Natives and Newcomers: Collective violence against internal migrants in post-Suharto Indonesia

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Table of contents

Introduction

The national emblem of Indonesia is the *Garuda Pancasila*, A gold plated eagle, wings outstretched, with a heraldic shield on its chest. Upon the shield are five symbols that represent *Pancasilla*, Indonesia's national ideology. The eagle's talons have a firm grip on a white ribbon, inscribed with a mantra that embodies Indonesia's state ideology: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, translated to 'Unity in Diversity'. The mantra encapsulated both the diverse nature of the country – an archipelago with thousands of islands, hundreds of ethnic groups, and multiple religions – and the desire for a strong, unified state. The mantra was adopted during Indonesia's struggle for Independence, and remained the foundation upon which President Suharto built his authoritarian regime: the New Order.

During the process of nation-state building, New Order officials had to come up with a solution for the unbalanced geographical distribution of Indonesia's population. The islands that made up the Archipelago's core, like Java and Madura, had too many people while the outer islands had to few. Utilizing the Transmigration Program became the preferred strategy to address this problem. The program was created under the Dutch colonial government at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was designed to alleviate population pressure and counter poverty in the more densely populated areas of the country by relocating people to less populous areas.[1] The aim was to provide opportunities for poor households and to better utilise the country's natural resources, but strategic and political goals had been at the centre of the program as well.

In addition to the state-sponsored program, spontaneous migration was actively encouraged, eventually resulting in more significant population shifts than those facilitated by the government-led initiative. The arrival of economic migrants, often ethnically, culturally, and religiously different from the native population, accompanied by legislation that favoured settlers, led to frictions between natives and newcomers. Under Suharto's regime, any expression of these tensions was quickly suppressed. The New Order had translated 'Unity in Diversity' into a notion of cultural homogeneity that reflected elitist illusions of a harmonious and conflict free society.[2]

[1] Yuhki Tajima, 'Explaining Ethnic Violence in Indonesia: Demilitarizing Domestic Security', Journal of East Asian Studies 8:3 (2008), 451-472, 458.
[2] Riwamnto Tirtosudarmo, 'Demography and conflict. The failure of Indonesia's nation building project?' in: D.F. Anwar, H. Bouvier, G. Smith and R. Tol eds., *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific. Histories, Political Economies and Policies* (Jakarta 2005) 58-68, 65.

After Suharto stepped down in 1998, buried grievances between natives and migrants, and Christians and Muslims, came to light. During this Post-Suharto period, large-scale communal and separatist conflicts broke out across the archipelago. This thesis analyses three of these conflicts and questions why the indigenous populations of West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua resorted to collective violence against internal labour migrants in post-Suharto Indonesia, and asks under what historical and socio-economic conditions group boundaries were made, maintained and defended. By answering these questions, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of what drives collective violence against labour migrants, and looks to identify general mechanisms of collective violence by analysing the erosion of intergroup boundaries.

Historiography

Indonesia witnessed a particularly tumultuous turn of the century. The period from 1996 to 2003 was one of major political and socio-economic change wherein Indonesia changed from a centralised to a decentralised nation and governance transitioned from Suharto's authoritarian regime to a democracy. The Asian financial crisis of 1997 further worsened stability as shortages and price hikes spread throughout the country. Underlying tensions – often aided by earlier unequal distribution of political and economic resources – between Christians and Muslims and between migrants and natives were suddenly laid bare. During this period large scale social violence skyrocketed. But while the written works on post-Suharto violence are numerous, not much research has been done in regard to collective violence against internal Indonesian migrants.[3]

There are, however, illuminating examples that showcase what can be considered as more general workings of collective violence against labour migrants. Gene Ammarell described how Bugis migrants from South Sulawesi, in regions like Papua and Central Sulawesi increasingly came to be regarded by locals as intruders who were taking away their economic and political power.[4] In all three cases of this thesis, the feeling of economic and political marginalisation is an important underlying factor that aided the outbreak of collective violence against internal migrants. In 'Xenophobic Mob Violence Against Free Labour Migrants in the Age of the Nation State. How Can the Atlantic Experience Help to Find Global Patterns?' (2022) Leo Lucassen asks the question under what historical conditions people who consider themselves as belonging to an ingroup resort to collective violence against free labour migrants.[5] While Lucassen mainly concentrates on the nineteenth and twentieth century North Atlantic, his article does provide a fitting example of mob violence against migrants in Burma that reads familiar when set beside the cases in Indonesia. Due to their ethnicity and religion, Indian labour migrants were considered to be inferior and threatening outsiders by the native Burmese population. The migrants were not only accused of imposing their religion and culture on the Burmese natives, but were also blamed for unfair competition in the labour market.[6] In 1930 and 1938, this led to large scale organised attacks on Indian workers.

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[3] Indonesian scholars have written more on (in)migrant conflict in Indonesia in their own vernacular; The anti-Chinese riots in Jakarta of 1998 have been more widely discussed in academic writing (Suryadinata 2017; Weeraratne 2010; Bertrand 2004).

[4] Gene Ammarell, 'Bugis Migration and Modes of Adaptation to Local Situations', *Ethnology* 41:1 (2002) 51-67, 61.

[5] Leo Lucassen, 'Xenophobic Mob Violence Against Free Labour Migrants in the Age of the Nation State. How Can the Atlantic Experience Help to Find Global Patterns?', *International Review of Social History*, *67* (2022) 1-25.

[6] Ibidem, 19.

The conditions that led to this widespread outbreak of violence can be recognised in the cases of Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua as well. But for an educated interpretation of this post-Suharto violence, a clear grasp of the socio-political factors, ethno-cultural dynamics, and some contextual background is needed.

Studies have adopted several theories in an attempt to explain the outbreak of extreme violence towards the end of the twentieth century. While they should not be judged in isolation, these theories can be grouped together under institutional, inter-ethnic, religious, and economic explanations. In consistence with institutional theories, Yuhki Jajima suggests in 'Explaining Ethnic Violence in Indonesia: Demilitarizing Domestic Security' (2008) that the unifying factor explaining multiple instances of violence at the end of the twentieth century is the discontinuation of the military from intervening in local conflicts.[7] Nearing the end of Suharto's regime the administration was confronted with political infighting and felt public pressures to democratise. As a consequence of increasing international inquiries in Indonesia's human rights abuses, a liberalising media, and growing democratic demands the military became more restricted in its ability to repress local conflicts.[8] This does, however, not mean that the more stable years of Suharto's rule should be considered as peaceful. As Varshney, Tadjoeddin, and Panggabean pointed out in 'Patterns of Collective Violence in Indonesia': "The New Order was at its heart an intrinsically violent system. The state used violence with impunity to impose stability."[9]

As mentioned above, buried grievances from natives who felt politically and economically marginalised came to the surface in post-Suharto period. In 'Ethnic Conflicts in Indonesia: National Models, Critical Junctures, and the Timing of Violence' (2010) Jacques Bertrand underscores New Order policies that managed to shift the power balance between natives and newcomers at popular (trans)migration destinations, in favour of the newcomers.[10] Focussing on the critical junctures of institutional change, Bertrand argues that the worsening tensions that followed president Suharto's departure "were embedded in the institutional structures that the New Order regime had established […]".[11] Focussing in on the Kalimantan province – but in line with Bertrand's more general scope – Jamie S. Davidson and Douglas

[7] Tajima, 'Explaining Ethnic Violence in Indonesia', 452; see footnote 1 for full annotation.
[8] Ibidem, 455.
[9] Ashutosh Varshney, Mohammad Zulfan Tadjoeddin, and Rizal Panggabean, 'Creating Datasets in Information-Poor Environments: Patterns of Collective violence in Indonesia, 1990-2003', *Journal of East Asian Studies* 8:1 (2008) 261-394, 44.
[10] Jacques Bertrand, 'Ethnic Conflicts in Indonesia: National Models, Critical Junctures, and the Timing of Violence' in: Ashutosh Varshney ed., *Collective Violence in Indonesia* (Boulder 2010) 77-98, 97.
[11] Ibidem, 98.

Kammen argued that the cruel violence that took hold of the region was not the result of 'primordial' ethnic identities or old traditions like head hunting, but were rather "a product of and remain a reflection on the origins of the New Order and its henchmen."[12] Analysts largely agree that many New Order policies were forceful attempts at creating a united and prosperous Indonesia. The transmigration program serves as a case in point. In the process of populating (or colonising), clearing, and cultivating Indonesia's hinterlands the administration bore little concern for the wellbeing of the indigenous populations. Even though transmigration started before Suharto's rule, the programme did expand under the New Order as the president believed that "Indonesians shared a common sense of identity and that national unity would be strengthened by the mixing of ethnic groups."[13]

This can be considered as quite a substantial oversight. Rizal Sukma found that the ethnic or religious dimensions that frequently came to characterise Indonesian conflicts served more as elements that justified the use of violence once a conflict was underway.[14] Sukma argues that a conflict is difficult to understand through its manifest forms such as ethnicity or religion and believes the presence of other factors such as weak states, economic and political grievances, and a nation's diminished capacity to deal with conflict are more important for understanding the outbreak of violent conflict.[15] The fighting that took place in Poso between 1998 and 2000 serves as an example. The conflict is largely seen as a clash between Christian locals and Muslim in-migrants, but Loraine Aragon argues that religious symbolism overshadowed more complex economic realities.[16] During their fieldwork in Poso, political scientists Maddison and Diprose drew similar conclusions, stating that "[…] many accounts of the underlying dynamics of the conflict pertained to contestation over economic and political inequalities".[17]

These underlying dynamics are also recognisable in the Kalimantan conflicts. In 'Territory, Custom, and the Cultural Politics of Ethnic War in West Kalimantan, Indonesia' (2001) Peluso and Harwell argued that the violence between the native Dayaks and the Madurese migrants was a "West Kalimantan-specific experience of Suharto's New Order

[12] Jamie S. Davidson and Douglas Kammen, 'Indonesia's Unknown War and the Lineages of Violence in West Kalimantan', *Indonesia* 73:1 (2002) 53-87, 86.
[13] Rizal Sukma, 'Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia: Causes and the Quest for Solution' in: Kusuma Snitwongse and W. Scott Thompson eds., Ethnic Conflicts in Southeast Asia (Singapore 2005) 1-41, 10.
[14] Ibidem, 8.
[15] Ibidem.
[16] Loraine V. Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi: Where People Eat Fish and Fish Eat People', *Indonesia* 72:1 (2001) 45-79, 79.
[17] Sarah Maddison and Rachael Diprose, 'Conflict dynamics and agonistic dialogue on historical evidence: a case from Indonesia', *Third World Quarterly* 39:8 (2018) 1622-1639, 1628.

territorial politics, and especially the politics surrounding property, resources, and ethnicity".[18] They found that this, together with the region's long history of violence and the cultural politics of 'violent identity production', affected both groups during the conflict. According to the authors, violent ethnic identities have been produced and strategically deployed by state actors, as well as by journalists, researchers, and local people themselves.[19] Not dissimilar from 'violent identity production', other research has focused more on Indonesia's 'culture of violence' as a conflict solving mechanism. De Jonge and Nooteboom note in 'Why the Madurese? Ethnic Conflicts in West and East Kalimantan Compared' (2006) that "In contrast to the Malays, the Chinese and most other immigrant groups in Kalimantan, the Dayaks and the Madurese tend to resort to violence to solve serious conflict."[20] Freek Colombijn finds the phrasing of 'culture of violence' to be easily misinterpreted and rather speaks of 'a cultural practise of violence' which denotes that "[…] certain forms of violence by certain persons are legitimate in specific conditions in the eyes of certain segments of society.[21] In this wording, a 'cultural practise of violence' comes close to what others might refer to as 'vigilantism'.

The conflict in Papua is predominantly one of secessionism and state repression. The large influx of (trans)migrants during the late 1980's and 1990's and Jakarta's settler favouring policies worsened Papuan premonitions of Indonesian colonisation.[22] According to Timo Kivimäki "The colonial framework is clearly the one by which the Papuan resistance movement legitimates it violence, not only against soldiers but also the migrants."[23] In line with above mentioned vigilantism, Kivimäki argues that this turned killing into a heroic act and was therefore seen as morally acceptable. In conjunction with this anti-Indonesian sentiment, economic disparities and cultural contrast between Papuans and migrants made for growing feelings of indigenous marginalisation. The contrast between Indonesian newcomers and the native Papuan population was also profound. In 'Plural Society in Peril' (2004) Rodd McGibbon writes that unlike the more entrepreneurial culture of Buginese migrants, the Papuan

[18]Nancy Lee Peluso and Emily Harwell, 'Territory, Custom, and the Cultural Politics of Ethnic War in West Kalimantan, Indonesia' in: Nancy Lee Peluso and Michael Watts eds., *Violent Environments* (New York 2001) 83-116, 84.
[19] Ibidem, 85.
[20] Huub de Jonge and Gerben Nooteboom, 'Why the Madurese? Ethnic Conflicts in West and East Kalimantan Compared', *Journal of Social Science* 34:3 (2006) 456-474, 462.
[21] Freek Colombijn, 'A cultural practice of violence in Indonesia. Lessons from History' in: D.F. Anwar, H. Bouvier, G. Smith and R. Tol eds., *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific. Histories, Political Economies and Policies* (Jakarta 2005) 245-268, 246.
[22] Sukma, 'Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia', 18.
[23] Timo Kivimäki, 'Initiating a Peace Process in Papua: Actors, Issues, Process, and the Role of the International Community', *Policy Studies 25* (Washington 2006) 10.

natives embrace cultural values that usually do not align with modern capitalist relations.[24] McGibbon notes that "The economic notion of land and natural resources as commodities is a largely alien concept in the customary belief system of indigenous Papuans."[25] Peluso and Harwell drew similar conclusions as to how Dayak people came to see Madurese prosperity as the manifestation of the New Order's marginalising policies. The authors explain that "Many of the resource claims and property rights of local people to local resources and so-called customary or native land were obviated by the new means of claiming resources as individual citizens within the capitalist state."[26]

While theories and explanations provide valuable frameworks for analysing and interpreting the various factors that contribute to the onset and escalation of violent conflicts, it is important to note that actors, both as combatants and victims, may experience violence and motivations for participation differently. As Maddison and Diprose point out:

"[…] the diversity of *view*s *about* the history of a conflict arises from a diversity of *experiences* and *memories* of that conflict. Seeking to achieve consensus on a single cause or about accountability potentially disguises multiple sometimes-contradictory memories, narratives and experiences of conflict."[27]

Moreover, researchers may develop theories for explaining the root causes behind violent conflict that hold great scientific and scholarly value, but for the actors inside these conflicts the reasons for mobilisation and participation may be more trivial or instinctive.

Michael Dove his article '"New Barbarism" or Old Agency Among the Dayak' (2006) provides an instance of this type of academic (over)analysis.[28] In 1997 Dove had described the violent conflict in Kalimantan as a "classic example of economic tensions manifested as ethnic tensions".[29] In his article nine years later, Dove replied to criticism he had received from a prominent Dayak NGO in Kalimantan, who felt that Dove had overlooked the true cultural explanations of the conflict: "In short, I explicitly blamed the Suharto regime for the conflict and exonerated the Dayak and Madurese themselves."[30] In other words, Dove was accused of

[24] Rodd McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril: Migration, Economic Change, and the Papua Conflict', *Policy Studies 13* (Washington 2004) 46.
[25] Ibidem.
[26] Peluso and Harwell, 'Territory, Custom, and the Cultural Politics of Ethnic War in West Kalimantan', 105.
[27] Maddison and Diprose, 'Conflict dynamics and agonistic dialogue on historical evidence', 1626.
[28] Michael R. Dove, ''New Barbarism' or Old Agency Among the Dayak?', *Social Analyses* 50:1 (2006) 192-202.
[29] Peluso and Harwell, Territory, Custom, and the Cultural Politics of Ethnic War in West Kalimantan, 84.
[30] Dove, ''New Barbarism' or Old Agency Amonth the Dayak', 194.

neglecting both parties (cultural) agency while examining the conflict, and looked for a more traditional answer in economic and political theory.[31] It is this agency that is vital for the analysis in this paper. Attributing agency to the participants of the conflicts in West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua is a key component for understanding how intergroup boundaries were made, how they were maintained, and how violence broke out when they could no longer endure.

[31] Dove, ‘’New Barbarism’ or Old Agency Amonth the Dayak’, 194.

Theoretical framework

The objective of this thesis is to contribute to the existing literature on the workings of collective violence against labour migrants, with an emphasis on internal migration. In addition, by putting native-migrant group dynamics at the forefront of the analysis, this research also aims to add to a wide body of scholarly work that has mainly approached post-Suharto violence from a religious, inter-ethnic, institutional, or economic perspective. All these elements are inherent to a native-migrant approach.

There are multiple analytical frameworks that could be used to map out group dynamics. Solveig Hillesund analysed horizontal inequalities and the risk of civil and communal violence by looking at cases from Africa between 1991 and 2009.[32] In his analysis, civil and communal conflicts are both forms of organised violence with the distinction that civil conflicts target the central government, while communal conflicts play out between citizens. Hillesund concluded that economically disadvantaged groups who are also politically excluded can be expected to prefer civil over communal conflict. He reasons that these excluded groups should prefer to attack the government for political -and economic redistribution simultaneously since they could, for example, expect the government to intervene when they attack another group for economic gain. In contrast, included groups should prefer communal rather than civil conflict since they should not be wanting to jeopardise their political position and could expect more tolerance from the government when attacking other groups.[33]

In Gerry van Klinken's pursuit of deciphering the mobilising structures of post-Suharto violence, he makes use of the theory on 'mechanisms', 'processes' and 'episodes' as described by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly in *Dyanmics of Contention* (2001).[34] Herein, processes are frequently recurring causal chains, combinations, and sequences of mechanisms; when two or more processes are involved, it grows into an episode.[35] In 'New actors, new identities. Post-Suharto ethnic violence in Indonesia' Van Klinken deploys this framework to look at Indonesian violent conflicts through the lens of progresses such as polarisation, scale-shift, mobilisation, and identity formation.[36] In *Dynamics of Contention*, however, the line between mechanisms and processes can sometimes seem somewhat blurry, making the categories more

[32] Solveig Hillesund, 'Choosing Whom to Target: Horizontal Inequality and the Risk of Civil and Communal Violence', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63:2 (2019) 528-554.
[33] Ibidem, 547.
[34] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge 2001).
[35] McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 28.
[36] Gerry van Klinken, 'New actors, new identities. Post-Suharto ethnic violence in Indonesia' in: D.F. Anwar, H. Bouvier, G. Smith and R. Tol eds., *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific. Histories, Political Economies and Policies* (Jakarta 2005) 79-100.

interwoven rather than flexible.[37] That being said, Van Klinken his scholarly work is indispensable when trying to understand the workings of collective violence in Indonesia.

Hillusund, as well as Betrand his article on critical junctures and ethnic conflicts in Indonesia, made use of David L. Horowitz his theories on ethnic group dynamics. In *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (1985) and *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (2001) Horowitz asks, among other relevant questions, why some ethnic groups get attacked and others do not, and looks at what conditions in a society are conductive for such attacks.[38] Important for the research in this thesis, are his reflections on ethnic boundaries. Horowitz writes that "Rioters take group boundaries and characteristics to be deeply embedded. […] On the other hand, rioters act on conceptions of violent events that see them less bounded than most outside observers do."[39] These group boundaries are not set in stone, and boundary change is not uncommon. The arrival of labour migrants, defined as the 'outgroup', can lead to competition with the native ingroup for political and economic resources. When the outgroup does not accept its inferior role and challenges existing boundaries, they are likely to provoke the ingroup, leading to irritation, protest, and in extreme cases mob violence.[40]

To better understand how these gears switch axis and pick up speed, the concept of boundary work, as described by Fredrik Barth in his book *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969)[41], and further expanded upon by Andreas Wimmer in *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks* (2013)[42] and more recently by Lucassen in his article on xenophobic mob violence against free labour migrants[43], will be used to analyse why the native populations of West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua resorted to collective violence against internal Indonesian labour migrants. Through a comparison of how group boundaries were made, maintained, and defended during these conflicts, this research aims to contribute to a better understanding of the more general workings of collective violence against (internal) labour migrants.

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[37] Thomas Welskopp, 'Crossing the Boundaries? Dynamics of Contention Viewed from the Angle of a Comparative Historian', *International Review of Social History* 49:1 (2004) 122-131; Knut Kjelstadli, 'Mechanisms, Processes, and Contexts', *International Review of Social History* 49:1 (2004) 104-114.
[38] Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (London 1985); Donald L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (London 2001).
[39] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, 43.
[40] Lucassen, 'Xenophobic Mob Violence Against Free Labour Migrants', 24.
[41] Frederik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organisation of Culture Difference* (Boston 1969).
[42] Andreas Wimmer, *Ethnic Boundary Making: institutions, power, networks* (2013).
[43] See footnote 3.

Concepts and explanations

The conflicts in West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua came to be recognised as ethno-cultural, religious, and separatist violence respectively, this thesis focuses on the outbreak of collective violence and therefore accentuates the migratory dimension of these conflicts. As previously discussed, extensive works have presented all-encompassing or locally focused explanations for the outbreak of post-Suharto violence. This thesis attributes to this literature by looking at the outbreak of collective violence through the lens of boundary work.

The concept of boundary work is made up of boundary making, boundary maintenance and boundary defence. First, boundary making. This process starts by reducing a group who exhibits otherness, to just that, their otherness. Their identity is cut down to this one-dimensional category and is cemented as belonging to the outgroup. Implementing such a 'master status' reduces the other to their nationality, ethnicity, or religion while ignoring all other aspects of a person's identity.[44]

Second, boundary maintenance. Once group boundaries have been put in place, they need to be guarded by maintaining the existing inequalities. This can happen either by law, or by informal means such as discrimination, racial profiling, name calling, or social distancing. Discrimination in the workplace, on the housing market, or in public spaces helps to reinforce the boundaries and strengthens the in-out group demarcation. And as long as the outgroup accepts its inferior position, collective violence against them will be rare.[45]

Lastl, boundary defence. Intergroup boundaries can become unstable when people from the ingroup start to oppose discrimination, or because members of the outgroup try to change or blur the boundary. Likely with resistance from the ingroup. When the established boundaries are, or appear to be, breaking down, leading figures of the ingroup will alert others that the boundary is under threat and increase boundary maintenance. With boundary defence, the role of the state is crucial. Violence is likely to erupt when the state is no longer able to guarantee public order, more often turns a blind eye to vigilantism, or openly sides with the attackers. This violence may range from lynching, destroying property, police brutality, and large-scale mob violence.[46]

The hypothesis of this thesis holds that in the three cases discussed, group boundaries were created after a large influx of government-sponsored and spontaneous migration, leading to competition over resources. The changing social, economic, and political landscape under

[44] Lucassen, 'Xenophobic Mob Violence Against Free Labour Migrants', 5.
[45] Ibidem.
[46] Ibidem.

the New Order weakened these boundaries. Then, within the political vacuum of the post-Suharto period, the state failed to guarantee public order, boundary defence was left to the people, and vigilantism became rampant.

All three cases involve internal migrants who either moved through the transmigration program or migrated spontaneously in search of better economic opportunities. It can be questioned whether transmigration should be considered as voluntary or forced relocation. To become a sponsored or registered (spontaneous) migrant the applicants needed to meet a number of selection criteria which the World Bank in 1986 summarised as:

"Indonesian citizenship, voluntary registration, low income near subsistence, knowledge of farming or of a special skill, being married [applicant had to be male] and below forty years of age, being in good health and an absence of a criminal record."[47]

There are other reports from the World Bank that show that the number of applicants often exceeded the amount of people the program could settle.[48] However, there were recruitment targets set for each province, district, and subdistrict and not meeting these quotas was considered to be unacceptable by higher government officials. The result of this was not that more people were forced to move, but rather that recruitment criteria were loosened so more applicants could qualify for resettlement.[49] While not numerous, there are instances where people were forced to move. This primarily happened in watershed areas, regions selected for dam construction or local development project, or in areas where conservation efforts were needed.[50]

[47] Mariël Otten, 'Transmigrasi: Indonesian Resettlement Policy, 1965-1985', *International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs* (Copenhagen 1986) 45; Information in the square brackets is originally not part of the summary.
[48] The World Bank, Transmigration Sector Review (Personal Papers of Gloria Davis), Folder ID: 30084780 (1986) 4.
[49] Otten, 'Transmigrasi', 44.
[50] Ibidem, 45.

Filling in the gaps

Where secondary literature provides necessary context, background information, and theoretical structure to ensure a clear understanding of the subject matter; the primary sources help to bridge the gap between the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis and the existing body of secondary literature. Regrettably, the inability to read Indonesian limits the amount of available primary literature and constrains the thoroughness of conflict and actor analysis. To overcome this limitation, multiple English and Dutch written sources will be made use of.

Fortunately, there are reports from International Crisis Group Asia (ICG), Human Rights Watch (HRW), and the World Bank Group (WBG) that offer detailed accounts of group make-up, conflict phases, and demographic figures. Unfortunately, figures on ethnicity, religion, and migration status during the New Order period are practically non-existent, as the *Biro Pusat Statistik* (Bureau of Statistics) was under constant pressure to suppress studies on ethnicity.[51] Secondary literature and figures dating after the fall of the New Order will be used to overcome this scarcity. For news articles and first-hand accounts of post-Suharto violence, the *Jakarta Post* is a valuable source of information. The English-Indonesian newspaper's articles on the impact of transmigration, government policies, and marginalised communities are especially insightful. The Dutch National Archive in The Hague provides some interesting documents as well. While not numerous, the documents do give insight in the successes and failures of the transmigration program, correspondence between embassies and letters to and from NGO's concerning the wellbeing of native populations.

[51] Tirtosudarmo, 'The failure of Indonesia's nation building project?', 65.

Chapter Outline

To ensure a thorough and in-depth analysis, each of the three cases discussed in this thesis will have its own chapter. The first chapter focuses on the case West Kalimantan. The Sambas riot in West Kalimantan was an instance of large-scale collective violence carried out by Malays and native Dayaks against Madurese migrants. The riot followed an earlier episode of anti-Madurese violence between 1996 and 1997. Special attention will be given to the question how group boundaries between the three ethnic groups started to shift; and the reason why Dayaks and Malays, two groups competing for the same political resources, chose to work together to kill Madurese migrants. The second chapter looks at the violence in Central Sulawesi's Poso district. The Poso conflict lasted three years and can be divided into four phases. Since the later phases of the conflict transformed into an all-out war between Christians and Muslims, the actor constitution and boundary workings leading up to the violence are more relevant for answering our questions and will receive more scrutiny. The final chapter examines the boundary process in Indonesia's most eastern province. Papua is an interesting case since the main targets of aggression in the region were native Papuans who fell victim to state violence. In the cases of West Kalimantan and Central Sulawesi, the state's security response to the conflicts was either absent, slow, or incapable. It should be insightful to see, without downplaying native Papuan hardships, along which lines the violence against internal migrants unfolded in a region with a heightened security apparatus. Each chapter will discuss the conflicts historical background, the economic and political scenery, actor make up, and conflicts phases to analyse how boundaries were created, maintained, and defended during the outbreak of large-scale collective violence in post-Suharto Indonesia.

1. Sambas

This chapter explores the historical backdrop and events that led to the escalation of large-scale violence in West Kalimantan. It delves into the grievances of the indigenous Dayak population, the influx of Madurese migrants, Malay political resurgence, economic competition, and the tensions and dynamics of inter-ethnic group boundaries, culminating in the Sambas riot of 1999.

1.1 A history of resentment?

Before expanding on the events that led to the escalation of violence in West Kalimantan, let us look at the historical backdrop against which they took place. The Kalimantan province covers two thirds of Borneo, the world's third largest island. But while the region represents 28 percent of Indonesia's total landmass, it only accommodates 5 percent of the country's population.[52] This vast area is home to the indigenous Dayak people. While often grouped together under this title, the Dayak are not a single ethnic community but comprise of more than two hundred different tribes with their own languages, cultures, and traditions.[53] Traditionally Dayaks lived in isolated villages in the rain forests, mainly practising 'slash and burn' or 'shifting' cultivation, but when young Dayaks started to receive modern education, they took up more urban occupations.

During the 1920's and 1930's Kalimantan saw an influx of migrants when the Dutch colonial government opened up the region. Another surge of immigration took place in the 1970's and 1980's when the New Order regime set out to exploit the islands natural resources on an unprecedented scale.[54] Before this period, the number of (trans)migrants had been relatively small. Between 1953 and 1968, about 42,000 transmigrants were assigned to agricultural projects throughout Kalimantan.[55] These numbers increased twofold between 1971 and 1980. Just three years after Suharto came to power, more than 100,000 transmigrants had arrived in Kalimantan. The following two decades transmigration numbers kept growing. When the program was put to a halt in 2000, Kalimantan had received approximately 180,000 transmigrants. Transmigration projects made for a large influx of migrants, and while the

[52] Biro Pusat Statistik, *Statistical Year Book of Indonesia 1995* (1996) 6.
[53] ICG Asia Report n.19, *Communal Violence in Indonesia: Lessons From Kalimantan* (Jakarta/Brussel 2001) 1.
[54] Huub de Jonge and Gerben Nooteboom, 'Why the Madurese? Ethnic Conflicts in West and East Kalimantan Compared', *Journal of Social Science* 34:3 (2006) 456-474, 458.
[55] A. Hafied A. Gany, The Irrigation-Based Transmigration Program in Indonesia: An Interdisciplinary Study of Population Resettlement and Related Strategies (Dissertation, The University of Manitoba 1993) 87.

seizure of land for these projects did elicit Dayak grievances, violence did not occur in or near transmigration settlements.[56]

West Kalimantan is home to 3.8 million people of whom around 200 thousand people, or 5,5 percent, were Madurese. While the Dayak and Malay inhabitants each accounted for 34 percent of the population.[57] Additionally, while the Madurese became a highly visible migrant group in Kalimantan, they were by no means the largest ethnic group among the migrant communities. Chinese, Javanese, and Buginese migrants accounted for 10 percent, 9,4 percent, and 3,3 percent respectively.[58] In West Kalimantan, the Madurese and Malays practise the Islamic fate while most Dayaks are Christians. The increase of large amounts of Muslim immigrants led non-Muslims to speculate about the real motives of state sponsored migration. Many Dayaks believed that Jakarta wanted, in line with Suharto's unification policies, to reduce the indigenous population and to keep the Christian population small.[59]

The migrants from Madura, the Indonesian island located above Eastern-Java, started to arrive in Kalimantan around the 1930's, while migration numbers would increase over several decades. While some Madurese migrants participated in the transmigration program, most of them arrived as spontaneous settlers.[60] The increase of migrant numbers was accompanied by an evolution in the country's legal framework. The Basic Agrarian Law (1960), the Basic Forestry Law (1967), and the Law on Village Government (1979) all effectively enabled the allocation of thousands of hectares of land, traditionally owned by Dayaks and other ethnic groups, to organisations based in Jakarta such as plantation, forestry, and mining companies, as well as to transmigration projects.[61] The Madurese became a highly visible -and industrious population and quite quickly began working (maybe even dominating) the lower levels of the economy, as they started competing with the local Dayaks on the labour market. The Madurese became prominent in small scale trade, transportation services, as market vendors, and as labourers on plantations and logging concessions.[62]

[56] Hélène Bouvier and Glenn Smith, 'Of Spontaneity and Conspiracy Theories: Explaining Violence in Central Kalimantan', *Asian Journal of Social Science* 34:3 (2006) 475-491, 477.
[57] De Jonge and Nooteboom, 'Why the Madurese', 459; ICG Asia Report n.19, 1.
[58] Biro Pusat Statistik, West Kalimantan in Figures (1999) 93.
[59] Kirsten E. Schulze, 'the "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflicts: Violence in Ambon, Poso, and Sambas', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40:12 (2017) 2096-2114, 2106.
[60] Human Rights Watch, *Indonesia: Communal Violence in West Kalimantan* Vol.9, No. 10 (1997) 6.
[61] Bouvier and Smith, 'Of Spontaneity and Conspiracy Theories', 477.
[62] Ibidem.

Nearing the end of the 1960's the Madurese, Javanese, Dayaks, and Malays competed for the farmland and shops that were abandoned by the Chinese in the wake of the *Konfrontasi* period.[63] The Madurese leased these previously Chinese owned lands and with the contribution of above mentioned laws, the Dayaks began to feel excluded on land they had always considered theirs. Under president Sukarno, the Dayak had enjoyed positions and privileges that quickly came to fade under the New Order's regime; whose lawmakers felt Dayak people lacked the characteristics of modern Indonesian citizens.[64] Here, the first signs of changing in-outgroup mechanics can be observed. De Jonge and Nooteboom accurately encapsulate the changing societal position of the Dayak:

"The Dayak not only had to resettle and to tolerate outsiders settling on land to which they believed they had customary titles, but they also witnessed them gaining most of the proceeds of the economic developments taking place. Most of the resources, jobs and profits went to people from the outside, people who looked down on them or ignored their presence, culture and history."[65]

The Dayaks (and the Malays to lesser extent) felt marginalised by the New Order's policies and focussed their resentment on the living by-product of the government's monopoly over, what they felt were, their land and resources: the Madurese.

The first major conflict between Dayaks and Madurese broke out in 1950, after which a second stint of violence broke out in 1968. Then, between December 1996 and March 1997, the Bengkayang district of West Kalimantan saw the largest outburst of inter-ethnic violence in decades. In February 2000, *The Jakarta Post* reported that ethnic conflicts had recurred every 2.9 years since the first fighting took place.[66] And while numerous government-supervised peace treaties were proposed and some were signed, tensions remained uncomfortably high. In the Sambas district in West Kalimantan, these tensions reached their breaking point in 1999. The subsequent riot saw Malay and Dayak people allying with each other to massacre Madurese migrants. The remaining of this chapter analyses the boundary making, maintenance, and defence during the Sambas riot.

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[63] The Indonesian and Malay name *Konfrontasi* refers to the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation between 1963 and 1966 about Indonesia's opposition to the creation of the state of Malaysia. After the armed conflict, Government initiated violence by the Dayaks against the Chinese (who were considered as communist sympathisers) caused many Chinese to vacate their properties. Most of them moved to more urban areas.
[64] Bertrand, 'Ethnic Conflicts in Indonesia', 89.
[65] De Jonge and Nooteboom, 'Why the Madurese?', 464.
[66] Edi Petebang, 'Tension between ethnic groups obscures future', *The Jakarta Post* (15 February 2000).

1.2 Boundary reconstruction in Sambas

The roots of the conflict in West Kalimantan can be traced back to central government policies that granted numerous contracts to Jakarta-based mining, logging and plantation companies, and the introduction of laws that were in stride with *adat* (customary laws) which led to disputes over land and natural resources.[67] And amidst feelings of neglect, the Dayak saw the Madurese flourishing on land they considered theirs. The migrants from Madura did not make up the largest percentage of transmigrants in West Kalimantan, but unlike the more numerous Javanese, they often left transmigration settlements to seek work on plantations and logging sites. Economically, Madurese migrants fared slightly better than other ethnic groups. This was mostly because they were more willing to accept any available work and would do almost anything to work their way up. Which led to both amazement and jealousy among other ethnic groups.[68]

Madurese migrants also ventured into more urban areas. The Sambas district of West Kalimantan saw the arrival of ten thousand Madurese between 1996 and 1998. This was a large influx of people in an area where the Madurese used to make up less than 10 percent of the population.[69] And while Dayaks used to feel the presence of Madurese on the outskirts of the district, both Dayaks and Malays now felt increased competition from the migrants in the urban sector as well. Moreover, the Madurese were characterised as an isolationist group of people, and while intermarriages between Dayaks, Malays, and Madurese did occur, they tended to visit their own mosques and generally lived in separated communities.[70] And while the Madurese and Malays were both believers of the Islamic scriptures, the Dayaks largely subscribed to Christianity or followed their own native religion.

Jakarta's policies also shifted the balance of power and representation within West Kalimantan's government administration. The new found interest in the region brought a boost of commercial development which not only led to an influx of labour migrants, but led to an influx of government administrators as well.[71] In the period that Indonesia enjoyed a parliamentary democracy, before Suharto, there were multiple Dayak parties in Kalimantan. After Suharto's New Order came to power, many Dayaks were alleviated from local

[67] R. Achwan, H. Nugroho, D. Prayogo and S. Hadi, 'Peace and Development Analysis in West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan and Madura', *Overcoming Violent Conflict Volume 1* (2005) xii.
[68] De Jonge and Nooteboom, 'Why the Madurese?', 460.
[69] Achwan, et. al, *Overcoming Violent Conflict*, 12; Before the riots broke out in 1999, Sambas was composed of 9.4 percent Madurese 11 percent Chinese, 28 percent Dayaks, 47 percent Malays, and other making up the remaining 4.6 percent.
[70] Ibidem.
[71] HRW, *Communal Violence in West Kalimantan,* 9.

government positions for their alleged leftism.[72] Before this period, both the governor and four out of nine *bupati* (district heads) were Dayak. But in 1997, the year of the first large scale anti-Madurese violence, only one out of nine of West Kalimantan's districts was headed by a Dayak. In a conversation with *The Jakarta Post* Aspar Aswin, at that time governor of West Kalimantan and himself a Dayak, noted that despite making up 51 percent of the province they remained underrepresented. "There are even more Irianese in government in Irian Jaya than there are Dayaks in Government in Kalimantan."[73] But in the fall of the New Order the Dayak elites saw an opportunity for political upward mobility. Their (violent) campaign against the Madurese worked, and by 1999 they had retaken the governance of six districts.

The Sambas riot, however, was initially a conflict between Malays and Madurese. In 1998 there were talks to split the district of Sambas into separate eastern and western regions. After the violence in 1997 had ousted many Madurese from the area, Dayak political control of the eastern region, called Bengkayang, was largely unchallenged.[74] But the western coastal region of Sambas, where Malays made up nearly 80 percent of the population, was not as politically rigid. The Madurese were too few in numbers to pose a threat politically, but for the Malay the difficulty lay in controlling the streets. In 1998 the Forum Komunikasi Pemuda Melaya (Communication Forum of Malay Youth, FKPM) was formed. The FKPM would become the most influential force in Sambas politics for the next several years. The organisation was led by a local Malayan business man with interests ranging from building and infrastructure projects to gambling, extortion and protection rackets.[75] In the coastal region of Sambas this more informal end of the economy happened to be controlled by the Madurese. Davidson reasons that the Malay elite sought control of this network because "[…] without control of its crime, without respect from its police force, without control of informal service sectors such as local transport, how could Sambas be considered 'Malay'?"[76]

After earlier violent altercations between Malay and Madurese, large scale conflict broke out in February 1999 when a Madurese passenger stabbed a Malay bus conductor.[77] In swift response, Malays started forming neighbourhood militias under command of the FKPM.

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[72] HRW, *Communal Violence in West Kalimantan,* 10.
[73] Dini S. Djalal, 'Marginalized Dayaks Violently Assert Their Rights', *The Jakarta Post* (1997).
[74] Achwan, et. al, *Overcoming Violent Conflict*, 18.
[75] Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia. Small town wars* (New York 2007) 59; The FKPM was in essence a new name for an existing network of business relations that formalised previously mobilised networks of thugs (Achwan et al. 2005; Davidson 2003; Van Klinken 2007).
[76] Jamie S. Davidson, 'The politics of violence on an Indonesian periphery', *South East Asia Research* 11:1 (2003) 59-112, 85.
[77] HRW, *Communal Violence in West Kalimantan,* 23.

A month later the violence escalated drastically when a Dayak man was killed by a Madurese youth, bringing the Dayaks in on the side of the Malays. After the violence had subsided *The Jakarta Post* reported that those in power had stirred up civilian conflict in West Kalimantan.[78] This observation was made by academical researchers as well. According to Van Klinken, the "Malay moral panic" during the Sambas riot had "[…] the hallmarks of a chauvinistic scapegoating campaign conducted by actors close to power."[79] Davidson holds similar views, stating that "Malay leaders needed to stamp Sambas empathically as their own, to demonstrate that Sambas was to the Malay what Bengkayang was to the Dayak."[80]

When looking at the process of boundary making, the stereotypes that were burdened on the Madurese become apparent. The Madurese were seen as hot tempered, combative and vengeful. While almost always praised for their devotion to work even though "often in the same breath it is added that they are not suited for difficult work."[81] When it came to transmigrants, the Madurese were often seen as 'inferior' to the Javanese. With the people from Java describing the Madurese as "some of the lesser sort, but at the same time they were afraid of their hot temper and their slyness."[82] Boundary making starts by reducing a group who exhibits otherness, to just that, their otherness. In this process, similarities or common interest between groups might be overlooked. Their identity is reduced to this one-dimensional category and is cemented as belonging to the outgroup. Concerning this, Horowitz writes: "Once minimal attraction has done its work, intergroup similarity will not impede intergroup rivalry."[83]

When looking at the boundary maintenance, the Madurese migrants seem to have been the ones who guarded many aspects of the boundaries between the different ethnic groups. They chose to practise their Islamic fate separately from Malay Muslims and they often lived in separate residential areas. Interestingly enough, while the Madurese were heavily stereotyped and reduced to their otherness, the Dayaks felt like the Madurese often looked down on them and perceived them as 'backwards' and 'uncivilised'.[84] Yet, when Dayaks were interviewed after the riots and were questioned about the Madurese, they would start by evoking all the stereotypes that characterised the migrants, but when asked about their own experiences with

[78] Edi Petebang, 'Tension between ethnic groups obscures future', *The Jakarta Post* (15 February 2000).
[79] Van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia*, 61.
[80] Davidson, 'The politics of violence on an Indonesian periphery', 84.
[81] Huub de Jonge, 'Stereotypes of the Madurese', *Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, International Workshop on Indonesian Studies no. 6* (1991) 10.
[82] De Jonge, 'Stereotypes of the Madurese', 10.
[83] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, 50.
[84] ICG Asia Report, *Communal Violence in Indonesia*, 2.

them, they explained that "they themselves had nothing but friendly relations with their Madurese or Dayak neighbours. The evil came from elsewhere."[85] This is in line with Van Klinken his statement on the Sambas riot being a scapegoating campaign by people close to power. The Malay on the other hand, were yearning to break free from their stereotype. Malays were called *pengecut* (chicken), *krupuk* (rice crackers), and *penakut* (coward) by the Dayaks and Madurese.[86] In the lower -and illegal ends of the economy, the sector whereof the Malays sought control, these stereotypes weight heavily. So, with the regions political power struggle in mind, the Malays needed to prove that they could hold their own as stewards of Sambas.

Boundaries between the ethnic group started to decay after 1998 when Dayaks enjoyed their political resurgence. This resurgence went hand in hand with a push for the (re)introduction of more *adat*. Davidson argues that these laws were disproportionately being applied to non-Dayaks and started "seeping beyond traditional boundaries".[87] Besides the above mentioned informal or social forms of boundary maintenance, boundaries between groups can also be guarded by law, and in the case of West Kalimantan, by structural marginalisation and political underrepresentation. A large influx of economic (trans)migrants, in combination with policies that favoured these newcomers, had already made the distinctions between West Kalimantan's in- and outgroups less defined. Now, the fall of the New Order brought opportunities to reconstruct group boundaries.

Without leaning too much into the institutional theories that single handily try to explain Indonesia's conflicts, the end of the New Order regime did have an important impact on the boundary defence of the ethnic groups involved. "Crucial for violence to erupt", Lucassen writes, "is the role of the state that actually may be unable to guarantee public order, but more often turn a blind eye to vigilantism, or even joins in with or leads the attackers."[88] In Tajima's study on ethnic violence in Indonesia he showed that throughout the New Order period the military's repressive capability helped to prevent communal conflict, albeit through violent means.[89] In the first years after Suharto's downfall calls for security reform, such as the separation of police and military, contributed to the states inability or unwillingness to intervene effectively. This is one of the main reasons why small-scale violence had more room to escalate, collective violence became more rampant, and vigilantism went unchecked. However, it should be noted that the collective violence against the Madurese between 1996 and 1997, a year before

[85] Achwan, Nugroho, Prayogo, Hadi, *Overcoming Violent Conflict*, 14.
[86] Davidson, 'The politics of violence on an Indonesian periphery', 85.
[87] Ibidem, 85.
[88] Lucassen, 'Xenophobic Mob Violence Against Free Labour Migrants', 6.
[89] Tajima, 'Explaining Ethnic Violence in Indonesia', 115.

the New Order was unseated, caused more casualties and was larger in scale than the violence in the post-Suharto period.[90]

After the violence subsided, more than five hundred Madurece had been killed, and tens of thousands had been displaced. Afterwards, inter-group boundaries were for ever changed. The boundaries between Madurese, Malays, and Dayaks were created under Sukarno, then changed under Suharto and now, amidst the economic and political uncertainty after the New Order's downfall, the existing boundaries could no longer be maintained. Against the background of what Pelluso and Harwell called a "West Kalimantan-specific experience of Suharto's New Order territorial politics" and through a combination of strongly imbedded cultural stereotypes, power hungry elites, and economic-political disparities the Madurese became the main victims of a violent process of boundary reconstruction.

[90] Refugee Review Tribunal, *Indonesia: 1. Where is Singawang or Singkawang, Indonesia? 2. Where is Setia Budi? 3. Is there any record of ethnic (racial), religious, or political violence in Singkawang or Setia Budi? 4. Are there any references to the authorities not protecting the Chinese in Kalimantan?* (2005).

2. Poso

This chapter focuses on the district of Poso in Central Sulawesi; exploring its demographic composition, the influence of (trans)migration on its population, and the dynamics between Muslim in-migrants and the indigenous Protestant population. It examines the influence of population shifts, the consequences of New Order policies, economic disparities, and the significance of religion and ethnicity in shaping the boundaries between natives and newcomers.

2.1 Fractured harmony

Poso is one of eight districts in the province of Central Sulawesi. The district lies in mountainous terrain and is situated on the gulf. The cities and coastal areas have a primarily Muslim population while the mountainous uplands are populated by an indigenous Protestant population. This population consists of several ethno-linguistic groups that include the Pamona, Mori, Napu, and Bada peoples.[91] Dutch missionary action started at the turn of the twentieth century and converted the majority of the district's interior to Christianity. But nearing the end of the 1990's, Muslims came to make up slightly more than 60 percent of Poso's total population.[92] This number is made up of a smaller indigenous Muslim population and a larger number of Muslim migrants. Additionally, the region had a long tradition of Arab traders settling along the coasts, and generations later their descendants still hold important functions in Muslim religious and educational institutions.[93]

For a long time, Sulawesi was not a popular destination for setting up transmigration projects. Between 1950 and 1974 the program settled 142.100 transmigrants of which 77 percent arrived on Sumatra and 11.5 percent in Kalimantan. While the remaining 11.5 percent was settled on Sulawesi and the other outer islands.[94] After 1975, popular transmigration locations were starting to run out of land to cultivate.

[91] Human Rights Watch, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', *Indonesia* 14:9 (2002) 6.
[92] Ibidem, 6.
[93] Ibidem.
[94] Hafied A. Gany, The Irrigation-Based Transmigration Program in Indonesia, 87.

Therefore, the legal and organisation chief of the transmigration program announced in 1985 that

"Sumatra, Kalimantan[95] and Sulawesi with the exception of Central Sulawesi will be closed for spoon-fed transmigrants beginning next year because of land shortages. Only those migrants who leave on their own will be accepted because they pose no financial burden to the government."[96]

From 1975 till 1990 Central Sulawesi would take in 139.465 transmigrants while West Kalimantan, a province more than twice Central Sulawesi its size, would receive 102.520 transmigrants.[97] Most of these transmigrants were from predominantly Muslim islands such as Java and Lombok.

Central Sulawesi also saw the arrival of many spontaneous migrants who either came on their own, moved through the transmigration program as non-government sponsored migrants or set part from North and South Sulawesi to find better economic opportunities in Central Sulawesi.[98] The majority of these labour migrants where Muslims and came from the Makasar, Mandar and Bugis communities. The construction of the Trans Sulawesi highway further helped to make Central Sulawesi more reachable for these inter-provincial migrants.[99] Some of them moved to the predominantly Christian uplands, but most settled in areas where their fellow Muslims held the majority. In addition, more labour migrants started to arrive after the start of the financial crisis in 1997. Muslim presence in the region grew quick. And at the beginning of the 1990's almost all key sectors of Central Sulawesi's economy were controlled by migrants.[100] Where Muslim migrants came to dominate crucial sectors of the economy, the native Protestants had for long held on to important political positions. But with a majority Muslim population at the end of the New Order, this became less certain too. Between 1989 and 1999 the percentage of Christian office holders in the top fifty government positions dropped from 54 percent to 39 percent, losing this majority as well.[101]

[95] This did not hold true, since the Kalimantan region would receive the majority of transmigrants between 1985 and 1990; See Bertrand 2004.
[96] Otten, 'Transmigrasi', 46.
[97] Jaques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* (Cambridge 2004) 93.
[98] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 6.
[99] Dave McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men. Interreligious Violence in Poso*, Indonesia (Leiden-Boston 2013) 26.
[100] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 6.
[101] Schulze, 'The "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflict', 2106.

This growing percentage of Muslim in-migrants and Muslim office holders did not come out of nowhere. During the New Order regime Muslim groups where somewhat excluded from political organisations. But by the mid-1990's this policy had clearly shifted. This shift fell together with a sharp increase of appointed military officers who were devout Muslims, and with the creation of the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) headed by vice president B.J. Habibie.[102] While these two components do not tell the whole story of, what Bertrand calls "Suharto's puzzling nurturing of Islamic groups after decades of repressing them.", it is worth mentioning that local government in Central Sulawesi was even more heavily militarised than in other parts of Indonesia.[103] Moreover, the ICMI pushed hard to increase the number of Muslims in leading positions, especially in Indonesia's eastern provinces. Consequently, it was not only the number of Muslims in political and military positions that increased, but virtually all important offices of the executive and legislative were occupied by members of ICMI, many of them migrants.[104]

In resemblance with Sambas, there were plans to divide Poso into two districts. Tensions over who should lead the districts got more strained when Muslims came to dominate the political field. Previously it had been customary that a Muslim *bupati* would have a Protestant *sekwilda* (secretary) and vice versa. This informal 'power-sharing' agreement fell apart in 1999 when Muslims – who were originally from Morowali, the area that split off from Poso – came to hold the positions of *bupati*, assistant *bupati*, direct assembly chair, and mayor of Poso.[105] Moreover, the district had no major industries and lacked the presence of a developed private sector. Because of this, the district relied on state resources that were, in the words of political scientist Dave McRae, "disproportionately central to the local economy."[106] People who did not work the land, being left with few options, were practically designated to compete for government jobs and contracts. This competition took place through rivalling patronage networks that organised themselves along religious and communal lines.[107] This often-happened trough a system of 'brokerage'. In *Dynamics of Contention*, 'brokerage' is defined as "the linking of two or more previously unconnected social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with one another and/or with yet other sites."[108]

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[102] Bertrand, 'Ethnic Conflicts in Indonesia', 94; After Suharto abdicated, B.J. Habibie became the third president of Indonesia for the period of May 1998 and October 1999.
[103] Bertrand, 'Ethnic Conflicts in Indonesia', 28.
[104] Schulze, 'The "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflict', 2107
[105] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 7.
[106] McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men*, 31.
[107] Ibidem.
[108] McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 102.

Brokerage was important for both economy and politics, but appears to have played a major part in the escalation of violence as well. In Poso, Van Klinken argues, power hungry elites acted as key brokers who were crucial for the escalation of violence, as they formed new alliances and mobilised large groups of people.[109] He strengthens his argument by emphasising that each of the four phases of Poso's conflict coincided with a moment of political transition. The outbreak of violence in December 1998 did occur at a moment of fierce competition over the selection of the next *bupati*. As the head of local administration and the government's representative at district level, the *bupati* had control of the local patronage networks. The position had become even more desirable after the fall of the New Order, since decentralisation policies had given more authority to local governments and a larger share of revenue could be kept at the local level.[110] In turn, this revenue would trickle down to the people holding government jobs and contracts. Since a Muslim was elected as *bupati* in 1999, this disproportionally benefited Muslim patronage networks.

However, the largest part of Poso its population worked in agriculture and had less affinity for urban politics. Throughout the New Order era, agriculture was good for about half of the district its gross domestic product.[111] Agriculture was focused on cultivating cash crops such as cloves, coffee, and especially cacao. The latter had experienced a planting boom during the 1990's. Cacao cultivation had already been a profitable business before the financial crisis of 1997 caused the rupiah price of cacao to shoot up. In combination with higher global prices, this made the crop a goldmine for the ones who had planted it in time.[112] As was recognisable in other places in Indonesia, migrants had been quicker to adapt innovations in agriculture then indigenous farmers. And in Poso, especially the Muslim Bugis and Javanese migrants had driven the expansion of cacao plantings. In her research on 'Cocoa and Class in Upland Sulawesi', anthropologist Tania Li found that this inadvertently led to the class creation of agrarian haves and have-nots.[113]

In likeness to West Kalimantan, native farmers in Poso saw migrants ignoring *adat* and flourishing on land that traditionally had belonged to them. This could happen by way of brokerage as well. Li provides an example hereof, showing one of the reasons why Muslim in-migrants increasingly found their way to Poso, and how they were indifferent to local *adat*.

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[109] Van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia*, 76.
[110] McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men*, 39.
[111] McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men*, 32.
[112] Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi', 56.
[113] Tania Murray Li, 'Local Histories, Global Markets: Cocoa and Class in Upland Sulawesi', *Development and Change* 33:3 (2002) 415-437.

Bugis in-migrants from South Sulawesi would buy large plots of land directly from village officials, or would buy them with their agreement and backing (with little concern for *adat*). These Bugis migrants, acting as brokers, would then travel back to their own villages to recruit settlers, offering them salaries and loans until they could buy the land in question.[114] Thus creating a cyclical pattern of arriving migrants. After the financial crisis even more migrants arrived, often through brokers, and many of them bought plots of land to cultivate cacao as well.[115]

Despite the pivotal impact of in-migration, the arrival of large groups of culturally and religiously different ethnicities is often presented as an afterthought in literature that discusses the Poso conflict. The inter-religious approach for understanding the outbreak of violence is the dominant narrative adopted by national and international media, government documents, and by most non-governmental organisations as well. However, Schulze found that during the Poso conflict, Christian natives had initially little to gain from a religious narrative within an Indonesian context. Between 2000 and 2001, however, a religious narrative would serve them better than an ethnic one, since it could tap in to (mainly western) concerns about the rise of militant Islam.[116] This appeal for sympathy worked. In July 2000, American senator John Ashcroft addressed congress about the violence in Indonesia. The senator orated: "To my dismay, the Indonesian government has had little success in protecting Christians."[117] Besides calls for intervention and the obligatory outrage, not much was (or could have been) done by western nations.

Aragon also noted how religious symbolism overshadowed more complex economic realities. Nonetheless, one's religious affiliation did come to matter a great deal for holding government offices or acquiring labour opportunities. So, during the already unstable post-Suharto period, religion interacted with Poso's political and economic structure in a destructive manner. Aragon argues that the conflict that followed was "[…] not about religious doctrines or practices, but about the political economy of being Protestant (or Catholic) and Muslim."[118] Van Klinken his observations diverge slightly from abovementioned arguments. He agrees that the most serious grievances in Poso its periphery were economic and not religious. But while resentment over economic disparities and land rights may have been the decisive factors that

[114] Li, 'Cocoa and Class in Upland Sulawesi', 429.
[115] Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi', 56.
[116] Schulze, 'The "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflict', 2108.
[117] Senator John Ashcroft addressing 'The horrible violence in Indonesia', *United States Congressional Record* rec. S7810 (27 July 2000).
[118] Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi', 47.

helped to escalate the conflict, Van Klinken argues, they did not provide a route along which the violence intensified, religion did.[119] This is an accurate observation. But concerning the actual outbreak violence, Van Klinken and Aragon agree that while the conflict certainly had a religious face, religion was not the decisive catalyst for the outbreak of violence in Poso.

In the end, it is always difficult to pinpoint a direct cause for the outbreak of large-scale collective violence. And this should neither be desirable. Simmering tensions due to in-migration, economic disparities, political power struggles, and party loyalty were all interwoven. And after the fall of the New Order, these simmering tensions received room to boil over. However, it is possible to analyse the process of boundary making, maintenance, and defence in order to pinpoint fault lines that led to the outbreak of collective violence. The next section is dedicated to this analysis.

[119] Van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia*, 75.

2.2 Crumbling boundaries in Poso

The process of constructing boundaries, guarding them, and - if needed, defending them is often highly dynamic. Demographic shifts, innovations, newly implemented legislation, or collapsing governments can all make a profound impact on existing boundaries. The conflict in Poso involved multiple ethnicities, was both rural and urban, lacked competent governance, and spiralled into three years of conflict, of which two were more akin to all out religious warfare than to intercommunal violence. In the period leading up to the violence, boundaries were successfully created and maintained, right up to the point when they could no longer be defended and violence broke out in December 1998.

For a long time, the people in Poso were in no need of strictly defined group boundaries. The region had become one of the most successful Dutch missionary sites and besides the presence of coastal Muslim communities, Poso had a largely Christian population. Naturally, within this population there were different ethnic groups with their own traditions, histories, and cultures. While most natives adopted Protestantism, *Adat* and cultural practises were there to stay. Then, in the second half of the twentieth century, profound demographic and societal shifts took place. Around the 1950's, the number of Protestants and Muslim was drawing closer together. In-migration was the main driving force behind large sums of arriving Muslims. And since the mid 1980's they represented a clear majority in the district. Figures derived form Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) show that in 2001, the year the conflict came to a close, Muslims and Christians in Poso accounted for 65,8 and 28,1 percent of the population respectively.[120] By 2005, however, Christians had retaken the majority. They made up 58 percent of the population while 38 percent of the people followed Islam.[121] This strong shift in demography was not due to an exodus, but rather to the redrawing of district boundaries in 1999, and again in 2004. For an analysis of the boundary process, the years nearing the end of the Suharto era are the most pivotal.

As in West Kalimantan, the large influx of migrants went hand in hand with the introduction of new state legislation. The introduction of the Law on Village Government (1979) had a profound impact on Poso. The law aimed to standardise traditional village government across Indonesia's islands and was to replace 'outdated' systems of government with a more modern one.[122] The New Order its efforts to modernise and uniformise Indonesia stripped customary leaders of their authority and transferred it to the national civil service,

[120] Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), *Sulawesi Tengah in Figures* (2001) 150.
[121] Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), *Sulawesi Tengah in Figures* (2005) 149.
[122] Ibidem, 2101

increasing political control from Jakarta and shifting socio-political hierarchies. Where in-migrants in Central Sulawesi previously were expected to show deference to local elders and *adat*, these expectations were increasingly not being met nearing the end of the New Order.[123] And as in-migrants came to see themselves as Indonesian citizens, they felt like they were just as entitled to land and resource allocation as the region's long-term residents. This also meant that group boundaries were gradually becoming harder to preserve. Where the native Christians used to belong to the ingroup, the large influx of migrants made the distinction between both groups more precarious.

Where Christians previously enjoyed privileged access to leading military and bureaucratic positions during the early years of New Order rule, these roles were now being reversed. The suspicion that the government wanted to keep the Christian population small and wanted to reduce indigenous populations was not unique to West Kalimantan's Dayaks. Many people who were native to Indonesia's outer islands felt like the transmigration program, accompanied by legislation that favoured newcomers, was aimed at the 'Javanisation' and 'Islamisation' of Indonesia its outer regions.[124] The Indonesian government, however, had never hidden transmigration its second agenda. In two letters from 1885, human rights organisation Survival International questioned E.M. Schoo, then minister of Development Coordination, to clarify the Dutch government its position in relation to Indonesia's transmigration program. They refer to a speech from the Minister for Transmigration wherein he states:

"[…] we have one native country, Indonesia; one language, the Indonesian language. By way of Transmigration, we will try to realize what has been pledged, to integrate all the ethnic groups into one nation, the Indonesian nation."[125]

Pertaining the consequences of transmigration, the minister suggested that "The different ethnic groups will in the long run disappear because of integration." and "There will be one kind of man […]."[126] It requires little imagination to understand why the native populations of popular (trans)migration sites were distrustful of arriving migrants.

[123] Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi', 57.
[124] Ibidem, 2106.
[125] National Archive The Hague, Department of Foreign Affairs, Letters from Human rights organisation Survival International written to E.M. Schoo (22 November 1985).
[126] Schulze, 'The "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflict', 2106.

When the process of decentralisation started after the collapse of the New Order, native Christians could see clearly how their societal position had changed. In West Kalimantan, eroding boundaries between the in- and outgroup had already been the reason for the outbreak of extreme violence before the end of the New Order.[127] Tension in Poso, however, kept increasing up until the point that the New Order collapsed. The intensity and longevity of the conflict reflected this. The following description by Horowitz serves as an interesting analogy:

"[…] a group whose land has been partly conquered may develop a domestic version of *revanche.* An indigenous group that was colonized and forced to abide the entry of ethnic strangers for colonial economic purposes may later regard their presence as illegitimate *ab initio.*"[128]

Colonialism is by definition not the right word to describe the large amounts of state sponsored migrants that were send to Indonesia's outer islands. But the analogy still stands. New Order policies of transmigration, modernisation, and uniformization led to several forms of marginalisation that indigenous people often experienced as akin to Javanese colonialism.[129]

As the influence form Jakarta started to wane during the post-Suharto period, disparities between groups were laid bare. The prosperity of Muslim migrants on Poso's farmlands had created, as Li formulated, classes of agrarian haves and have-nots. In other words, the successes of Muslim migrants had reversed the dynamic between the traditional ingroup (native Protestants) and the historic outgroup (Muslim migrants). And under the New Order, these new boundaries could successfully be maintained. Personal reports obtained by Aragon seem to confirm this. In the correspondence, a Protestant claimed that they "had long been 'stepped on", adding that they were fearful that their community would become vengeful.[130] By looking at the conflict phases this does seem to be the case.

The first phase of the conflict started on Christmas eve in December 1998, which fell during Ramadan that year, when a Protestant youth stabbed a Muslim boy.[131] In retaliation, several churches were set alight and some skirmishes broke out between Protestant and Muslim youths. This happened at a time of unrest and political competition between two rivalling patronage networks. In their documentation of the violence in Poso, HRW reports that the

[127] Although it should be noted that state authority was already crumble amidst the conflict in 1996/97.
[128] Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 30.
[129] Schulze, 'The "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflict', 2097.
[130] Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi', 62.
[131] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 14.

chronology of the conflict suggests a correlation between the 'question of powers sharing' and the outbreak of collective violence.[132] The first phase of violence broke out in December 1998, just after the *bupati* of Poso declared that he would not seek re-election. The second phase of violence broke out in April 2000, at a time where threats were being made over the selection of *sekwilda* candidates. And the fourth phase coincided with the actual election of a new *sekwilda* in July 2001.[133]

The first two phases of the violence were characterised by skirmishes between Protestant and Muslim youths, and the burning of (mostly) Protestant properties and churches. Seven people were killed during this period, four of them shot by police.[134] In these two phases, street battles were fought between migrant Bugis and natives from the upland Pamona and Mori communities. Banners that linked Christian combatants to patronage networks were also hanged in, what Christian analysts considered to be, attempts to destabilise the election campaign of a Protestant politician running for *bupati*.[135] In comparison to the outbreak of large-scale violence in the next phase of the conflict, the first to phases were relatively tame. For this reason, this first period of escalations can be considered as a heightened form of boundary defence by the Muslim community. Attacks by Protestant youths had been responsible for the escalation of violence in the two first phases. And in both instances, Poso's Muslims had readily responded with arson, vandalism, battery and assault. For these offences no one had been prosecuted.[136] Further aggravating the Protestant community.

Boundary defence failed when the third phase of conflict began, and large groups of Christians launched a revenge attack on the district's Muslim population. A minimum of 246 people, mostly Muslims, were killed when the use of overwhelming lethal violence took them by surprise.[137] This was such a steep escalation of violence that many police and government officials abandoned their posts and some security officers even participated in the violence. A month later, on the 23rd of June, The Jakarta Post reported that "[…] 28 military members are being questioned as there are strong indications they were involved in the unrest."[138] When the state is no longer able to guarantee public order and relinquishes the monopoly of violence, the boundary defence is left up to the people. In interviews conducted by HRW, multiple residents expressed that the effective and unbiased deployment of security personnel could have ended

[132] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 8.
[133] Ibidem.
[134] McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men*, 39.
[135] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 15.
[136] McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men*, 9.
[137] McRae, *A Few Poorly Organised Men*, 6.
[138] 'Military officer's role in Poso riots investigated', *The Jakarta Post*, (published on 23 June 2000).

the conflict when it began in 1998.[139] After decades of militarism and authoritarian rule, Poso residents had become suspicious, even scared, of police and military institutions. Or so was the reasoning by Poso's four main political parties. In the anticipation of the elections in June 1999, wrote The Jakarta Post, the leaders of the four parties had rejected the presence of military troops to secure the election campaigns. The politicians argued that it would cause a sense of fear among the public and said the presence of troops was "[…] inconsistent with their agreement to secure their campaign by themselves."[140]

The conflict phases coincided with moments of political transition and all wore a distinct religious face. But, the retaliatory nature of the violence in the beginning of the third phase suggests that this escalation stemmed more from a place of jealousy, resentment, and frustration. Especially between native Protestants and migrant Muslims in Poso's periphery. In an interview conducted by Kirsten E. Schulze in 2003, a local reverend said that during the third phase of the conflict "They [referring to native Pamona people] targeted the Bugis, Gorontalo and Javanese because they were an economic threat … and because they were aggressive."[141] Referring to the same attack as quoted above, another reverend claimed that one Pamona youth returned with fifty identity cards which he had taken off the people he had killed. All identity cards belonged to migrants.[142] Another instance where Javanese migrants were singled out was the attack on Sintuwulemba village, also known as Kilo Nine. The residents of the village were mostly Javanese cacao farmers who had moved to Poso when an earlier attempt at settlement in South Sulawesi had failed.[143] In 2000 on May 23, they day the Christian retaliations began, the village was attacked by a mob of machete and gun wielding Pamona's. Thirty-nine bodies were later found in three mass graves, while Muslim analysts estimated 191 people were killed in the attack.[144] According to Aragon, the attack came from a feeling of jealousy as Protestant Pamona farmers "had watched their ancestral holdings shrink as the migrants continued to purchase more land."[145]

The fourth phase of the conflict escalated to civil war proportions. Now, violence between mainly Protestant Pamona's and Bugis Muslims had become widespread and the conflict continued along the same ethnic and economic fronts as earlier. In urban centres most of the fighting had taken place near shops and markets while in rural areas the fighting centred

[139] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 2.
[140] 'Army Troops not Wanted', *The Jakarta Post*, (published on 21 June 1999).
[141] Schulze, 'The "ethnic" in Indonesia's communal conflict', 2104.
[142] Ibidem.
[143] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 17.
[144] Ibidem.
[145] Aragon, 'Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi', 57.

around cacao groves. However, the conflict dynamics changed with the arrival of the radical Muslim group Laskar Jihad.[146] Their arrival cemented the violence as a religious conflict and made the fighting more organised and deadly. After four more months of intense conflict, the conflict came to an end in December 2001 when both parties signed the Malino Declaration. The peace deal was coordinated by the Minister of People's Welfare Yusuf Kalla, a native from Sulawesi himself, and despite occasional bombings and violence, the peace deal did hold.

In the years leading up to the downfall of the New Order, Poso's natives had seen the arrival of increasingly more Muslim migrants. There were fixed boundaries in place, but as migrants became more dominant in urban centres, political spheres, and on farmlands the traditional in- outgroup dynamics were starting to reverse. This process was guarded by New Order legislation and the advance of Muslim political influence. Poso's migrants wanted to ascertain the new in- outgroup dynamics, while the native population wanted to rebuild the boundaries that had been crumbling. The fall of the New Order came at an opportune moment to start these processes. Large-scale collective violence broke out when the state could no longer, or was unwilling, to guarantee public order. Patronage networks, organised along religious and communal lines, were able to mobilise large groups of people; eventually increasing the size of the conflict to civil war proportions.

[146] HRW, 'Breakdown: Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi', 11.

3. Papua

During the post-Suharto period, surmounting tension between natives and migrants led in West Kalimantan and Central Sulawesi to the outbreak of large-scale collective violence. All the elements that led to these outbreaks were also present in Papua, yet, violence of the same proportions did not break out. This chapter zooms in on this inconsistency by examining how, and by whom, groups boundaries were made, how they were sustained, and how they were defended.

3.1 Broken promises

Papua is the western half of the island of New Guinea. Indonesia based its claims to Papua on the fact that the region had been part of the Dutch colonial empire, and was therefore a non-negotiable part of the successor state. The period between Indonesia's independence and their acquisition of Papua in 1963 proved to be crucial, and can be considered as responsible for many grievances that are being felt on the island to this day.[147] This had everything to do with false hope. After the Dutch were expelled from newly independent Indonesia, they re-established their rule over, what was back then called, West New Guinea. The Dutch government began to prepare the territory for independence which meant a rapid build-up of infrastructure, ports, and roads; while increased government spending led to better education, urbanisation and more indigenous political participation.[148]

Politically, the status of West New Guinea was in dispute. Sukarno launched a campaign to reunify the territory with the rest of Indonesia. International support, notably by the United States who had interests in countering communist influences in Indonesia, increasingly stood behind Sukarno.[149] This left the Netherlands with basically no other options than going to war over the territory, or to agree with Indonesia's plans for Papua's acquisition. In 1962, the signing of the New York Agreement temporarily handed the control of Irian Barat, as it was called back then, to an interim United Nations Temporary Executive Authority, after which Indonesia would assume control of the territory.[150] Native Papuans, who had grown accustomed

[147] Jim Elmslie, *Irian Jaya - Under the Gun: Indonesian Economic Development Versus West Papuan Nationalism* (Honolulu 2002) 10.
[148] Stuart Upton, The impact of migration on the people of Papua, Indonesia. A historical demographic analysis (dissertation, University of New South Wales 2009 120; It should be noted that despite these advances, West New Guinea was still more akin to a colony run along racial lines. With a clear racial hierarchy where Dutch and Eurasian people higher upon the societal ladder.
[149] Elmslie, *Irian Jaya - Under the Gun*, 12.
[150] Ibidem, 12.

to the notion of future independence, now saw a new wave of colonisation in their future. Part of the New York Agreement was the promise of an Act of Free Choice; a referendum to secure majority approval before the Western half of New Guinea would become an official part of Indonesia.[151] The referendum was a farce. The Indonesian government appointed all 1025 'community leaders' who, under coercion, unanimously voted for integration into Indonesia. Theys Eluay, one of the hand-picked community leaders, told the *The Jakarta Post*: "If we had not voted for integration (with Indonesia), our houses would have been burned down and our families slaughtered."[152] Today, Papuans still feel betrayed as they hold on to a promise once made.

By the 1970's Irian Jaya[153], as the land came to be called, was undergoing fast social, economic, and demographic changes. It is difficult to find exact numbers on Papua's demography. Official transmigration numbers are hard to come by and for a long-time researchers found the area to be unsafe for fieldwork. Therefore, Researchers puzzle together their own estimation based on official numbers, Indonesian sources, and research from colleagues. In a policy paper on 'Migration, Economic Change, and the Papua Conflict', McGibbon estimates that the government relocated over 220 thousand people to Papua between 1972 and 1999.[154] In *Settling for Less. Why States Colonize and Why they Stop*, Lachlan McNamee puts this number at approximately 300 thousand people over the same period.[155] This number might as well have been higher. In a memorandum sent by the Dutch consulate to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1985, it is mentioned that a recent study, commissioned by the Indonesian government, estimated that there were already more than 300 thousand people living in transmigration sites.[156]

While Papua became one of the most popular transmigration destinations, especially after earlier transmigration areas were deemed to be full, the number of transmigrants was still dwarfed by the number of spontaneous migrants. This steep increase in migrant numbers was mainly due to the introduction of the Act of Free Choice in 1969 and the 'Go East' program. This program aimed to attract more people by expanding hotels, airports, roads, and tourism infrastructure. It seems to have worked, as many economic migrants followed. According to

[151] Ibidem, 13.
[152] Gwynne Dyer, 'West Papua – Will it become the next East Timor for Indonesia?', *The Jakarta Post* (26 October 2000).
[153] The western half of New Guinea has had many names over the years. To avoid confusion, from now on I will use the name Papua.
[154] McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril', 23.
[155] Lachlan McNamee, *Settling for Less. Why States Colonize and Why they Stop* (Princeton 2023) 59.
[156] National Archive The Hague, Memorandum from the Dutch consulate, 'Transmigratie West-Irian; kritiek van internationale milieu organisatie' (28 May 1985).

McGibbon, for every transmigrant that moved to Papua between 1970 and 1999, three spontaneous migrants followed.[157] This economic migration was mostly directed to urban centres and whereas most transmigrants came from Java, most spontaneous migrants came from Sulawesi. Around 2000, migrants made up two out of every three residents in Papua's urban centres.[158]

Most transmigrants, however, were initially settled in rural areas close to the border with Papua New Guinea. This is also were the most vocal opposition against Indonesian rule originated from. The most militant expression of this came from the Free Papua Organisation (OPM), which was formed during the 1960's. When Papua New Guinea became independent from Australia in 1975, this did not only provide an example of an independent Papuan state, but also strengthened the presence of OPM in the highlands along Papua and Papua New Guinea its border.[159] The fact that transmigrant sites increasingly rose up around this stretch of land led many observers to believe that this was proof of how Jakarta used the transmigration project for pacification and security purposes. As mentioned in the previous chapter, there is not much need for speculation about the New Order's secondary agenda for transmigration. In an article titled 'The Rape of West Papua', published in a special issue of The Ecologist from 1986, former eastern region lieutenant-general Kahpi is quoted as saying that transmigration was very important for development, and that this was

"[…] especially the case in strategic areas, like border zones … former soldiers in such areas are very important to create a 'buffer zone' and all such transmigrants would have the function of guarding against crossers of the Indonesia-PNG border, thus acting like a 'security belt' in the border district."[160]

Another important development that led to an increase of transmigration sites was the discovery of the Grasberg mine, one of the largest gold deposits in the world. Before the discovery of the mine there had been no been no transmigration to the region but, according to McNamee, the opening of the mine in 1989 led to a substantial increase in transmigrant settlement in and around the area of the mine. McNamee reconstructs the timing and location of state-sponsored migration to provide strong evidence that the "[…] colonisation of West

[157] McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril', 23.
[158] Upton, The impact of migration on the people of Papua, 16.
[159] McNamee, *Why States Colonize and Why they Stop*, 63.
[160] Marcus Colchester, 'The Rape of West Papua', *The Ecologist* 16:2/3 (1986) 102-103, 103.

Papua has indeed been driven by the twin goals of resource extraction and coercive state building."[161] The isolated town of Timika lies close to the Grasberg mine and saw an influx of economic migrants as well. The increasing number of migrants led to growing tensions and on multiple occasions violence broke out between natives and newcomers.

In Papua's rural regions, indigenous people were frustrated by New Order policies that targeted their traditional lands. The Basic Forestry Law of 1967 had made Indonesia's forests property of the state. The piece of legislation opens by proclaiming that "[…] forests, as the blessing and mandate of the One Almighty God for the Nation of Indonesia, is an asset controlled by the state, which provides manifold benefit for human beings."[162] Then, the fourth point of the first article declares: "State forest shall be a forest located on lands bearing no ownership rights."[163] What made this law so devious was the fact that many indigenous population based their land ownership on *adat*, not on formalised ownership rights. As could be seen in West Kalimantan and Central Sulawesi, the dismissal of customary laws led to surmounting grievances under the indigenous Papuan population.

These grievances in Papua's border region were mostly acted upon by the OPM. While the organisation had become the main form of resistance against Indonesian repression, it was not a singular entity. The OPM was made up of multiple factions of disaffected indigenous people from a number of ethnic backgrounds.[164] The loose-knit group of separatists was led by an alienated elite who had received modern education under Dutch rule, and remembered the promise of an independent Papua vividly. Where later generations of leaders would defend their struggle for independence on legal and political grounds, the first generation under New Order control opposed Indonesian rule based on difference in history, religion, and culture.[165] Suharto on the other hand, believed that Indonesians shared a common sense of identity and that by the mixing of ethnic groups, national unity would be strengthened.[166] This was a commendable thought, but especially in the case of Papua, this proved not to be reality. Jim Elmslie, writer of *Irian Jaya – Under the Gun* (2002) accurately describes why Papua did not fit the New Order mould:

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[161] McNamee, *Why States Colonize and Why they Stop*, 60.
[162] Ministry of Forestry Affairs, Forestry Act No. 41 of 1999 (30 September 1999).
[163] Ibidem.
[164] Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, 'A new kind of self-determination in Papua. The choice between independence and autonomy' in: D.F. Anwar, H. Bouvier, G. Smith and R. Tol eds., *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific. Histories, Political Economies and Policies* (Jakarta 2005) 211-236, 211.
[165] Ibidem, 221; This first generation of leaders, however, were naturally against economic, racial, and political marginalisation as well.
[166] ICG Asia Report n.19, *Communal Violence in Indonesia*, 13.

"Irian Jaya was not involved in the 'trials of fire' that forged the nation. The war of liberation against the Dutch, and the early turbulent years did not include Irian Jaya; there are not the bonds of shared hardship that bind the rest of the nation."[167]

Despite this, every form of resistance against Indonesian rule has been squashed violently. After the opening of the Grasberg mine, there were some cases where small scale violence broke out between transmigrants and Papuans.[168] And in the town of Timika, tensions between natives and economic migrants escalated more than once into inter-group violence. But despite small outbreaks of conflict, large-scale violence between Papuans and migrants remained relatively rare compared to other Indonesian islands. Clashes between natives and newcomers occurred a little more often during the post-Suharto period: in Entrop in 1999 and 2000, and Sentani in 2000.[169] The deadliest conflict took place in 2000 in the town of Wamena. Violence broke out between native Papuans and security forces when the latter tried to take down the Morning Star flag, the official flag of Papuan independence. In the ensuing unrest, native tribesmen, armed with only bows and arrows, directed their anger at a nearby block of migrant houses. After the violence subsided, more than thirty people were killed and thousands of migrants had fled Wamena.[170]

While the grievances experienced by the indigenous Papuan population or on par with, or even surpass, the experiences of the native populations of West Kalimantan and Central Sulawesi (if such a thing could ever be measured), the same type of large-scale collective violence against migrants has not eventuated in Papua. The rest of this chapter addresses this discrepancy by analysing how native-migrant group boundaries were made, maintained, and defended in Papua.

[167] Elmslie, *Irian Jaya - Under the Gun*, 13.
[168] The most notable violence around the Grasberg mine took place shortly after the opening in 1989. Papuan unrest around the mine was brutaly squahed by the Indonesian military, with violence more akin to genocide than to intervention. After the massacre, thirty-nine Papuans were either killed or missing.
[169] McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril', 27.
[170] Ibidem.

3.2 Unyielding boundaries in Papua

Boundary making in Papua was defined by two waves of colonisation. The Dutch government took official control of the territory in the nineteenth century. However, when the Netherlands transferred sovereignty of its East Indies territories to Indonesia in 1949, West New Guinea was not included. The Dutch decided that West New Guinea should follow another path, a path that would lead to the creation of a separate, sovereign state. This was a commendable effort. But in practise, between 1949 and 1962, Papuan remained a society marked by a pattern of racial apartheid.[171] This was the legacy of indirect rule by the Netherlands. This form of government created, and relied on, flows of educated Indonesians that moved to Papua. According to McGibbon, this system created a pattern of ethnic relations in which the native Papuan population was subjected to colonial rule, while migrants made up the ruling apparatus.[172]

Between the 1950's and 1960's, however, the education and promotion of Papuans into the bureaucracy became an important element of new Dutch colonial rule. By curbing migration and investing in its colony, the Dutch hoped to form a Papuan elite that could counter Indonesia's territorial claims over the territory. This seemed to have worked. According to a report from1961 by the Dutch Ministry of Home Affairs, 4.950 out of 8.800, or 55 percent, of civil servants were Papuans.[173] As was often the case, this development only took place near coastal areas and urban centres, effectively leaving Papua's inland population behind. These grievances were magnified when Jakarta's policies widened discrepancies between rural and urban areas even further. But the more well-off Papuan people would face disillusionment as well. After Indonesia took over Papua in 1963, an exodus of educated Papuans took place. Those who sympathised with the Indonesian government soon discovered the true nature of new rule; as a wave of de-Papuanisation swept through the bureaucracy.

Boundary making starts by implementing a 'master status' over the other, based on perceived inferiority, ethnicity, religion or social criteria.[174] The implementation of a master status within the Dutch colonial context is evident. But perceptions of indigenous Papuan 'backwardness' remained prevalent throughout the New Order period. This is confirmed in an editorial from *The Jakarta Post*: "There is a common tendency in this country, particularly

[171] Upton, The impact of migration on the people of Papua, 129.
[172] McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril', 27.
[173] National Archive The Hague, Department of Home Affairs, Report on Netherlands New Guinea for the year 1961 (1962) 16.
[174] Lucassen, 'Xenophobic Mob Violence Against Free Labour Migrants', 5.

among the political elite and the decision makers, to threat Papuans as uneducated and stupid, simple tribespeople, who are ungrateful for the services provided by the government."[175]

The indigenous Papuan population was also an easy target for 'othering'.[176] Historically, people from Indonesia's inner islands are associated with straight black hair and a fair skin. While Papuans are Melanesians, stereotypically have a dark skin and curly hair. There is the aspect of religion as well. Missionary activities had turned a large part of the Papuan population to Christianity, while Indonesian in-migrants came from predominantly Muslims islands. Figures from BPS show that in the year 2000, 78 percent of the Papuan population was Christian and 21,4 percent was Muslims.[177] Despite this, the larger Papuan population was treated as the outgroup by a smaller Muslim immigrant class. These boundaries were quite easily maintained during the New Order period, and the government tried hard to suppress pan-Papuan sentiments. Children in school read books on how Indonesia 'liberated' them from Dutch colonial rule and newspapers needed approval for publishing articles that referred to the territory's past. Even the term 'Papuan' became taboo, since natives now needed to refer to themselves as *orang Irian*, after the Indonesian name for the territory.[178]

The end of New Order rule brought opportunities for change. During this period, Papuans could finally express their experienced hardships and their aspirations for independence in a more democratic setting. In October 1999, Abdurrahman Wahid was elected as the new president of Indonesia. Wahid had chosen Jayapura, Papua's capital, as the city where he would address the beginning of the new millennium. On 31 December, he used this opportunity to hold talks with Papuan leaders.[179] After listening to their complaints and demands, he allowed them to use the name Papua instead of Irian Jaya, and he gave permission that people were allowed to raise the Morning Star flag, as long as it was placed thirty centimetres below the Indonesian flag.[180]

Despite this official statement, multiple clashes took place throughout Papua between security forces and Papuans over the raising of the Morning Star. On October 6, 2000, violence erupted in the central highland town of Wamena, after security forces forcibly removed the pro-independence flag. After conflict broke out between security forces and indigenous *Satgas Papua* (pro-independence civilian guards), the violence eventually turned to the local market

[175] 'Losing Papua', *The Jakarta Post* (20 March 2006).
[176] Othering occurs when individuals or groups are labelled as not fitting in within the norms of a social group.
[177] Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), *Papua in figures* (2002), 203.
[178] Octavianus Mote and Danilyn Rutherford, 'From Irian Jaya to Papua: The Limits of Primordialism in Indonesia's Troubled East', *Indonesia* 72:1 (2001) 115-140, 121.
[179] Ibidem, 131.
[180] Mote and Rutherford, 'From Irian Jaya to Papua', 131.

district.[181] There, *Satgas Papua* directed their resentment to Wamena's migrant population. After the violence subsided, a spokesman of the National police told *The Jakarta Post*: "The Satgas Papua members have set fire to homes, raped women and then murdered them. They also burned some people alive."[182] There is no other literature available to confirm this statement, however. In a detailed report from 2001 by HRW, there is no mention of such atrocities.

The report does put the violent outbreak in other light. The report describes that the Papuan mob became increasingly larger, after which the security forces retreated to the residential area next to a marketplace. Once a large mob had formed, shots were fired at the crowd for nearby migrant houses. After seeing that the bullets came from the houses of non-Papuans, the mob attacked the homes and their inhabitants.[183] According to interviews conducted by HRW, many Papuans believed the police tactics, especially the decision to fire from amidst migrant homes, were aimed at inducing violence between Papuans and migrants. The deputy chair of the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation held the Wamena Chief of Police responsible for the outbreak of violence, but did not go as far as claiming that the police tried to induce a communal conflict. He did conclude that "[…] the government had not been consistent in dealing with the Papuan problem, and that, as a result, what began as a vertical conflict between the people and the government was becoming a horizontal conflict between groups."[184]

This outbreak of large-scale violence against economic migrants did not follow the same patterns as the other two cases in this thesis. In Papua, boundaries were not created by the native population. They were built by outsiders under two separate, nevertheless interwoven, phases of colonisation. Considering this, for over a century, Papuans had not enjoyed any of the economic, political, or social privileges that would typically belong to the ingroup. The cases of Sambas and Poso showed how boundaries between migrants and natives became increasingly more difficult to maintain, challenging the traditional demarcation of who belonged to the ingroup, and who belonged to the outgroup. In Papua, however, the native people were treated as outsiders on their own land, their boundaries were not under threat of siege, they had already fallen.

[181] '26 people killed at Wamena's worst riots', *The Jakarta Post* (8 October 2000).
[182] Ibidem.
[183] HRW, *Violence and Politcal Impasse in Papua* 13:2 (2001), 12.
[184] Mote and Rutherford, 'From Irian Jaya to Papua', 136.

The group who had a dominant position to protect were Indonesians in Papua. However, there are no notable cases of large-scale violence from migrants directed at native Papuans. Rather, the boundaries between natives and newcomers seem to have been maintained (through legislation, discrimination on the job and housing market, state violence, and so on) by the New Order regime. These group boundaries were vigorously defended by the government and military; because notions of Papuan independence challenged Jakarta's unification policy.[185]

But the question remains: why was there so little collective violence against in-migrants compared to other regions in Indonesia? All ingredients were there: a population divided by Christian natives and a growing number of Muslim in-migrants, an economy dominated by outsiders, and a history of repression and exploitation. Hillesund provides a comprehensive explanation on why communal conflict may not transpire:

"[…] economically disadvantaged groups who are also politically excluded can be expected to prefer civil over communal conflict […] Politically excluded groups gave ample reason to expect the central government to intervene whether they attack another group to achieve economic redistribution."[186]

Indigenous Papuans were already experiencing levels of violence akin to genocide. Moreover, large-scale collective violence against migrants could have been interpreted as violence directed at the central government.

During the post-Suharto period, a time of democratisation after thirty-six years of authoritarian rule, these boundaries could be challenged. More often native Papuans challenged the Indonesian-Papuan dichotomy, and more skirmishes broke out between natives and migrants. But during this period of political transition, large-scale violence between natives and migrants had broken out across Indonesia's outer islands. The explanation to why such an outbreak of violence did not occur during the post-Suharto period in Papua is threefold. Firstly, Papua was heavily militarised and policed by security forces that sympathised with the central government. Even after the fall of the New Order, expressions of separatism or dissent were heavily punished. Per illustration, HRW reported that on the morning before the violence escalated in Wamena, police raided multiple *posko* (command or communications post) where

[185] McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril', 17.
[186] Hillesund, 'Choosing Whom to Target, 547.

the Morning Star was flying.[187] In the raids, ten Papuans were shot and dozens were arrested. Back at the police headquarters the Papuans were reportedly beaten with wooden sticks and rifle buts.[188] To recall, this happened after president Wahid gave permission to hoist the flag.

Secondly, while there was an elite that was vocal on aspirations of Papuan independence, with some having close ties to OPM, they would not directly benefit from a large-scale communal conflict, unlike the leaders in Sambas and Poso. Quite the contrary, in Papua there were influential ethnic and religious organisation that worked together with indigenous leaders to manage ethnic relation and to urge restraint in times of tension.[189]

Thirdly, before the Sambas and Poso riots it was clear who the disadvantaged groups were. Nevertheless, the migrants that were attacked still posed an economic and political threat. In Papua, such a rivalry was largely absent. According to Hillesund, communal conflict rather than civil conflict might be the preferred choice when most group members blame an ethnic group they have a long-standing rivalry with, rather than the state, for their disadvantage.[190] This was not the case in Papua. Despite tensions between natives and newcomers, their main adversary was an oppressive regime.

In closing, there were multiple occasions where increasing tensions escalated into violence between natives and migrants. But besides the conflict in Wamena, no large-scale collective violence was directed at labour migrants. For more than a century, indigenous Papuans had not been in the position to create group boundaries. Instead, under Dutch and Indonesian rule, newcomers had built deeply entrenched boundaries, which were actively maintained by legislation, discrimination, and racial profiling. After the fall of the New Order, when native-migrant boundaries for the first time came under threat of eroding, boundary defence was stepped up by the Indonesian ingroup. And where in the cases of Sambas and Poso vigilantism became rampant after a lacklustre military response, the security forces in Papua defended the existing boundaries with devotion.

[187] A *Posko* is usually a simple structure or shack where neighbourhood residents gather to discuss matters of public interest. *Posko* became important locations within communal conflicts in post Suharto Indonesia.
[188] HRW, *Violence and Political Impasse in Papua* 13:2 (2001), 12.
[189] McGibbon, 'Plural Society in Peril', 37.
[190] Hillesund, 'Choosing Whom to Target, 535.

Conclusion

This thesis started out with the question why the indigenous populations of West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua resorted to collective violence against internal labour migrants in post-Suharto Indonesia. And asked and under what historical and socio-economic conditions group boundaries were made, maintained and defended. By analysing this boundary process, this study aimed to identify general mechanisms of collective violence against internal labour migrants.

Firstly, boundary making. In the three cases discussed, the first inter-group boundaries started to form after a large increase of state-sponsored and spontaneous migration placed natives and newcomers in competition over resources. Only in Papua did this process start earlier. The transmigration program was designed to relieve population pressure and counter poverty in the more densely populated areas of the archipelago. The idea was to provide opportunities for hard working poor people, and to bring forth a workforce that would better utilize the country's natural resources. Spontaneous migration was encouraged, and eventually led to larger demographic shifts than state-sponsored migration. After the arrival of the newcomers, who often shared no ethnicity, culture, or religion with the native population, the first boundaries were made by implementing a 'master status' over the other. When the outgroup no longer accepts its role of inferiority and starts competing for key resources, this is likely to lead to tensions. In Sambas and Poso, migrants became increasingly more dominant in political and economic spheres. Challenging the boundaries that had been made, making the distinction between the traditional ingroup and outgroup less defined. In Papua, however, the native population had not been a part of the ingroup for over more than a century. They were burdened with the role of inferiority, and were reduced to their otherness.

Secondly, boundary maintenance. In Sambas, the boundaries between natives and migrants were informally upheld by discrimination, stereotyping, and social isolation. Boundaries became less stable when government legislation did not help to maintain them, but instead helped migrants to challenge the division between in- and outgroup. In Poso, government legislation used to favour the migrant outgroup as well. But before the fall of the New Order, the native population was able to maintain the boundaries that had been made through political and communal patronage networks. Since the in- and outgroup mechanics were reversed in Papua, the inferior role of the indigenous outgroup was not only informally

guarded by discrimination and notions of 'backwardness', but also by legislation that marginalised the native population in social, political, and economic spaces.

Thirdly, boundary defence. Intergroup boundaries need to be confirmed by maintaining and guarding existing inequalities. But when the existing boundaries become under threat of eroding, they need to be defended. In Sambas and Poso, intergroup boundaries had been eroding up to the point where they had almost crumbled near the end of the 1990's. After the financial crisis of 1997 and the abdication of Suharto in 1998, the traditional ingroups of Poso and Sambas saw an opportunity to defend what was left from the boundaries that once had been made. Government and security personnel left this defence up to the rivalling in- and outgroups, after which vigilantism became widespread and collective violence broke out. In Papua, boundaries *were* defended by the formal institutions and security forces. Hence, they did not need to be defended by the people. Therefore, no collective violence was directed by the ingroup against the indigenous outgroup.

Papua did not follow the same in- outgroup processes as the other two cases, but the region does present two interesting results. First, it shows how the boundary concept works both ways. In the cases of Sambas and Poso, the native people considered themselves to belong to the ingroup, and when the boundaries where under threat of eroding, they violently defended them against the outgroup. In Papua, the ingroup was considered to be the Indonesian migrant class. When the boundaries they had created were under threat of eroding (during a period of post-Suharto democratisation that would challenge existing boundaries), boundary defence was increased as well. Not by the civilian migrant ingroup, but by security forces that acted violently against threats of boundary erosion. Second, if the indigenous population of Papua is regarded as the ingroup, and the Indonesian migrants as the outgroup; it shows how large-scale collective violence will not transpire when the state upholds the monopoly of violence.

However, this thesis has taken a broad approach to the conflicts in West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua; and the histories and spaces they took place in are vast and complex. While these cases deserve more scrutiny, there were similar outbreaks of collective violence between economic in-migrants and indigenous people on multiple Indonesian islands during the post-Suharto period: in North and South Maluku (1999-2002), in Central Kalimantan (2001), and in Ambon (1999-2002). Analysing the process of boundary making, maintenance, and defence in Maluku and Central Kalimantan, both places where conflict broke out between natives and newcomers, might show similar patterns of conflict dynamics. Comparing the boundary process in Aceh's separatist conflict might reveal similarities between the in- and outgroup mechanisms that took place in Papua. Since this thesis focused on cases of in-migrant

and native tension, cases of anti-Chinese violence were left out. But comparing this violence to the other cases might show familiar patterns.

In conclusion, boundaries were created after government sponsored -and spontaneous migration brought natives and newcomers in competition over state -and local resources. Boundary maintenance was scaled up after New Order policies changed the social, political, and economic landscape. These boundaries started crumbling when the prosperity of newcomers, aided by legislation that favoured migrants, made the traditional distinction between in -and out groups appear blurry. Then, after the fall of the new Order, the Indonesian government was either unwilling or unable to put a halt to outbursts of large-scale collective violence. Boundary defence was left to the people and vigilantism became rampant. Papua stands out as an exception, underscoring the challenges faced by a politically and economically marginalised group when attempting to question or challenge deeply ingrained group boundaries.

Appendix

Map No. 4110 UNITED NATIONS
June 1999

Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section

1. Maps of Indonesia, sourced from: International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Violence and Radical Muslims* (Jakarta/Brussels 2001).

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