibus, especially in Konda and Wamargege, almost every household has recently become involved in shrimp fishing. Within one year the supply of larger shrimps in the river near to the villages was depleted. As a result, people now have to take their canoes out to the river mouth. A much longer trip, which excludes older people and widows from shrimp fishing as they are unable to row such a long distance against the tide. Men, women, and in peak seasons even children, are joining in the catch of shrimps by means of nylon gillnets or cotton 'tromol' nets. A family who, at the end of a day or night's work, takes a catch of 5-10 kg good quality shrimps back to the trader can earn some Rp. 20.000 to Rp.25.000 per kg. But catches are unpredictable and variable from day to day.

In Konda, but not in Wamargege, the World Bank sponsored District Development Program (PPK), which succeeded the Inpres Desa Tertinggal (IDT) program in 1998, is supporting four work groups of fishermen. It provides credit for outboard motors, nets, and cool boxes. It is interesting to note that these groups are organised on the basis of ethnohistorical power that is, they follow the social-cultural organisation of the different raja and their dependents, who in fact also co-reside in the different RT of the village. So, these groups have access to motorized canoes which gives the fishermen the great advantage that they do not depend on the tide, hence they can fish for more hours per day, and at less physical cost. Their economically advantageous position also creates substantial social tension with non-motorized fishers who do not happen to belong to one of the work groups.

Shrimp fishing for export purposes in Konda and other villages along the South coast of Teminabuan is rapidly intensifying. Both the fishers and the middlemen acknowledge that the Kaibus area will be overfished within a couple of years only, after which the industry will move on, along the coast to Inanwatan. But, for the time being, shrimp fishing provides a good income which is spent primarily on consumptive needs. Access to the markets of Teminabuan and Sorong is relatively easy, and the men and women of Konda, like elsewhere, enjoy the improvement of their economic status. However, contrary to villages like Waigo, for example, the fisher people of Konda do not invest in housing. Yet they have renovated the magnificent GKI-church constructed of gaba-gaba walls and a sago leaf thatching, with the financial support of the bapak angkat shrimp trader.

Like in the case of the logging industry, the shrimp industry is developed by private entrepreneurs of non-pribumi origin (i.c. Ambonese and Buginese), most of whom were born in Papua and/or lived here for many years. Their own economic future lies in Papua. Also, the district Fisheries

Department is involved. In Sorong they have close ties with one of the fish export industries, *P.T. Usaha Mina*.

At the moment of research two of the three enterprises were active in the Kaibus area, with their own ships on which the shrimps are stored in large coolboxes immediately after they are bought from the fishers, at sea or in the village. Because of differences in quality measurements and the competition between the Sorong-based fishing industries, there is much confusion among the fishers concerning prices, and problems of access to the better quality shrimps and better prices are causing discontent, both vis a vis 'outsiders' and within the villages.

In other words, these are the orang kaya in the particular social-cultural sense of 'orang yang diakui warga setempat sebagai penguasa mereka' (Susanto & Supriatma 1998:144). Those Papuan administrators and religious leaders are rich, even compared to the village elite, and they are also becoming orang kaya in the modern capitalist sense of people who have access to 'segala kekuasaan dan kekuatan', that is road construction, transport facilities, land development projects, etc. (ibid.). But the majority of these local leaders, who act as brokers in the shrimp and logging industries have no access to the latter.

Moreover, it is important to note that the non-pribumi middleman/trader is not automatically blamed, because he is regarded as somebody who was born here and whose identity is Papuan, not in an ethnic sense, but in a national(istic) sense: somebody who economically invests in the future of their country. In other words, the development of the village-based industries creates tensions which are much more complex than simplistic oppositions, like pribumi/non-pribumi or state-society (Visser 1999) make us believe. A proper understanding should be based on approaches which move beyond such centralistic conceptualisations.

Adat and empowerment

Early colonial and anthropological sources usually translate adat with 'custom', 'customary rights', or 'tradition'. More recently, the identification of adat regulating relatively stable, small-scale, homogeneous societies which are not (yet) incorporated into global social-economic development, has proven to be false (among many others, see Warren 1993, Visser 1999). The present case shows that adat becomes a key concept in people's search for empowerment and for a new national identity within the wider discourse of the Indonesian nation state, neighbouring Papua New Guinea and other Melanesian states.

In the national(ist) discourse the meaning of adat is associated with 'aspiratif' and clearly separated from and opposed to tradition. In an article on the event of the population who barred the Kantor Bupati at Fakfak it is stated:

"...[P]emerintahan yang bekerja secara rutin dan tradisional, serta tidak mampu menyikapi dan menjawab aspirasi masyarakat. ... Karena [bupati] ini tidak menerima

dan tidak dapat berlaku sesuai dengan adat dengan baik ... Orang yang tidak mampu menghargai adat tentunya tidak beradab" (CePos 4.11.99).

The application of the word adat in the names of people's organisations, like the Lembaga Musyawarah Adat Papua and the various regional Lembaga Musyawarah Adat shows the interest of what Howitt (1996:4) has called the elements of geopolitics: territoriality, identity, and power. 'Adat' thus emphasizes a new, supra-place, and integrative notion. Although identity is still basically defined on ethnic terms, the ethnic identity should not be equated with sukuism but rather with the larger geopolitical units of, for example, the Birds Head, the South coast, or the central mountains. The notions of territoriality linked to identity should not be understood either in a too material sense. For example, the title Wayir of the cultural group of Ayamaru, Aitinyo, and Aifat students in Abepura, refers to their common pre-colonial regional identity from the interior of the Birds Head area of West Papua. It primarily acts as a point of reference for the common roots of their imagined community (Anderson 1981) of a younger generation of national Papuans. Their prime mover is empowerment for the purpose of self-determination, or power-over-self rather than power-over-others (Galtung 1980 in Howitt 1996:20).

The authority of indigenous institutions does not reach beyond the social-economic networks of individual ondoafi, bobot, or raja, or whatever the titles of indigenous adat leaders. Moreover, these networks are primarily individual and family networks, hence they do not provide a basis for modern identity formation of groups or societies which are incorporated in an international world order. Thus, the newly instituted Lembaga Adat indeed bridge a structural organisational gap, bottom upwards, in the governance of the majority of the Papuans, often cross-cutting formal administrative boundaries below district level. The major other institution fulfilling this role is the church (or, in Fakfak the mosque).

However, in places like the hinterland of kabupaten Sorong, the geopolitical power and authority of local leaders in some respects still resemble the situation before the arrival of the first missionaries. Authority over land was vested in the na tmak or ratabam (tuan tanah, Tehit resp. Meité) as the representative of the family group/keret rights to land and water vis à vis other living groups and vis à vis the ancestors. Although indigenous land rights were acknowledged by the Dutch colonial administration (1945-62) the position of the tuan tanah was not, and formal negotiations about land usually took place with the raja who were regarded as village heads. Actually, these raja often controlled important socio-economic regional networks, holding the power and the title of nakohok (Tehit) or bobot (Meité) over large numbers of people of different families and clans through the exchange of cloth and other valuables (Miedema 1984, 1994, Haenen

1991, Visser 1999).

The raja were incorporated into the colonial administration, receiving paraphernalia, a salary. Their sons and even daughters received formal education (JVVS) which prepared many of them to a position as clergymen, schoolteachers, tax collectors, nurses, and civil servants. Individual raja/bobot accumulated great wealth, in the Birds Head especially kain timur/cloth, but also land, as they had power over people and land. The Tehit people of kab. Sorong associate their power with the power and wealth of the Sultans of Tidore to whom the Birds Head people paid tribute. Today, much of their wealth and power is inherited by men who are thus easily regarded as the 'natural' leaders in the quest for self-determination. For example, at subdistrict level and village level, *desa* which were created as administrative units after the implementation of UU 5, 1979, but lacking social cohesion, are now in the process of splitting along the lines of pre-colonial historical group identities following different *raja*. At a more integrative level, both Theys Eluay and Tom Beanal can be seen in this light, and their personal history is usually well-known by the public, also as a result of selection of information (or the reproduction of local knowledge?) by the Papuan media.

Papuan societies, like most other Melanesian societies, exist through processes of exchange and reciprocity. Individuals who do not participate in the exchange of goods, fertility, and knowledge, are believed to deliberately withhold these from others, hence are regarded as thieves (Timmer and Visser 2000) and become suspects of sorcery and witchcraft (Oosterhout 1998:139). Participation in exchange networks is a matter of life and death, socially, occupationally, and otherwise, like in the dialogue concerning pemekaran propinsi. The mass of students protesting against pemekaran propinsi on 6 September 1999 made it also understood that they were not *mordicus* against it, but that they demanded conditions: "kendati demikian bukan berarti penolakan terhadap pemekaran ini menjadi harga mati ...cuma dengan syarat ...". (CePos 7.9.99, my underlining). Even in the political discourse, reciprocity (or withdrawal from it) is a matter of life and death.

Miedema and other scholars on the culture of the Birds Head, like Elmerg, Kamma, and Pouwer, have described how *bobot* who do not participate in the Meybrat tradition of reciprocity are called *bobot-pencuri*. When kain timur became scarce after World War II when import had come to a halt, the *bobot's* personal "interests in the kain timur business came to dominate the interests of people dependent on the *bobot*, including their own relatives" (Miedema 1986:34). Miedema's research in the 1970s on Meybrat fisheries of the Ayamaru lakes show that "in former times pusaka were regarded as the joint property of the kinship groups involved, nowadays they are claimed by the *bobot* as their own private property" (ibid:35). The two cases presented here of the exploitation of forest resources and fisheries in the two villages in the

hinterland of kabupaten Sorong show an identical process.

Concerning human dignity

Whereas 'empowerment' is a term applied in a modern intellectualist discourse by representatives of the state bureaucracy, NGOs, and academics alike, the basic concern of Papuans at all levels of society is the restoration of the (inter)national acknowledgement of their human dignity. Indigenous institutions and organisations exist to engage in communications with other communities, to travel frequently, to exchange ideas and concentrate political demands. 'These constitute a form of a strong social capital, which in no way balances the lack of development, but which does act as a focus for both protest and opportunity'. (King 1997:109-110)

In Papua, like elsewhere in Melanesia, '[a] claim to land, rather than some abstract notion of citizenship, is how the majority of Melanesians secure a foothold on the political stage and gain the attention of the state. Land is the prize in the process of resource development and the means of access to the contest between communities, who insist on their birthright and to prior occupation, and the state, which asserts its sovereign and constitutional rights to certain elements of the land.' (Ballard 1997:48)

In the cases of the Birds Head of Papua a further serious development is indicated. The commodification of the resources from adat land, of which Papuan ownership is not acknowledged by the Indonesian state, and the recent active involvement of indigenous adat leaders in their exploitation, enhance the cultural and economic valuation of the land. Moreover, the people's cultural and historical identity formation is re-contextualized along indigenous institutional lines, like *raja* clienteles which are often conflicting with state imposed village units. Consequently, since 1995 one can witness growing tensions within villages too, followed by an increased tendency to split existing villages (*desa*), with members of houses and clans even moving physically to former settlements within their adat domain.

Social cohesion should not be automatically looked for at village (*desa*) level. After the first formation of concentrated village settlements in the 1950s, state-formed villages only became instituted as the basic administrative unit of society in Irian Jaya after the implementation of UU No.5, 1979, and they have been restructured again by provincial regulation in 1991 (KDH Tk.I IriJa No. 253) in order to adapt the national law to the local practice of village formation⁷. But still major significance keeps being attached to origin groups (clans or *keret* and their leaders linked to a particular adat domain.

The new forestry regulation No. 6, 1999 (IHPHH) provides indigenous leaders with the opportunity to use their social-economic and local-political authority to increase the scale and rate of exploitation of natural resources. These men, especially the younger generation who are of *bobot* or *raja* descent, have enjoyed primary and often 3 or more classes

of secondary school in town, and who are well acquainted with wider economic networks, become the spokesmen and manager of the villagers vis à vis the non-Papuan patron-middlemen. They control and provide the natural resources (SDA) as well as the human resources (SDM) involved in resource exploitation through inheritance, inter-family obligations (kain timur, denda, etc.) and territorial affinity. These indigenous institutions largely surpass village settlements.

This indigenous land-controlling (not: owning) elite have become key actors in the commodification of land (as a shorthand for terrestrial and marine resources). Also, as representatives of social-cultural and territorial identity groups, they are brokers between social-cultural and economic identities and the wider political (global) power networks. Thus, the political economy of resource exploitation or the 'politics of environment' (Hirsch and Warren 1998) seriously threatens the very basis of the formation of the nation-state in Irian Jaya/Papua. Not those appointed by the state, like the village head and administrative institutions have authority over the people, but the people with adat authority. Unless the functions of the former coincide with the status of the latter. In the perception of the indigenous society self-determination or freedom a priori mean their right to retrieve economic and political autonomy to govern their own land (both territorial and marine) as a social-cultural value, and to decide upon and profit from the economic exploitation of its resources.

Recently, the sensation of greater political freedom instigates people, young and old, men and women, to express their frustration of the denial by the state of their human right to say: 'No'. Physically one can withdraw from participation in state-dominated developments (cf. the 'uncaptured' African peasant of Hyden 1983). But there are no material means to withhold their land from being occupied and exploited by the state and its shareholders. Moreover, until 1999 villagers were denied active economic participation in and access to the profits from large-scale resource use of their adat land. (cf. Aditjondro 1998, Banks & Ballard 1997, Kunanayagam & Young 1998).

Social-cultural identity formation now clearly relates to, and is integrated with a wider nationalist Papuan movement in search for 'freedom'. It is my impression that at sub-kabupaten levels the search is not primarily for political independence from the state of Indonesia. Discussions in the villages seem to concentrate on the frustration of a general lack of recognition and the denial of human dignity. A recognition, finally, which is primarily denied by 'the people from overseas', but increasingly also by their own Papuan elite who are performing major roles in the Indonesian political economy of Jayapura and the kabupaten centres.

In the present era of fundamental political changes in Papua, frustration caused by social-economic dependency and feelings of deprivation are easily blamed on 'the outside world', often including the Tkt. I administrators as well as the pendatang.

The denial of human dignity and the lack of access to natural resources and rural development together with job opportunities in town is significantly labeled as *ham*, in the sense of *pelanggaran ham* or 'the transgression of our indigenous and human rights'. The universal concept of human rights is here being adjusted to accommodate the local perception of a global problem: How can it be that we remain poor, while living on top of natural riches? Moreover, *ham*, in the eyes of most villagers, becomes almost identical with 'M' (merdeka): freedom as a cultural, social, and economic good which can be retrieved with the help of the culture hero of the cargo cult, who often today is identified with Jesus Christ (Timmer 2000). Thus, those who show the political will, and who are committed to the development of a sustainable future for Papua should take into account, more than has been the case during the last 32 years, the information from and knowledge about social-economic and cultural developments in the local economy and the role and position of indigenous entrepreneurs. Possibly, sustainable resource management in Papua should primarily focus on sustainable human resource development.

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⁷ This administrative re-organisation or Pola Operasional Penyelenggaraan Pemerintahan Desa was highly acclaimed by the population. In kec. Teminabuan it changed the former number of 10 desa into 31 so-called desa-POP.

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