Imagined Indonesian Indigeneity and the Meratus People: A Postcolonial Interrogation

Jazak Akbar Hidayat

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

University of Sydney

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AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

This is to certify that:

I. this thesis comprises only my original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

II. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used.

III. this thesis does not exceed the word length for this degree.

IV. no part of this work has been used for the award of another degree.

V. this thesis meets the University of Sydney’s Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) requirements for the conduct of this research.

Signature: ............................

Name  :  Jazak Akbar Hidayat

Date  :  ..............................
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In commencing my journey to attain a PhD degree in 2014, after completing my Masters degree in 2005 and having left the academic world for a career in a government institution in Indonesia, I experienced difficulty in being a student again. It was a huge readjustment to adapt to academic thinking and writing, let alone issues related to English as my second language. However, I was extremely fortunate to be associated with amazing people who helped me to get through it all.

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Kalimantan Selatan, AMAN Kalimantan Selatan, BRWA and PB AMAN who participated in my research. They all kindly accepted my engagement in their activities and facilitated me to build a rapport with the local communities in the Meratus Mountains. *Kementerian Sosial RI* (The Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia) and *Dinas Sosial Provinsi Kalimantan Selatan* (Provincial Office of Social Affairs of South Kalimantan) also supported the research by providing invaluable information and helping me engage with some of the Meratus communities they were working with.

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ABSTRACT

There is a growing indigenous movement in Indonesia linked to global activism led by NGOs advocating on behalf of local traditional communities experiencing injustice and marginalisation. However, rather than taking indigeneity for granted, understood as a fixed category or inherent identity, this research critically interrogates the application of the concept in Indonesia. Often conceptions about non-indigeneity and indigeneity are viewed as dominant discourses that have been imposed on the voiceless local traditional communities. In contrast, this study seeks to give a voice to local people through a focus on representation. In doing so, the research has been conducted through a postcolonial perspective, and aims to contribute to knowledge about how indigeneity is produced, reproduced and resisted in postcolonial contexts and through engagements between communities, NGOs and the state.

This research explores indigenous identity construction and examines the practices of representation through political, social and cultural dialectics within certain historical moments. The main question raised in this thesis is: How have NGOs influenced the representation of local traditional communities through the discourses of indigenous activism? The concept of representation goes beyond a simple notion of ‘being existentially represented’, prompting an interrogation to which the local voices of the people were made to be ‘self-representing’.

In order to explore this question, an in-depth study was undertaken with local communities in the Meratus Mountains of South Kalimantan province. The fieldwork involved an exploration of community members’ constructions of indigeneity and the production of indigenous identity through the masyarakat adat movement in Indonesia and NGO activism. This research incorporates postcolonial perspectives into interrogations of indigeneity, as well as engages in a close examination of representation. The Meratus study has therefore involved developing an innovative analytic strategy for understanding the complexity of indigeneity. This was achieved by drawing on postcolonial and poststructural theories, which found that the production of indigeneity is a fluid, imaginary identity that, when embraced in strategic ways, depends on local communities’ capacity to hybridiise representational impositions from external forces.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIPP</td>
<td>Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMAN</td>
<td>Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (Indigenous People’s Alliance of the Archipelago)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRWA</td>
<td>Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat (Traditional Domain Registration Agency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>civil society organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>corporate social responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>credit union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBMT</td>
<td>Direktorat Pembangunan Masyarakat Suku-suku Terasing (Directorate for the Development of Isolated Tribal Communities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>(the British) Department for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPR</td>
<td>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People’s Representative Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPRD</td>
<td>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People’s Representative Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPIC</td>
<td>free, prior and informed consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>global positioning system</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSO</td>
<td>grassroots support organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td>Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Assistance Agency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HST</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Tengah, district in South Kalimantan, Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSS</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Selatan, district in South Kalimantan, Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IWGIA</td>
<td>International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAPHAMA</td>
<td>Jaringan Pembelaan Hak-hak Masyarakat Adat (Network Defense Rights of Indigenous Peoples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JKPP</td>
<td>Jaringan Kerja Pemetaan Partisipatif (Network for Participatory Mapping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAS</td>
<td>Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Konrad Adenauer Foundation), German political party foundation with missions on civic education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAT</td>
<td>Komunitas Adat Terpencil (remote indigenous communities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KDA</td>
<td>Koperasi Dayak Alay (Dayak Cooperative Alay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMAN</td>
<td>Kongres Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (Indigenous People’s Congress)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KPA</td>
<td>Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria (Agrarian Reform Consortium)</td>
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KTP  Kartu Tanda Penduduk (resident identity card)
KUDETA  Koalisi untuk Demokratisasi Pengelolaan Sumber Daya Alam (Coalition for the Democratisation of Natural Resources Management)
LBH  Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (Legal Aid Institute)
LPMA  Lembaga Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Adat Borneo Selatan (Institute for Community Empowerment Indigenous South Borneo)
LPPMA  Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Adat (Institute for Adat/Customary Community Studies and Empowerment)
LSM  lembaga swadaya masyarakat (non-governmental organisation)
MHA  masyarakat hukum adat (customary law communities)
MK  Mahkamah Konstitusi (Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia)
Muswil  Musyawarah Wilayah (Regional Council)
NGO  non-governmental organisation
ORNOP  organisasi non pemerintah (non-governmental organisation)
Perda  peraturan daerah (local regulation)
PERMADA  Persatuan Masyarakat Adat (Association of Indigenous Peoples)
PKAT  Pemberdayaan Komunitas Adat Terpencil (Remote Indigenous Community Empowerment)
PKI  Partai Komunis Indonesia (Communist Party of Indonesia)
PKMT  Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Terasing (Welfare Development Program for Isolated Community)
PMKS  Penyandang Masalah Kesejahteraan Sosial (socioeconomically disadvantaged group)
REDD  reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
RUU-PPHMHA  Rancangan Undang-Undang Pengakuan dan Perlindungan Hak Masyarakat Hukum Adat (Draft Law on the Recognition and Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)
SKEPHI  Sekretariat Kerjasama Pelestarian Hutan Indonesia (Indonesian NGO Network of Tropical Forest Conservation)
SLPP  Simpul Layanan Pemetaan Partisipatif (Unit for Participatory Mapping Services)
UKP3  Unit Kerja Percepatan Pemetaan Partisipatif (Unit for the Acceleration of Participatory Mapping)
UN  United Nations
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNDRIP  United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPFII</td>
<td>United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United State Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUD 1945</td>
<td>Undang-undang Dasar 1945 (Indonesian Constitution 1945)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALDA</td>
<td>Wahana Lestari Persada, local Torajan NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALHI</td>
<td>Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (Indonesian Forum for the Environment; Friend of Earth Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEF</td>
<td>World Economic Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YCHI</td>
<td>Yayasan Cakrawala Hijau Indonesia (Green Horizon Foundation of Indonesia), local NGO in South Kalimantan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YLBHI</td>
<td>Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia (Foundation of the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute)</td>
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</table>
INTRODUCTION

‘Indigenous peoples’ as a global term and concept, is mainly applied in, and derived from, countries ruled by dominant colonial settlers. Rather than taking indigeneity for granted, understood as a fixed category or inherent identity, this research critically interrogates the concept of indigeneity in Indonesia. The research has been conducted through a postcolonial perspective, and aims to contribute to knowledge about how indigeneity is produced, reproduced and resisted in postcolonial contexts and through engagements among communities, NGOs and the state.

The Indonesian government has long held the position that there are no real issues related to indigeneity in Indonesia, claiming that all Indonesians are basically indigenous. Indeed, since 1950s, the Indonesian government only recognised strictly traditional communities living in remote areas through suku terasing (isolated tribes). Since early 1990s, many NGO activists began to insist that the government should recognise the existence of indigenous peoples in Indonesia and create laws and policies to protect their rights. The new masyarakat adat (customary community) has emerged through this kind of activism. In response to these positions, the research explores indigenous identity construction and examines the practices of representation through political, social and cultural dialectics within certain historical moments. The main question raised in this thesis is: How has the representation of local traditional communities been influenced by NGOs within/through the discourses of indigenous activism, particularly in response to the state’s proposition of non-indigeneity?

In order to explore this question, an in-depth study was undertaken with local communities in the Meratus Mountains of South Kalimantan province. The fieldwork involved the exploration of community members’ constructions of indigeneity and the production of indigenous identity through the masyarakat adat movement in Indonesia and NGO activism. Two further questions in the Meratus study included: (i) How does the representation of the Meratus communities’ local identity and culture fit into a broader indigenous movement? and (ii) Does the concept of masyarakat adat revive the past, reconstruct the existing, or generate a new identity for the subjected communities? These questions were highly motivated by concern about potential issues of power relations in the process of representation, which is central to the research. Often conceptions about non-indigeneity and indigeneity are viewed as dominant discourses that have been imposed on the voiceless local traditional communities. In contrast, the Meratus study sought to give voice to local people through a focus on representation. The concept of representation goes beyond a simple notion of ‘being existentially represented’, prompting an
interrogation of the extent to which the local voices of the people were made to be ‘self-representing’. Gayatry Spivak’s (1988) idea of ‘subaltern’ has thus shaped research strategies within the fieldwork, particularly in relation to prioritising the voice of local community members.

This research was strongly influenced by several prominent studies (Grumblies, 2013; Henley & Davidson, 2008; T. M. Li, 2000; Tsing, 2005). Among the ideas strongly embraced is the constructivist insight outlined by Tania Li (2000) who developed the concept of a ‘tribal slot’, which depicted Indonesian indigeneity as part of a global movement that found its compatibility with long-established traditional practices among local ethnic groups in Indonesia. The ‘tribal slot’ concept suggests that being indigenous is both a form of articulation of identity and a political positioning of marginalised local communities that occurred through opportunities emerging from the state’s hegemonic imposition and growing indigenous movements. Henley and Davidson’s (2008) critical review of the Indonesian indigenous movement, which emerged on behalf of *adat*, has also been significant. These important studies reflect the complexity of the issue and underline the importance of interrogating the processes through which indigeneity is constructed.

However, there is a dearth of research in Indonesia that incorporates postcolonial perspectives into interrogations of indigeneity or engages in a close examination of representation. This genre of study is still dominated by anthropological and political perspectives that have less exploration of the richness and dynamics of issues on power relations and subalternity. This could lead to, at least, two situations. First, objectification of issues of indigeneity that is simply represented under mainstream perspective without considering critical issues of power relations/marginalisation. Second, even when issues of power relations/marginalisation become the concern, they would tend to be simply presented through binary opposition perspective and ignores their, again, complexity. The use of postcolonial perspectives in studying indigeneity is meant to critically explore an issue of indigeneity and deeply scrutinise its complexity, including its paradoxes.

The Meratus study, therefore, involved developing an analytical strategy for understanding complexity by drawing on postcolonial and poststructural theories. It is important to mention here that, while the analyses developed in this study may indicate many criticisms of NGO activities, the position is basically supportive of them. However, as the analyses developed in this study were informed by poststructuralist views, simplification through binary-opposition vantage points is refused. Therefore, throughout the thesis there is a critical-supportive,
scrutinising complexity, which serves as a way to contribute to how activism may be viewed differently and, then, developed to accommodate complex issues. In order to provide an overview of theoretical, contextual and methodological issues at stake, and the outcomes and implications of the research, the following section summarises each chapter of the thesis.

**Thesis Structure**

Theory plays a significant role in a qualitative study as it operates to explain and construct meaning contained in the issues that are raised. Therefore, it is explained in Chapter 1 to show its essential function that is necessary for understanding the following chapters. In explaining the theoretical framework of this study, Chapter 1 is divided into two parts. *Part one* contains certain historical aspects of Indonesian postcoloniality that is the contextualisation for the application of postcolonial theory in this research. Meanwhile, *Part two* is allocated to the conceptualisation of relevant theories. Under a broad postcolonial framework, the latter part of the thesis elaborates on how further theories were conceptualised and developed as analytical tools for issues raised from findings of the research.

In general, illuminated by poststructuralism, Chapter 1 explains why and how this study applied postcolonial perspectives as a way to negotiate complex ideas of power that go beyond the binary conception of dominant-subordinate relationships in indigenous issues. Raising the topic of representation of local communities within dominant discourses under which cultural hybridity occurred, theories explored in this chapter were set to interrogate issues of power relations that emerged in indigenous activism in Meratus communities. Three main poststructuralist-informed postcolonial theories were offered: (i) subjectivity/subjection; (ii) identity/identification; and (iii) subalternity and representation.

Expanding from these theoretical concepts, a presentation of the broad and complex context of Indonesian indigeneity is reported in Chapter 2 with two main focuses. The first focus explicates the Indonesian government’s construction and reconstruction of local communities’ socio-cultural identities through its institutions and policies, such as the long established identity of *masyarakat terasing* (isolated communities). In this discussion, it was important to reveal the dominant discourses underlying the emergence of indigenous movements in Indonesia. The second focus is on various conceptions about Indonesian indigeneity derived from the research of prominent scholars on this area of study. While this discussion offered varied theoretical bases, it also functioned to keep a local-scope inquiry connected to broader relevant issues.
To provide a clear understanding of Indonesian indigeneity discourses, Chapter 3 explores NGOs’ role in building it through adat movements. Initially, a brief historical and political context encircling the development of NGOs in Indonesia, especially under the New Order regime, is discussed to show the ideological standpoint of indigenous activism. This is an important section that leads an explanation roles played by NGOs in the emergence of indigenous movements in Indonesia and how these movements were stimulated by the popular growing global discourse of indigeneity. Chronological events are presented to provide a clearer description of the rise of Indonesian indigenous movements. Critical views towards NGO indigenous activism in Indonesia are also presented in Chapter 3 to allow for alternative complementary perspectives on Indonesian indigeneity, as explored in Chapter 2.

Having covered the background and theories of the previous chapters, the steps applied in this study are documented in Chapter 4. The processes of this research were not linear but emerged through dynamic and developing ideas alongside the researcher’s engagement with participants during fieldwork, as well as during the analysis and writing period. The methodological steps in this study, hence, are described through an exploration of the researcher’s experiences. This led to the reconceptualisation of the methodology as an ‘analytical strategy’, which emphasises how data or findings could be properly and critically analysed in order to produce new knowledge or perspectives. This chapter consists of three parts: (i) foundational concepts placing the Foucauldian concept of discourse as the underlying idea for this research’s qualitative design; (ii) a presentation of processes involved in the field research, including operational and technical matters that describe the ‘what, who, how and where’ of this study; and (iii) an analytical strategy implemented and developed by applying theories that framed the research.

Chapter 5 reports on the data reporting that forms a narrative of what may constitute Meratus people’s self-representation and voices to reveal their own identity. This was mostly based on knowledge that emerged from observation and interviews with research participants during the fieldwork, as well as information from relevant written resources added for confirmation of specific details. The narrative reflects a flowing process of data gathering that followed emerging events that provided insight into indigenous activism in Meratus, including its dynamic local issues. Data gathered from several sites of the Meratus communities, although reflecting different characteristics of issues among them, were not presented for comparison but as a complex representation of local communities. They were generated as themes that were intended to give spaces for the Meratus people to represent themselves.
In contrast, Chapter 6 reports on the second part of the findings of this research with a focus on NGO roles in building indigenous activism among Meratus communities. While an explanation of the emergence of Indonesian indigeneity was explored in Chapter 4, this chapter has a specific focus on the efforts made by NGO activists and steps to bring the nation-wide masyarakat adat movements to the local communities. Three main concerns are covered in this chapter to show the social, cultural and political processes and dynamics of NGO activism in building indigeneity among Meratus communities. The presentation of data in the form of themes was structured in such a way as to depict the representation of local communities within the discourse of indigeneity.

This thesis culminates in discussions and conclusions presented in Chapter 7, which is specifically aimed at discussing critical issues that emerged throughout the research process. The main focus was on revealing issues of power relations in the representation of local communities through indigenous activism. Indigenous activism in the Meratus Mountains is interrogated and examined through analyses vigorously illuminated by postcolonial perspectives. Through these discussions, theorisation was generated, proposing insight or perspectives about indigeneity issues in Indonesia. For example, it was found that encounters between cultural differences in the so-called ‘in-between space’ (Bhabha, 1994) are viewed as enabling amalgamation and/or constitution of new hybrid identities through processes of intercultural translation and negotiation. In the final section of Chapter 7, critical questions, contextualisation with current development and analyses of future implications are presented.
CHAPTER 1:  
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The theoretical framework for this research is derived from a postcolonial theory that is “informed by the experience of being colonised – the experience of being dependents, subalterns and subjects of the West’s experiences … that did not end with the achievement of independence” (Phillips, 2011, p. 159). This framework is employed to identify how Indonesian local communities, referred to as indigenous peoples, have been subjugated by the dominant nation-state that the Indonesian postcolonial government inherited from the previous colonial government. The emphasis of this perspective is on revealing issues faced by communities in postcolonial states after decolonisation, mainly in relation to culture, society and politics, rather than the past colonisation itself. Ashcroft et al. (2007) observed that postcolonial countries were gifted with artificial independence after adopting and maintaining their former Western model of power formation imposed by the colonisers.

In explaining the theoretical framework of this study, this chapter is divided into two parts. Part one is concerned with the contextualisation of postcolonial theory in studying Indonesian postcoloniality in general and indigeneity issues raised in this thesis. Exploring Indonesian postcoloniality is important for this research in order to clearly position and define a specific issue of indigeneity that, within the Indonesian context, come with competing meanings. Furthermore, in this research, the construction of indigeneity in Indonesia is examined through the exploration of one particular local community referred to as Indigenous peoples. The thesis steps back from assuming the indigenousness of these people in order to ask questions about how national and local discourses contribute to the construction of indigeneity in Indonesia. The broad picture of Indonesian postcoloniality is presented as a precondition of exploring the main subject of this research.

Meanwhile, Part two concentrates on the conceptualisation of the postcolonial framework applied in this research. Basically, postcolonialism is conceptualised as a fundamental framework or perspective that illuminates the wholeness of this study and contains specific theories regarded as relevant and applicable to the issues or themes raised in this study. However, it is important to note that these postcolonial theories do not function as a set of ‘ready to use’ tools. If each of them can be applied with certain fixed schemes or techniques to analyse issues or themes that arose from the data or findings, they function basically as complex
ways of thinking and concepts that serve this research with alternatives for an analytical strategy.

While the terms ‘postcolonial theory’ and ‘postcolonialism’ are applied interchangeably, this research also uses the term ‘postcolonial framework’ or ‘postcolonial perspective’ to reflect the researcher’s positioning in using postcolonial theories as a broad point of view in analysing issues raised while accommodating relevant concepts or theories. In other words, a postcolonial perspective functions as the umbrella for more specific theories provided as the framework of this research. In general, the framework follows the basic idea of how knowledge of a coloniser or dominant actor has been produced and reproduced by the colonised or marginalised.

Part 1: Contextualisation of theories

Employing postcolonial perspectives to study Indonesia

After the Indonesian archipelago territories experienced Dutch colonial occupation, the country should have been ready for the growth of postcolonial studies. Until recently, the employment and discussion of postcolonial theory as a way of viewing various social, cultural and political issues in Indonesia has not been widely applied. As part of “the most colonised regions in the world”, Beng Huat (2008, p. 231) revealed that Indonesia is among other postcolonial Southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Myanmar, Malaysia and Singapore, with minor development in the academic field of postcolonial studies. This relationship to postcolonial theory or perspectives raises questions about what caused postcolonial countries to be absent from postcolonial discourse representation by their own scholars and Western scholars. Beng Huat (2008) suggested that the influence of the Cold War, made some Asian countries to become a battleground between anti-communist movements supported by ex-coloniser Western countries and fast growing communist movements. This global ideologically-based war had created vagueness regarding the history of Western colonialism within some colonised countries. The traces of colonisation were obscured by a public phobia of communist totalitarianism. In Indonesia, Beng Huat (2008) observed that the rapid economic development and industrialisation following the ruin of communism had diverted the public’s memory of colonialism to the hope of a better future.

The other factor that could have attributed to undeveloped studies on postcoloniality in Indonesia is issues of language, mainly in literary works, which according Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (2003) reflected an ongoing impact of the past imperial power on postcolonial countries’ culture. Foulcher (1995) was in agreement with this, saying that postcoloniality is
recognised from writings produced in the colonial languages and, “the language issue is central, and must always lay at the heart of any attempt to pursue questions of postcoloniality and literature” (1995, p. 150). In Indonesia, any contemporary literature or writing in Dutch can no longer be found (Anderson, 1987; Foulcher, 1995). Also, the 1920s was a period when the modernised-Malay language was introduced as Bahasa Indonesia, signifying the rising consciousness of Indonesia as a nation-state. Weaver pointed out that Soekarno, the first president of Indonesia, realised the significant role played by languages for a nation to reach its “full independence”, therefore he prohibited the teaching of the Dutch language in schools (2000, p. 230).

Discontinuity from a colonial language and literature does not exclude Indonesia from the status of postcoloniality. Foulcher (1995) further showed how a colonial language was actually transferred in the form of early ideas about Indonesia, which remains in existence as footprints of postcolonialism. On the basis of his historical analysis of the constitution of Indonesian as a national language, Foulcher revealed:

_Dutch was ... the language Indonesian nationalist ideals were shaped and defined ... In the Netherland Indies, it was Dutch-language education that was the common thread linking those journeys, and it was in Dutch that the Indonesian nationalist both communicated to each other and articulated their nationalist ideals ... The new 'Indonesian' language thus came into being slowly and unsteadily, as the Dutch-educated and Dutch-speaking nationalist elite made the transition into their own new version of a language that had grown as a language of a state under Dutch supervision and for Dutch purposes. As they did so, both their own thinking and all the apparatus of the colonial state were quite literally translated into Indonesian, symbolically marking the transition to the postcolonial era. (1995, pp. 163-164)_

It was through the Indonesian language declared a national _lingua franca_ that past colonial ideas and ideals have been translated and transferred into those of the Indonesia nation-state. In bahasa Indonesia, said Foulcher, “linguistic link with the past was submerged, actually hidden within the new language rather than displaced by it” (1995, p. 164). Therefore, Foulcher (1995) placed Indonesia in the same frame of postcoloniality as other postcolonial countries in Southeast Asia, Africa, Australia or elsewhere where colonial experiences had implanted ongoing effects on their status as nation-states.

To deal with the complexity of cultural issues within diverse archipelagic Indonesia, a theory was required to enable the examination of written sources and materials resultant from interviews and activities, and other factors that led to the apprehension of cultural meanings. Ashcroft, et al., argued that the significant influence of poststructuralism embraced by some
prominent postcolonial intellectuals, such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha has brought postcolonialism from its concern with literary impact to “material effects of the historical condition of colonialism” (2007, p. 168). For example, Bhabha identified culture as having a “transnational dimension” in its process of transformation through “migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation … makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification” (1994, p. 172). It is within this complexity that various signs emerged through “diverse cultural experiences – literature, art, music ritual, life, death” by which meanings produced are contingent on each specific context (Bhabha, 1994, p. 172).

The Indonesian nation-state provides such a complexity. Despite its declaration of independence on 17 August 1945 and international recognition as a sovereign country in late 1949 (Lindsay, 2011a; Liu, 2006) Indonesia inherited a state system, including its geographical borders, as defined by its former Dutch colonial government (Anderson, 1965). In its early stages, this young nation was mostly concerned with finding and/or crafting a national identity (Bourchier, 1994; Lindsay, 2011a; Nordholt, 2011). This mission was continued and even encouraged during the New Order regime along with its ‘developmentalism’ projects through tailoring a “cultural substratum” labelled as “archipelagic culture” (kebudayaan nusantara) to represent the unity of cultural diversity (Acciaioli, 2001, p. 3). Symbolic construction projects, such as monuments and venues, were widely undertaken during this period. One famous venue that functioned as a form of an ‘archipelagic culture’ project was Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII or the Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park) located in Jakarta in which Indonesian cultural diversity was represented through traditional housings from 27 provinces (Acciaioli, 2001; Aspinall & Berger, 2001).

**Postcolonial perspectives within Indonesian studies**

Due to a lack of Indonesian postcolonial studies conducted, the development of this research gained its research literature from broader Indonesian studies that provided social, political, cultural and historical perspectives. The main objective of this section is to explore the thoughts that represent Indonesian postcoloniality as an initial path towards Indonesian indigeneity issues.

Placing the Indonesian nation-state within a discourse of postcolonialism allows for competing perspectives, as defining this archipelagic country’s cultural identity is always debatable. Lindsay (2011a) pointed out that the debate on cultural identity of the imagined nation had been around since the 1930s. It was polarised between those who believed that the new nation-state, Indonesia, should be formed on the basis of its indigenous localities and those who dreamed of
a new national identity without bond to its ancient inheritance. Lindsay (2011a) further observed that this debate proceeded to a binary representation of the East (representing the past, tradition and indigenous identity) versus the West (representing high technology, modern education and Europe).

As noted by experts researching Indonesian history (Abdullah, 2009; Bourchier, 1994; Feith, 2007; Lindsay, 2011a; Liu, 2006; Nordholt, 2011), Indonesia experienced a period of euphoria when it sought to express self-identity after its declared independence in August 17th, 1945. Nordholt, described the 1950s as a highpoint of Indonesian nationalism, stating that the newly founded nation’s cultural identity was to be formulated as an ongoing process of creativity since its “ideas and ideals were projected in the future” (2011, p. 391). This also meant that “Indonesian culture was no longer localised and materialised in the ancient objects” (Nordholt, 2011, p. 388). Lindsay (2011a) similarly stated that the initial project of the Indonesia nation-state was to create a culture that was closely associated with modernity. Such a view is affirmed by Abdullah (2009, p. 68), a prominent Indonesian historian, who believed that the unification of the Indonesian archipelago was from the beginning meant as building “a new nation”, not inheriting the so-called “glorious past”.

A popular quote considered to represent the spirit of this period of nationalism was known as *manifesto kebudayaan* (cultural manifesto) written under the title ‘Surat Kepercayaan (a letter of credential)’ published by a weekly magazine, *Siasat*, on 18 February 1950 (Abdullah, 2009, p. 200). Under the literary section ‘Gelanggang’, was a manifesto written by a young poet, Asrul Sani (1928-2004) and his friends (later known as *angkatan 45* or ‘generation of 1945”), as quoted by Abdullah:

*We are the legitimate inheritors of the culture of the whole words, [...] and we shall transmit this culture in our own way. We come from the ordinary people and for us the people are a mixture of everything from where a new and healthy world would be born. (2009, p. 200)*

It is important to note that the idea of Indonesian modern nation state was preceded with many debates and conflicts that involved various groups: communist, socialist, Islamist, secular, capitalist and even bore polarisation impacted by the colonial legacy’s dichotomy of Java and Outer Islands (Benda, 1965; Nasution, 2009; Nordholt, 2011). It was under these contestations that Indonesia’s founders attempted to create a nation-state with a globally recognised culture. This complexity was questioned by Anderson: “What is an Indonesian?” (1965, p. 75), although
according to him, it was not a question asked before the 1950s. It is interesting to note his response to the question:

Indonesians were those who shared the burden of white colonial rule in the Netherland Indies. The fact of Dutch control defined the arena of conflict (the Dutch East Indies), the future (liberation from the Dutch) and the philosophy (unity against the Dutch). The rapid evaporation of Dutch power in Indonesia after the transfer of sovereignty (1950) has since brought the whole idea of ‘Indonesia-ness’ into question. (Anderson, 1965, p. 75)

Anderson’s (1965) research revealed how Indonesian people suffered from difficulties in defining their cultural identity in early period of the new nation-state. Supporting this idea, Benda observed that after achieving independence, “what we have witnessed is the agonizing, difficult adjustment of Indonesia to its own identity” (1965, p. 1072). Regarding this, Foulcher (1995) pointed out that postcoloniality begins when people of a country start to become aware of inauthenticity concerning their own identity. To demonstrate the expression of suffering from such an inauthenticity, Foulcher cited a letter written in the Dutch language by a young Indonesian medical doctor, Soebandrio, to his Dutch colleague:

I do not want to see my children suffer in the way their parents have done. The feeling of a double consciousness, to see yourself through the eyes of a white person, with all the inner conflicts bound up with that experience. Two souls, two ways of thinking, in the one person... (1995, p. 147)

The imposition and/or adoption of a modern nation-state system to Indonesia with highly diverse localities has led to marginalisation of many minority groups’ cultural identities. This is conceptualised by Anderson (1987) as ‘an imagined political community’. The notion of ‘imagined’ is about holding a belief that all citizens have the same identity and ideals about their nation, assuming they know each other whereas it is actually not the case. Also, the nation is imagined as a community. Despite the presence of exploitation, discrimination and marginalisation, there is a strong belief that a nation supports its citizenship and solidarity. As an archipelagic country, the Indonesian nation-state is prone to issues of marginality, especially in terms of cultural identity and subalternty.

The historiography of the Indonesian nation-state, as explored by many Indonesian researchers or Indonesianists, has shown that this postcolonial state had been unquestionably defined by its past history of colonisation. Benda (1965) documented how Indonesian culture, in the era of decolonisation, was an amalgam of historical dynamics in which Javanese culture took on a significant role in colouring Dutch colonial structures and policies. Likewise, some scholars
(Anderson, 1990; Berger, 1997; Dove, 1985) argued that, because Java had been a significant political and economic centre within the archipelagic regions before the Dutch occupancy, the Javanese pattern of aristocracy and stratification was adopted as part of the Dutch colonial bureaucracy and apparatus to continue shaping the modern Indonesian nation-state. Furthermore, Anderson (1983) related that approximately 10 per cent of Europeans (Dutch) in 1928 held positions as colonial state officials, while the remaining 90 per cent were mainly Javanese people from Indonesians.

The New Order regime, according to Tsing (1993), was the best example of how the Dutch colonial administration system, described as ‘peace and order’, had been adopted to repress resisting voices and create political stability while at once perpetuating the pre-colonial Javanese culture by which the lowest level of administration system (of a village) to the highest political system had been constructed. Tsing, citing Shelly Erlington, pointed out where Java was placed:

... an Indic spatial framework of exemplary centres (as shown in cases of ‘development’) and disorganised peripheries (as the not-yet-developed). In this framework, the once-and-future glory of ‘Java’ is the center of a national potency that extends outward to rule what, since colonial times, have been called ‘Outer Islands’. (1993, p. 23)

Berger similarly stated that the New Order regime had inherited a colonial and Javanese culture:

*The historic connection between the New Order and the colonial era is apparent in socio-ethnic terms, insofar as the Javanese priyayi (the hereditary petty aristocracy of Java) has continued to reproduce itself and play a central role in the bureaucratic (and military) structures of the modern Indonesian state.* (1997, p. 329)

It is within a hegemonic Java-centric nation-state system that local ethnic minority groups, especially around the ‘Outer Islands’, were subjugated under jargonistic diversity (Grumblies, 2016). Grumblies further stated that Javanese culture “was supposed to serve as the overall ‘Leitkultur’, denying the archipelago’s cultural diversity, a practice which seriously affected local power structures” (2016, p. 52). To some extent, this is comparable to the postcolonial Malaysian nation-state after decolonisation where indigenous identity attached to the dominant Malays became a privilege as they had obtained their new status as the ‘Self’ (Nah, 2003)

To raise postcolonial critiques within the Indonesian context of cultural identity is not sufficiently covered by narrowly looking at the binary coloniser-colonised relationship,
therefore, the construction of the complex amalgam or hybridity should be examined. The postcolonial analysis of indigeneity issues within the Indonesian context is complex because it deals with ambiguous and competing meanings of indigeneousness. Indigenous Meratus Dayak communities in South Kalimantan are among minority groups inextricably defined by discursive formation processes of ‘Indonesia’ that was born as a postcolonial nation-state. Attention should be paid to how the construction of hybridity has constituted and/or impacted on subjected local communities, such as the Meratus people.

**Postcolonial perspectives on Indonesian indigeneity: Revealing marginalisation**

Under national development programs led by an ‘archipelagic culture’ project, claims of indigeneity by local communities identifying themselves with hereditary traditions and entitlement to rights to the land they had lived on since their ancestors, were considered inappropriate. The Indonesian nation-state, since its very beginning, was founded on the idea of unification under a state system inherited from the Dutch (Anderson, 1983), not only in terms of geography, but also culture (Lindsay, 2011b). The former president Soekarno was concerned with “the image of national Indonesian personality” instigating attempts to adapt communities to it (Schefold, 1998, p. 271). This was perpetuated and enhanced by the New Order government that, along with its development projects, came with the notion of backwardness or isolation by which such communities were labelled suku terasing (isolated tribes) or masyarakat terasing (isolated societies) (Persoon, 1998). Acciaioli depicted the situation:

> Development programs implemented to coerce the conformity of all Indonesians to this conceptualisation of shared national culture have tended to target such people as the ‘[most] isolated groups’ (suku terasing) because of their distance from the facilities of provision and instruments of surveillance of the modern Indonesian state. But, in addition, they have been targets for more intrusive transformation within programs forced upon them with scant regard for local rights of self-determination precisely because they do not fit the standards of pan-Indonesian culture that have been defined by such concepts as the essentially ‘aquatic’ orientation of pan-Indonesian archipelagic culture. (2001, p. 17)

Acciaioli further observed that people under these claims were supposedly qualified under “the label “fourth world” peoples, minority groups enclaved within third-world nations” (2001, p. 14). From the inception of the Indonesian nation-state, their existence had been excluded from the country’s political and cultural roadmap, therefore, needed to be ‘assimilated’. Persoon noted that resettlement programs undertaken by the Department of Social Affairs had been part of the most explicit “mainstream policy” imposed to bring communities into the bandwagon of
the Indonesian nation-state (1998, p. 290). Related to this process, Li (1999) observed that the program had been conducted since 1950, thus perpetuating the Dutch government’s resettlement program of relocating people living in isolated areas to locations accessible to the state apparatus.

The notion of indigeneity that NGOs brought to these communities compete with the dominant discourse of nation-state citizenry. This condition is strongly related to the history of colonialism in Indonesia, which may represent a ‘classic colonialism’. That is, only a small group of colonisers from the far metropole came to invade the region so that ‘indigenous’ inhabitants remained dominant in terms of numbers but lived under the small group’s control (Weaver, 2000). This was distinguished from a form of ‘internal colonialism’ by which large numbers of colonial settlers directly occupy the colonies and become dominant in numbers and power (Weaver, 2000). The former category is typical for African and Asian postcolonial countries while the latter applies to countries such like Australia, New Zealand and United States.

The contestation of Indonesian indigeneity – if the term ‘indigeneity’ should be applied here – is represented by the Indonesian government and NGOs activists. The Indonesian government still hitherto refused the concept of indigeneity as there is no longer colonial settlers and they believed that Indonesians are mostly indigenous. Meanwhile, NGOs concerned with indigenous issues in Indonesia have agreed that the most appropriate term is masyarakat adat, which is the proper Indonesian translation of ‘indigenous peoples’ (Moniaga, 2007). Against such competing meanings of (non-)indigeneity, the core issue raised in this research is the condition of local communities excluded from dominant discourses of nation-state citizenry through being subjected to claims of indigeneity and the label of isolation.

Dominant and minority dichotomy inevitably leads this section to include the topic of Indonesian characteristics as a modern nation-state that from its inception was built on the existence of centre-periphery relations, not only in a geopolitical sense, but also in a sociocultural one (Haug, Rössler, & Grumblics, 2016). While such centre-periphery relations have appeared in volatile forms since the pre-colonial period, the Dutch colonial government put in place the foundation for a vigorous geopolitical sense of a “superordinate centre” to be a modern state, along with ideas of ethnic nationalism under a Javanese hegemony (Haug et al., 2016, p. 8; see also Vickers, 2005). From the late colonial period to after the declaration of independence in 1949, the domination of Java as the centre of Indonesia become evident, resulting in a split between Java and the outer islands (Haug et al., 2016; Vickers, 2005). As
Vickers (2005) pointed out, this lasted until the New Order regime took control over the nation when power became more centralised in Jakarta so that “the periphery became even more peripheral” (2016, p. 8). This centre-periphery pattern is beautifully portrayed by Sakai, Banks and Walker:

> Viewed from space at night, Indonesia assumes a different profile from its familiar intricate pattern of islands, coasts and mountains. Java positively glows with an incandescent light, southern and central Sumatra is a radiant oasis, and Bali is an intense spot of heat. The rest of the archipelago is marked by an inky darkness splattered occasionally by the lights of provincial capitals and other isolated points of illumination. (2009, p. 1)

Such a portrayal of inequality brings this section to discuss issues of marginalisation, which was identical to the existence of local communities living in the interiors, to whom the discourses of Indonesian indigeneity were mostly referred. The most robust picture of Indonesian marginalisation of the interior local communities was represented by the New Order regime. Marginalisation was strongly apparent in the local communities living in upland areas of the Outer Islands. The New Order’s marginalisation, according to Grumblies, was a manifestation of vigorous bias towards the Javanese culture as expressed by the government imposing “a unifying administrative apparatus on the whole nation” (2016, p. 52). In a firm statement, Grumblies stated that “through the government’s centralisation impetus, Outer Indonesia, at least since the 1960s, represented the idea of the state’s marginalised periphery” (2016, p. 52).

Grumblies’ (2016) description about marginalisation of local communities, especially those living in the Outer Islands, such as the Meratus people, helps to further explain the issues and situations on which Indonesian indigeneity has been pivoting around. While being “left without prospects” (2005, p. 88), the New Order’s strong centralistic government placed marginalised communities under a constant representation of backwardness and primitiveness, along with its robust ideas and projects of modernity and development based mostly in Java (Grumblies, 2016). Living in the periphery Outer Islands and upland areas, so that being subjected to geographical and cultural isolation, local communities such as the Meratus people may best represent the ‘Other’ who, under emerging discourses of Indonesian indigeneity, were situated between issues of local traditions preservation, environmental conservation, and marginalisation. Moreover, these issues emerged under the dominant narrative of modernity and development.

This is where the postcolonial theory is best employed in this study, to reveal the complexity of indigenous issues of postcolonial Indonesia. More specifically, this study emphasises three
postcolonial concepts as tools to scrutinise issues of cultural identity construction of indigeneity among local traditional communities: (i) subjectivity and subjectification; (ii) identity and identification; and (iii) subalternity and representation. This exploration is situated within the euphoric democracy era that has been seen as creating better conditions for indigenous movements, despite the government’s continuing disavowal of indigeneity as a concept. It is becoming a fast-growing national issue.

To put Indonesian postcoloniality and indigeneity within a proper framework of postcolonial theory, a basic theoretical exploration of key postcolonial concepts is also presented within this chapter. The basic concepts of colonialism and postcolonialism are important as part of a foundational framework on which the wholeness of this study stands. A specific look at theories of identity and culture leads this study to focused objectives of a postcolonial project, that is, revealing the colonial representation of the colonised and dismantling the colonised unconsciousness within the sphere of culture.

Part 2: Conceptualisation of postcolonial perspectives for this study

Postcolonialism and colonialism

While colonialism can be loosely understood as a form of domination, subjugation, occupation and oppression, postcolonialism proposes more complex ideas. Similarly, while the prefix ‘post’ can signify a subsequence or time order, in postcolonialism it embraces meanings more complex than merely ‘after’. However, postcolonialism cannot be detached from discourses of ‘colonialism’, which often becomes the point of departure of postcolonial works (Childs & Williams, 1997; Said, 1994, 1995; Williams & Chrisman, 1994). Grasping postcolonial theory inevitably needs an understanding of colonialism.

Ahmad (1995) raised a key problem with the concept of ‘colonialism’ in postcolonialism, that is, it embraces uncertainties in terms of periods. Ahmad (1995) argued that postcolonial literature applying the term ‘colonialism’ is volatile because they referred to colonial empires, such as the Ottoman Empire, while others looked to forms of national oppression, such as the Indonesian government's occupation of East Timor.

In response to such criticism, Said’s view of colonialism as an impact of imperialism can be put forward as the very basic understanding of postcolonialism:

‘Imperialism’ means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; ‘colonialism’ which is almost
always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory. (1994, p. 8)

While imperialism refers to an abstract idea of imposing power (in forms of values, culture, economy, politics), colonialism is concerned with the direct occupation of a colonised territory. Williams and Chrisman also provided a similar understanding, stating that “colonialism, the conquest and direct control of other people’s land, is a particular phase in the history of imperialism” (1994, p. 2). In both differentiations, colonialism is included in imperialism. Placing colonialism under the category of imperialism helps to respond to Ahmad’s (1995) criticism of the trans-historical facts of colonialism. As part of imperialism, the emphasis of ‘colonialism’ in ‘postcolonialism’ causes a broad, deep and long-lasting impact on the colonised. Such a concept of colonialism exists in the idea of ‘empire’ as an objective of imperialism. Said, citing Michael Doyle, wrote:

(Empire) is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire. (Said, 1994, p. 8)

As cited by Said from Richard van Alstyne, empires were originally based on the idea of “imperium”, that is, “a dominion, state, or sovereignty that would expand in population and territory, and increase in strength and power” (1994, p. 7). In addition to the fundamental idea of an empire, a subject raised by Said (1994) and other experts (Magdoff, 1978; McNeill, 2013; van Alstyne, 1974) was Western countries or the so-called metropolitan world that have begun to expand their unprecedented power, compared to 19th century powers, such as Rome, Spain, Baghdad and Constantinople. McNeill (2013) noted how the proportion of territorial scale occupied by Western countries (British, France and the United States) had almost doubled since 1800, increasing from 35 per cent of the earth’s surface to 67 per cent in 1878. The proportion achieved, especially by Europe, rose with astonishing scale, reaching approximately 85 per cent of the world’s regions in the form of colonies, protectorates, dependencies, dominions and commonwealths. Similarly, the United States, as noted by van Alstyne (1974), after claiming its domination over North American territory as a republic, expanded its power to distant regions designated for American interests, such as the Philippines, the Caribbean, Central America, the Barbary Coast, parts of Europe and the Middle East, Vietnam and Korea.

Postcolonialism, therefore, cannot be detached from geopolitical aspects since it emerged along with historical experiences of colonialism that had ‘united’ countries labelled as ‘the Third
World’ or ‘the South’ to fight domination of the North or West. The Bandung Conference held in Indonesia in 1955 that involved newly independent countries of Africa and Asia signified “the origin of postcolonialism as a self-conscious political philosophy” (Young, 2003, p. 17). This was followed by the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in 1966, attended by countries from three continents: Latin America, Africa and Asia. Young viewed the latter summit as “a more militant version of third-world politics, as a global alliance resisting the continuing imperialism of the West” and that the term “tricontinental is more appropriate term to use than ‘postcolonial’” (2003, p. 17). Based on such a geopolitical perspective, Young also asserted that “postcolonialism, or tricontinentalism, is a general name for the insurgent knowledge that come from the subaltern, the dispossessed, and seek to change the terms and values under which we all live” (2003, p. 20).

Nonetheless, this study has no direct concern with geopolitical issues within the adopted postcolonial framework. The main focus is on the essential power relations embedded within the impact of colonialism. This is based on Said’s (1994) observation when he stated that, as a part of imperialism, colonialism cannot be simply stopped by withdrawing all the colonial settlers from the colonised land. While direct colonialism has ended in many places around the world, its ‘spirit’ of imperialism is still alive, affecting cultural, political, ideological, economic and social practices. Furthermore, Said (1994) contended that within the spirit of imperialism, there is a ‘commitment’ stronger than merely the motif of seising colonised land with all its potential resources:

...there is more than that to imperialism and colonialism. There was a commitment to them over and above profit, a commitment in allowed decent men and women to accept the notion that distant territories and their native peoples should be subjegated, and, on the other, replenished metropolitan energies so that these decent people could think of the imperium as protracted, almost metaphysical obligation to rule subordinate, inferior, or less advanced peoples. (1994, p. 10)

Colonialism inscribes its spirit of imperialism deeper than its act of land occupation. Said (1989) categorised ‘the colonised’ as comprising of all inhabitants of countries with a later status of independence and surrounding territories still dominated by Western settlers. Paraphrasing Fanon’s words to describe the ‘lasting effect’ of colonialism, Said stated, “The experience of being colonised … did not end … when the last white policeman left and the last European flag came down” (1989, p. 207). The status of the colonised has left people of this category under a stigma of underdevelopment, dependency, poverty and inferiority. This led Said to further point out that the understanding of ‘the colonised’ has broadened:
... women, subjugated and oppressed classes, national minorities, and even marginalised or incorporated academic specialties. Around the colonised there has grown a whole vocabulary of phrases, each in its own way reinforcing the dreadful secondariness of people ... Thus the status of the colonised people has been fixed in zones of dependency and peripherality, stigmatized in the designation of underdeveloped, less-developed, developing states, ruled by a superior, developed, or metropolitan coloniser who was theoretically posited as a categorically antithetical overlord. ... to be one of the colonised is potentially to be a great many different, but inferior, things, in many different places, at many different times. (1989, p. 207)

In addition, Smith summarised four forms of how European imperialism, since the 15th century, were previously described: (i) “as economic expansion”; (ii) “as the subjugation of ‘others’”; (iii) “as an idea or spirit with many forms of realisation”; and (iv) as “a discursive field of knowledge” (2012, p. 21). An interesting point made by Smith (2012) arising from those descriptions is that the first three forms reflect how European imperialists colonised the territories while the fourth reveals an understanding of imperialism from the experience of the colonised. In other words, there are two sides of concern in dealing with imperialism, which then become the concern of the postcolonialism: (i) dismantling the coloniser’s ways of imperialism; and (ii) decolonising the colonised’s minds.

Xie (1997) interestingly used the term ‘neocolonialism’ to explain what (and how) postcolonialism confronts. Neocolonialism was identified as a method of how Western countries perpetuated their colonialism after the formal independence of Third World countries, when postcolonialism emerged as a counter-discourse that attempted to deconstruct the “cultural hegemony of the modern West with all its imperial structures of feeling and knowledge” by shifting the political and military struggle to a cultural discourse (Xie, 1997, p. 9). To do so, it is the mandate of postcolonial intellectuals to work on two sides: (i) revealing imperialist contamination ingrained in their own political and cultural unconsciousness; and (ii) implanting the Western representation of Third World countries (Xie, 1997). In this counter-hegemonic process, Xie, referring to Bhabha, pointed out that within the coloniser-colonised encounter “is the emergence of the Third Space of enunciation, the hybrid, ambivalent, in between space of signification … an interstitial locus of meaning, between the indigenous and the European” (1997, p. 17).

While recognising the ‘Western and the rest’ critical concept of postcolonial perspectives, the framework of this study is not connected with a binary-oppositional and geopolitical point of view. Putting the discourses of identity and culture at the centre of the issue, this study’s postcolonial framework follows Bhabha’s (1994) emphasis on a quest for authenticity in
cultural discourses to appreciate hybridity. This is explored in the next section on specific postcolonial conceptualisations for this study.

Poststructuralist-informed postcolonialism: Embracing hybridity

While the previous section explains the general concepts of postcolonialism through the basic notion of colonialism, this section provides a specific conceptualisation of the postcolonial framework applied in this study. Placing poststructuralist views as its foundational element, the study’s postcolonial framework is designated to recognise issues being studied as a complex discourse and refuses to view coloniser-colonised power relations as a simple binary opposition.

Postcolonialism, as mentioned above, is concerned with issues of colonialism as a part of imperialism in which it finds discourses of culture at the centre of hegemonic power relations. Cultural domination is the focus of postcolonial perspectives that, according to Bhabha, are concerned with Third World countries’ vantage points in revealing the geopolitical fraction of East versus West or South versus North by intervening “in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give a hegemonic “normality” to the uneven development and the differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, races, communities, people” (1994, pp. 245-246). It is this cultural concern that distinguishes postcolonial theory from the dependency theory, despite a shared area of interest: “A suspicion of Western liberal modernity, a historical-global analysis and a critical politics” (Kapoor, 2002, p. 647). While the former generally grapples with poststructuralist-informed cultural perspectives on imperialism’s subversion of agency through politics of representation, the latter gives an account of structuralist ideas of capitalist imperialism within socioeconomic relations (Kapoor, 2002).

The use of the term ‘poststructuralism’ in this section places an emphasis on avoiding the structuralism’s belief of universal theory that tends to reduce the complexity of social structures into linguistic formations, which simply comprises arbitrary signs (a signifier and a signified) (Seidman, 1998; Young, 1981). Seidman argued that poststructuralist views, while sharing the basic view that signs got their meanings from the relations of difference, is distinct from structuralism in that meanings are not static and always in flux because they are attached to “social and political contestation” (1998, p. 222). It is this basic view that constituted the deconstructive characteristics of poststructuralism. In postcolonial studies, There are three prominent postcolonial thinkers, previously referred to as ‘the Holy Trinity’, who are strongly influenced by poststructuralist views: (i) Edward Said by Foucauldian discourse; (ii) Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak by her translation of Jacques Derrida’s ‘Of Grammatology’; and (iii) Homi Bhabha by Lacan and Derrida’s theories (Gikandi, 2004).
While postcolonialism is concerned with the decolonisation process of colonised subjects, according to Bhabha (1994), it does not seek to build a fixity or rigidity upon the binary relation between the coloniser and the colonised. Rather, the encounters of dominating Western values with dominated cultures are seen as generating what Bhabha described as “in between spaces” or “interstices” wherein new signs of cultural identities are negotiated and sought to be built (Bhabha, 1994, p. 2). It can therefore be implied that decolonising cultural imperialism should focus on recovering the past history in order to find an authentic pre-colonial tradition, as well as negotiate new articulations of cultural identity for the present situation. Bhabha explained this view:

*The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation. ... Social differences are not simply given to experience through an already authenticated cultural tradition; they are the signs of the emergence of community envisaged as a project —at once a vision and a construction- that takes you ‘beyond’ yourself in order to return, in a spirit of revision and reconstruction, to the political conditions of the present.* (1994, pp. 2-3)

Bhabha’s concept of cultural hybridities became the core idea that illuminated other poststructuralist-informed postcolonial theories applied in this study: subjectivity/subjectification, identity and identification and subalternity and representation. Conversely, the theories explored in the next sections explicate how hybridity works as a conceptual framework.

**Subjectivity/subjectification**

Within postcolonial perspectives, subjectivity becomes a crucial issue as it embraces questions of agency, a concept of an individual’s autonomous capability to act. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin explained:

*In contemporary theory, it hinges on the question of whether individuals can freely and autonomously initiate action, or whether the things they do are in some sense determined by the ways in which their identity has been constructed. Agency is particularly important in post-colonial theory because it refers to the ability of post-colonial subjects to initiate action by engaging or resisting imperial power. The term has become an issue in recent times as a consequence of post-structuralist theories of subjectivity.* (2007, p. 6)

Among the main characteristics of postcolonial thought is a constant questioning of the ‘agency’ of subjects. Fanon asserted that colonialism has unconsciously pushed the colonised to
always engender the question: “Who am I in reality?” (2004, p. 182). This question represents his view about the colonist fabrication of the colonised subjects (Fanon, 2004). Describing his people (Algerian), Fanon showed how a colonising culture of the White has been absorbed and reproduced by the Black:

The black man wants to be like the white man. For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white. Long ago the black man admitted the unarguable superiority of the white man, and all his efforts are aimed at achieving a white existence. (2008, p. 178)

Bhabha pointed out that from the vantage point of postcolonial theory, individual or human agency of the colonised is represented under a “hegemonic normality” imposed by discourses of modernity within “the uneven development and differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, races, communities, peoples” (1994, p. 171). Furthermore, he argued that current theories show that the history of the colonised culture is ‘transnational’, that it derived from diverse stories of cultural displacement across the world in forms not only subjugation and domination but also diaspora and, therefore, ‘translational’ that the signification among the cultures becomes complex and hybrid. Within this hybridity, Bhabha also postulated that ‘forces of normalisation and naturalisation’ come to ‘create a modern Western disciplinary society’ through the invisible power of, in reference to Foucault, “dehistoricized figure of Man” engendered “at the cost of those ‘others’ – women, natives, the colonised, the indentured and enslaved – who, at the same time but in other spaces, were becoming the peoples without a history” (1994, p. 197). This poststructuralist view of the postcolonial subject refuses simplification of the concept of agency in recognising an individual’s autonomous capacity of resistance. Therefore, the term ‘subjectivity’ is more appropriate to be used in this research.

‘Othering’ is another key concept of postcolonial theory that can support the understanding of the concept of subjectivity. Within colonial discourse, the ‘other’ is an entity created by the coloniser to characterise the colonised with inferiority, such as cannibalism, primitivism and other threats to civilisation (Ashcroft et al., 2007; Fanon, 2008; Morton, 2003). The concept of the ‘other’ is manifested through the act of ‘othering’ that describes the way of producing a subject by the coloniser (Ashcroft et al., 2007). This othering process is illustrated by Fanon in the way the Black people see themselves: “I begin to recognise that the Negro is the symbol of sin, I catch myself hating the Negro” (2008, p. 153). The colonised accept and internalise the imposed subjectivity as the other, as produced by the coloniser.
Through the process of othering, the coloniser builds identity as the centre of civilisation that the colonised should refer to and the opposite entity of all inferior characteristics of the other. Said described this as follows:

_The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilisation and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience._ (Said, 1995, pp. 1-2)

Spivak (1985), in _Rani of Sirmur_, presented three examples of how practices of ‘othering’ had been shown by colonial apparatuses upon the kingdoms around the Simla Hills in Simur, India, within the first half of the 19th century. Each example represents dimensions of ‘othering’ of colonised or marginalised people that were conceptualised by Jensen (2011) into three practices: (i) showing the power holder; (ii) constructing inferiority; and (iii) controlling knowledge. The power holder dimension is derived from Spivak’s story of a colonial captain who travelled to a remote area of a conquered state to represent the existence of European power over the region in order to be “reinscribed from the stranger to Master, to the sovereign as Subject with a capital S” (1985, p. 254). The dimension of ‘constructing inferiority’ refers to Spivak’s story of a general obsessed with colonial superiority who viewed the colonised as ‘only possessing all the brutality and perfidy [sic] of the rudest time without the courage and all the depravity and treachery of the modern days without the knowledge or refinement’ (1985, pp. 254-255). The “controlling the knowledge” is the third dimension exemplified by restricting access to knowledge by the East India Company’s Board of Control towards the native Indian troops, thus, representing a master/native relationship, where “the master is the subject of science or knowledge” (Spivak, 1985, p. 256).

Applying this conceptualisation of ‘othering’ to this study helps to reveal how, within the process of indigeneity representation in Indonesia, subjectivity was constructed through discursive processes. When a community has accepted its otherness and, therefore, its subjectivity, Bhabha said, “The Other must be seen as the necessary negation of a primordial identity – cultural or psychic – that introduces the system of differentiation which enables the cultural to be signified as a linguistic, symbolic, historic reality” (1994, p. 52). This is equivalent to Spivak’s (1988) view that the colonised can only speak and be heard through the use of the coloniser’s language.
Therefore, subjectivity is a reflection of hybridity as it results from combined aspects of an individual’s agency and its surrounding influences/impositions (e.g. social, cultural, economic, politic). Ashcroft conceived subjectivity as the production of “the human subject through ideology, discourse or language” (2007, p. 202). In a practical sense, within the context of a state’s political hegemony, Bacchi and Goodwin (2016) used the term ‘subjectification’, which referred to ‘the production, or making, of provisional ‘subjects’ of particular kinds through policy practices’. As a realistic concept, subjectification may occur along with the process described by Rose and Miller as “governmentalisation” (1992, pp. 174-175) when referring to Foucault’s (1991) concept of governmentality. This implies that the exercise of power by a state does not mean imposition, but is producing “governable subjects” to force subjects to “play a part in its operations” (1992, pp. 174-175).

The concept of governmentalisation positions individuals, not only as an object, but also as a part of power. Foucault placed this under a power-knowledge nexus through which the production of subjects occurs under “the rules of the system of knowledge” (2007, p. 205). It is where knowledge functions as the power of the subject to control discourses, and eventually, dominant discourses in certain historical contexts will take over control in determining the subjectivity of the subject. Foucault stated, “We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth” (1980, p. 93). This explains the way (dominant) discourse produces subjectivity and how individual subjects take a part in exercising power.

Bhabha suggested that within colonial discourse the process of subjectification can be explained by “stereotypical discourse”, that is, “stereotyped images” built through “political normativity”, consisting of “the repertoire of positions of power and resistance, domination and dependence that construct colonial subject (both coloniser and colonised)” (1994, p. 67). Furthermore, Bacchi and Goodwin stated that the subject is “an effect of politics, always in process, and a product of power-knowledge relations” (2016, p.49). It is based on the concept of identity, which is the effect of subjectivity (Ashcroft et al., 2007) that is important in the postcolonial framework of this research. Complementing this theory of subjectivity/subjectification, the next section explains how identity formation occurs within the representation of a colonial/hegemonic system.

Identity and identification

Fanon suggested that colonialism does not only erase “the native’s brain of all form and content’ but also ‘turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys
it” (1994, p. 37). The impact that a coloniser seeks to achieve is on the colonised people’s belief of their barbaric pre-colonial history and superior civilisation of the coloniser. Fanon’s (1994) conceptualisation of colonialism, despite differences of vantage points, basically represented other prominent postcolonial experts’ (Bhabha, 1994; Hall, 1990; Said, 1994; Young, 2003) emphasis on issues of colonised cultural historicity, specifically issues of cultural identity. The colonised became people without an historical identity and, therefore, without roots. However, critical questions that emerge regarding such a conclusion are: Is it possible that people lost their identity? Could it be merely a matter of shifting identity? Is there such a thing as an ‘authentic identity’?

In addressing issues of identity, Hall offered two views of thinking about cultural identity that stands on the basis of “identity as a “production” which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (1990, p. 222). The first view describes cultural identity as “one, shared culture, a sort of collective “one true self”, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ”selves”, which people with shared history and ancestry hold in common” (Hall, 1990, p. 223). From this perspective, cultural identity is reconnected to the past history lying unchanged beneath the volatility and versatility of its following histories, waiting to be rediscovered. Hall (1990) described Black Caribbean people who quested for their descent identity as part of an African diaspora as an example of identity formation. The rediscovery then becomes “resources of resistance and identity” to confront the dominant Western reconstruction of their experiences (Hall, 1990, p. 225).

The second view, cultural identity “is a matter of “becoming” as well as of “being”. It belongs to the future as much as it belongs to the past. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation” (Hall, 1990, p. 225). Rather than recover the past, Hall (1990) contended that identity is a matter of how people position themselves within, and are positioned by, their historical narrative. It is this second sense that allows us to see how, for instance, Black people’s experiences were constructed and represented through the dominant Western categorisation of normality, which makes them able to see and feel their otherness. Hall (1990) added that this irony occurred within internal knowledge as an inevitable excess of every regime of representation, which is always a reflection of the ‘power/knowledge’ nexus described by Foucault (1972).

Based on his own experiences as part of the African or Afro-Caribbean diaspora, Hall expressed how the colonised could free themselves from domination and immediately define their identity:
The original ‘Africa’ is no longer there. It too has been transformed. History is, in that sense, irreversible. We must not collude with the West which, precisely, normalises and appropriates Africa by freezing it into some timeless zone of the primitive, unchanging past. Africa must at last be reckoned with by Caribbean people, but it cannot in any simple sense by merely recovered. (1990, p. 231)

Hall (1990) further suggested that the Caribbean identity could be found or constituted through what Benedict Anderson (1987) described as ‘an imagined community’. Hall added, “To this Africa, which is necessary part of the Caribbean imaginary, we can’t literally go home again” (1990, p. 232).

This fits in with Fanon’s (1994) assertion that the struggle for freedom of a national culture does not bring back its former values and shapes due to the struggle unavoidably transforming the culture into a new form. Fanon wrote, “After the conflict there is not only the disappearance of colonialism but also the disappearance of the colonised man” (1994, p. 51). The view that culture is a process of domination is affirmed by Cabral:

In fact, to take up arms to dominate a people is, above all, to take up arms to destroy, or at least to neutralize, to paralyse, its cultural life. For, with a strong indigenous cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation. (1994, p. 53)

Past history needs to be revealed and revisited, but not be incarcerated within the imagination of its fixity. Cultural identity did not emerge from nowhere. It is fixed in the past but has grown from somewhere, and is always in an ongoing process of ‘positioning’ (Hall, 1990). In simple terms, Hall stated:

Though they seem to invoke an origin in an historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually identities are about questions of using resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. ... not the so-called return to roots but a coming-to-term-with our ‘routes’. (1996, p. 4)

An important inclusion in this section is the concept of ‘identification’ that Hall (1996) referred to as the process of subjectification occurring through discursive practices. Instead of relying on a naturalistic approach that conceives identification as recognising a group of persons based on shared and common signs, Hall (1996) saw it through a discursive approach, that is, as a process of ‘articulation’ by suturing differences that interweave in a meeting point and therefore is an endless process. According to Bhabha, this is where the initiation of “new signs of identity” is possible and “that the intersubjective and collective experiences of ‘nationness’, community
interest, or cultural value are negotiated” (1994, pp. 1-2). In the process of decolonisation, identity is not a function of recovering the past, nor is it about returning to its authentic origin; it is a process of negotiating self-agency within a changing discourse.

It is important to note that identification is an act of creating a subject through a so-called ‘politics of exclusion’; it cannot remove the differences it works on, meaning that it is “always “too much” or “too little” … never a proper fit” (Hall, 1996, pp. 2-3). This is in line with Bhabha’s “colonial mimicry”, that is “the desire for a reformed, recognisable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (1994, p. 86). The colonised or marginalised inevitably, to a certain extent, adopts the coloniser’s or dominant group’s values or system to be equally recognised (and/or integrated) while still signifying difference.

Identity is viewed as a process of becoming and positioning, rather than rediscovering, a fixed authentic origin of past history. Meanwhile, culture becomes the terrain where indigenous peoples make an attempt to consult their past, instead of going back to it, to reconstruct a new identity in dealing with the state’s ‘hegemonic normality’, moving between resistance and integration. Postcolonial theory is applied in this study with two main concerns: (i) decolonising the indigenous communities’ political and cultural unconsciousness; and (ii) dismantling how they had been represented by surrounding actors, especially by NGOs.

**Subalternity and representation**

According to postcolonial studies, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1942-), a well-known postcolonial thinker, popularised the term ‘subaltern’ through asking: ‘Can the subaltern speak?’ (Spivak, 1988). This term is derived from _Prison Notebook_, a book written by Italian Marxist thinker, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), while imprisoned during the period of Mussolini’s fascist government in Italy (Morton, 2003). Gramsci applied ‘subaltern’ interchangeably with the term ‘subordinate’ to refer to peasant communities in Southern Italy who had neither social nor political awareness about their identity as a group so were prone to be subjected to any form of state intervention (Morton, 2003).

Meanwhile, a group of South Asian historians, known as the Subaltern Studies group, used this term to be applied to subordination in its sense of class, caste, age, gender, office or other processes and structures in South Asian society (Guha, 1988b). Guha described it as a consequence of nationalist elite domination in representing Indian historiography that is unhistorical for its inadequacy in acknowledging the contribution made by “groups constituting the mass of the labouring population and the intermediate strata in town and country, that is, the
people” (1988, p. 40). Supporting Guha’s view, Pandey (1988) revealed a local historical account of a Urdu manuscript written in 1880 that narrated the colonial experiences of the Mubarakpur people in the district of Azamgarh, North India. This can be seen as an attempt by Pandey (1988) to show that historical accounts of people do exist but, due to difficulties in accessing sources, are buried under British official records.

Applying a Marxist perspective, Chakrabarty (1988) is in agreement with such a view, showing that the history of the working-class was reconstructed by the ruling-class. While Spivak had the same basic view within Subaltern Studies, she questioned the adequacy of the Marxist theory by defining the subaltern as, unlike the story of European working-class, embracing complex histories and conditions (Morton, 2003).

Spivak defined the subaltern as a “person without lines of social mobility” (1988, p. 271). In an interview compiled by De Kock, Spivak stated, “… everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern – a space of difference. Now who would say that’s just the oppressed? The working class is oppressed. It’s not subaltern” (1992, pp. 45-46). The subaltern cannot be simply positioned within a structuralist’s concept of oppression in which oppressed groups have access to when faced with the oppressors so they can “speak” as there is “a transaction between speaker and listener”, as described by Phillips (2011, p. 162). It is proposed by Spivak that this limits defining the subaltern that does not always accommodate issues of oppression or discrimination.

Spivak’s question of the (in)ability of subaltern groups to speak out was also a criticism directed towards the Subaltern Studies group and Gramscian views of the subaltern’s self-determination (Ashcroft et al., 2007). The experience of the subaltern lies outside the discourse of class struggles that necessitate the act of an autonomous agency capable of speaking and directing access to hegemonic discourses. Subaltern groups, according to Spivak, do not have the space because their voices cannot be heard unless represented in a language that belongs to the hegemonic discourse; any act of resistance conducted on their behalf cannot be disconnected from existing dominant discourse (Ashcroft et al., 2007). It means that they cannot speak for themselves or a person from the dominant discourse should be present to represent them, or teach them how to represent themselves in a language or ways acceptable to the dominant discourse. Spivak wrote:

*When you say cannot speak, it means that if speaking involves speaking and listening, this possibility of response, responsibility, does not exist in the subaltern’s sphere. You bring out these so-called subalterns from the woodwork; the only way that that speech is produced is by inserting the subaltern into the*
Spivak’s concept of subaltern can function as a tool of analysis to elaborate in situations the disenfranchised falls under subalternity. Revealing the condition of subalternity is not intended to remain as is. It is useful for activists and those concerned with issues of social justice to be critically aware of the situation they are dealing with. However, Spivak postulated, “You don’t give the subaltern voice. You work for the bloody subaltern, you work against subalternity” (De Kock, 1992, p. 46). Subalternity is not about the need of being voiced. Spivak suggested, “In seeking to learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for) the historically muted subject of the subaltern … the postcolonial intellectual systematically ‘unlearns’ … privilege” (1988, p. 295). Therefore, unlearning privilege is the first key concern for every intellectual or activist who comes from a circuit of hegemonic discourse when dealing with subalternity. Byrd and Rothberg (2011) stated that most concerns have been given to issues of the subaltern’s inability to speak (failed subaltern), and less attention has been paid to the dominant group’s failure to listen. This should be seen as a chance to build a bridge that deals with the incommensurable communication transaction by providing a space for the subaltern to speak and the dominant group to listen.

It is important to note that Spivak’s (1988) theory of subaltern was derived from an Indian context and experience. As the theory has its specific context of critical concern about women’s inability to make their own voice heard within a specific place and time of Indian’s experience of colonialism, represented through the case of Sati, this particularity may not be able to be perfectly adopted. Also, Indian’s experiences of colonialism and postcolonialism cannot be seen as simply comparable to Indonesia. More specifically, this study’s context (place and time) was not directly connected to the condition of colonialism. Therefore, without an intention to universalise the meaning of subaltern, the application of this theory in different cultural contexts must be adjusted to their dynamics.

In this study, Spivak’s (1988) theory of the subaltern contributed more to revealing and scrutinising the complexity of power relations, rather than drawing parallels between distinction cultural groups of peoples. The adoption of this theory into the Indonesian context of indigeneity is meaningful, firstly in explaining the concept of being ‘exist’ or ‘present’ for local minority communities living under a hegemonic state system that does not provide any space for their localities; and secondly, it was essential in revealing how NGOs had played key roles...
in representing local community indigeneity to enable access to the circuit of dominant discourses.

A problem of representation exists when exploring the concept of the subaltern. Morton (2003), in referring to Derrida’s critique of Levi Strauss’s portrayal of the indigenous community as untouched civilisation, noticed a lack of Western knowledge about its non-Western counterparts positioned as its object of representation. The subaltern is then always the object of representation made by the dominant group.

It is crucial then to include within this chapter a theoretical basis that can explain how representation works in constructing or shaping subjectivities. Hall offered an understanding of representation as ‘the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language’ (1997b, p. 17). In examining the meaning of representation, Hall emphasised, “It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the “real” world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events” (1997b, p. 17). Representation consists of three basic elements: (i) things (objects and people, whether real or fictional); (ii) concepts; and (iii) languages or signs. The central idea of representation is that ‘things’ are not produced by themselves for their own meanings; concepts that are created and planted in human minds go through a complex process before being translated into words, images or sounds that compound languages or messages to be shared among people. All these elements link together to create a ‘system of representation’ by which people can share or exchange meaning. However, Hall expressed that despite having the ability to share meanings through common languages or signs, “each of us probably does understand and interpret the world in a unique and individual way” (1997b, p. 18).

According to theories of representation by language, there are broadly three approaches: reflective, intentional and constructionist. The reflective approach suggests that ‘language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists in the world’ (Hall, 1997b, p. 24). This approach does not seem to work for this study because the concept of indigeneity in Indonesia had been manifested in different meanings and terminologies that are still debatable. The intentional approach contends that “it is the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language” (Hall, 1997b, p. 25). Indigeneity issues have been deployed as a public concern involving the government, NGOs and the communities in question as the main stakeholders. Relying its meaning strictly on certain individuals or parties is unacceptable.
It is the last approach, constructionist, that is able to connect indigeneity in Indonesia as a result of the linguistic reflection of the real existence of the communities in question and a complex systemic construction of language or signs by which people can communicate, although with simple, common understanding. The key principle of this approach is ‘things’ alone do not have, or signify any, meaning. “It is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and communicate about that world meaningfully to others” (Hall, 1997b, p. 25). This approach implies an analysis that embroils subjects or social actors, as well as a broader cultural system that contributes to the production of meanings of indigeneity in Indonesia.

In addition to the three approaches, another theory that can accommodate more varied and comprehensive elements is ‘representation through discourse’. This theoretical approach of representation is vigorously derived from Foucault’s conceptualisation of discourse. He defined discourse as broader than the linguistic sphere; it includes “a group of statements that provide a language for talking about – that is, a way of representing – a particular kind of knowledge about a topic” (Hall, 1992, p. 291). It is important to emphasise that the Foucauldian concept of discourse is not a linguistic concept, therefore, its application as a tool of analysis is not merely based on language materials, textual or oral, but all practices that are brought to a particular topic. Hall explained this:

*Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But it is itself produced by a practice: ‘discursive practice’- the practice of producing meaning. Since all social practices entail meaning, all practices have a discursive aspect. So discourse enters into and influences all social practices.* (1992, p. 291)

‘Statements’ is a term used to name the elements that make up a discourse. McHoul and Grace (1993) argued that a statement has a more complex expression and meaning than language as it presents itself with certain conditions for understanding. They can take any form of practice or event that when placed together, can “refer to the same object, share the same style and support a strategy … a common institutional … or political drift or pattern” will be under a discursive formation and therefore produce a discourse (Cousins and Hussain as cited by Hall, 1997b, p. 44). In other words, discourse works by absorbing all aspects in social life that conjointly contribute to the production of a meaning and therefore knowledge.

A more conceptualised understanding about a discursive approach to representation by differentiating it from semiotic approaches is provided by Hall:
It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, make up or construct identities and subjectivities, and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practiced and studied. The emphasis in the discursive approach is always on the historical specificity of a particular form of ‘regime’ of representation: not on 'language’ as a general concern, but on specific languages or meanings, and how they are deployed at particular times, in particular places. It points us towards greater historical specificity - the way representational practices operate in concrete historical situations, in actual practice. (1997a, p. 6)

Based on this understanding, ‘representation’ is applied in this research as ‘practices of representation’, that connect all relevant ‘statements’ within a specific ‘regime of representation’. Instead of discussing “how language produces meaning”, the discursive approach “is more concerned about the effects and consequences of representation – its politics” (Hall, 1997a, p. 6).

Therefore, studying the construction of the competing meanings of indigeneity in Indonesia may be conducted by scrutinising any form of practice that leads to the formation of indigeneity discourses. When applied to issues of subalterity in which the cultural identity (including indigeneity or non-indigeneity) of the communities in question is constructed by actors from mainstream societies, this discourse approach is inquiring about the power relations of representation. Foucault’s concept of power, despite its complexity, is relevant to explaining the process of the production of meanings and therefore, knowledge seen as multidirectional and “comes from everywhere … is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations” (1978, pp. 93-94).

Similar to Spivak’s concept of the subaltern that lies beyond simple binary opposition of dominant-subordinate relations, Foucault’s concept of power is not limited to what can be identified from the relations between the superior and inferior, or the stronger and the weaker. That power does not arrive from agents who actively exercise their power over others. It comes from everyone involved in social relations, who embrace dynamic inequalities between each other. To put it within a postcolonial discourse, subalterity is the condition created through complex coloniser-colonised relations in that there are interstices or in-between spaces excluded from mainstream discourses.
Summary

Derived from a globally mobilised concept, issues of indigeneity in Indonesia are seen in this study as not self-evident but as contingent on larger social, cultural and political dynamics that connect local communities to national and global discourses. The history of Indonesian postcoloniality is relevant to investigating how the construction of indigeneity has been built. Inheriting the colonial Dutch nation-state system and territory, Indonesia was, in its early phase as a sovereign state, faced with questions of national cultural identity. Against a backdrop of highly diverse localities, polarisation occurred between those who called for the adoption of local traditions and those who wanted a new modern nation-state. It was the latter that gained more space, mainly under the New Order regime. Ethnic diversity was represented mainly as a symbolic identity to support national unity run through a robust developmentalism narrative. In practice, the nation-wide administration system was Java-biased. Indonesian postcoloniality emerged as, what Anderson (1987) called ‘imagined communities’, representing the diverse local communities under one unitary identity of citizenship. It is within such a contextualisation of Indonesian postcoloniality that a postcolonial framework is used as the main tool for an analytical strategy in studying the indigenous movement in Indonesia.

Nonetheless, this study refuses to see this issue of power imposition within a simple binary opposition or patron-client relation. The representation of the local communities within a dominant discourse, despite the presence of power relations, is seen as a point of encounter for the negotiation and/or construction of new identities among actors involved. Still, this leaves a question about how things work in the process of representation. To scrutinise this, three specific poststructuralist-informed postcolonial theories were applied: (i) subjectivity/subjection; (ii) identity/identification; and (iii) subalternity and representation. The postcolonial framework is explained and presented as an analytical strategy supported by the Foucauldian concept of discourse (Chapter 5).

It is important to note that the application of the three main theories were not rigidly structured into a theory-led narrative of discussions. Instead, the theories followed the narrative of data reporting the researcher developed based on mostly issues raised or topics found from the fieldwork and their appropriateness with this study’s questions. As explained in Chapter 4 on analytical strategy, this study’s topics development was also processed through the use of a computer software for a qualitative data, NVIVO. The theories mentioned then served as prepared tools that emerged through a flowing narrative of data reporting instead of categorisation of theory-discussion structure.
Chapter 2: Perspectives on Indonesian Indigeneity

Introduction

In dominant contemporary societies, indigeneity issues tend to be marginalised from the discourses of modernity and development while, at the same time, it has become an increasingly popular topic, bringing local issues of marginalised local communities into international discourses, representing global social justice issues (Dove, 2006; Keck, 1995; Persoon, 1998). However, Dove observed that “modernity has helped to popularize, and at the same time threaten, indigeneity” (2006, p. 191). Indonesia, an archipelagic nation-state with more than 1300 ethnic groups (consisting of ethnic, sub-ethnic and sub-sub-ethnic groups) (Ananta et al., 2015; Badan Pusat Statistik, 2010), is indicative of the duality suggested by Dove (2006). Indigenous movements have been growing more intensely since the beginning of the reformasi era at the end of the 1990s (Bedner & Van Huis, 2008; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2000a, 2001) despite the Indonesian government’s unchanged stance of refusing indigeneity as one of its key policy issues and recently volatile policies.

As emphasised previously, in the Indonesian context, the concept of indigeneity is contested by the state through the concept of ethnicity as a glorified symbol of social and cultural diversity. Moreover, being perceived as a primordial identity, which tends to be apart from the concerns of national development programs, ethnicity is also represented in the national slogan, Bhineka Tunggal Ika, meaning ‘unity in diversity’. Deemed as the original inhabitants of the Indonesian territory, these local ethnic groups are seen wholly as indigenous (prihumi). The Indonesian government has only recently recognised the existence of the so-called ‘Indonesian people’ and refuse to recognise the existence of what has been perceived as indigenous versus non-indigenous issues (Li, 2001; Moniaga, 2007; Persoon, 1998).

When referring to ethnic minorities historically living distinct ways of life set apart from the general Indonesian society as they tried to maintain their hereditary traditions, the government used the terms ‘customary law communities’ and ‘isolated’ or ‘remote’ communities to emphasise the notion of estrangement from mainstream society instead of indigeneity. It is believed that this condition resulted from the New Order regime’s policies that strove to emphasise uniformity rather than diversity within (Safitri & Bosko, 2002), as described by Nordholt (2003, p. 554), “It was not the society but the state that mattered”. The implementation of the concept of desa, which refers to the Javanese concept of ‘village’ to replace the diverse...
The native territorial system over all parts of the country, is one example of such a paternalistic uniformity (Bedner & Van Huis, 2008; Burns, 2007; Sangaji, 2007).

Meanwhile, the rise of indigeneity issues in Indonesia cannot be detached from global discourses of indigenous peoples (Afiff & Lowe, 2007; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2001). Symbolically, the globally growing campaign on indigenous peoples’ rights was mobilised through the First International Decade of the World's Indigenous People proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993. Li (2001) stated that it was within the UN global indigenous peoples mobilisation that the First Congress of Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN or Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago) was held. With support from national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their international and local networks concerned with indigeneity issues (Li, 2000a), AMAN represented the grassroots support organisations (GSO) of those described as masyarakat adat (meaning ‘customary community’) across Indonesia. The inception of AMAN can be referred to as signifying the rise of indigeneity issues in Indonesia. With its almost two decades of experience in organising indigenous movements, AMAN has succeeded in building and strengthening indigeneity discourses across Indonesia.

Nonetheless, indigeneity emerged as a floating concept with loose meanings, not only in terms of its terminological aspect, but also in how it was placed within broader issues in Indonesia. On one hand, the concept of indigenous peoples in Indonesia is still contested by several comparable concepts such as ethnic groups, rural communities, customary law communities and isolated communities that, even though they refer to the same subject, and embrace different assumptions and consequences; while on the other hand, indigenous peoples or adat movements have become a widespread socio-political reality in Indonesia and even, as contended by Henley and Davidson (2008), have become an ideology or belief structure.

In addressing the complex conceptualisation of Indonesian indigeneity, this chapter focuses on two main concerns. Firstly, how the Indonesian government, through its institutions and policies, has constructed and reconstructed sociocultural identities of local communities as customary law and/or isolated communities. This is presented to demonstrate the dominant discourses underlying the emerging indigeneity issues in Indonesia. The emphasis is on showing the technologies of power the government has applied through institutions, policies and legal instruments. And secondly, the concern is narrowed down to looking at understanding how Indonesian indigeneity is perceived or conceptualised. This is achieved by deriving various
perspectives from scholars in this area of study. The aim is to illuminate further theoretical bases of indigeneity for this study.

**Indonesian government’s construction of local and/or isolated communities**

Refusing to adopt the UN’s concept of indigenous peoples, the Indonesian government did, however, constitutionally acknowledge that there are groups of peoples living in ‘customary law communities’ where local peoples adhere to their hereditary traditions. Other terminologies used in different state documents and/or institutions refer to communities with the same or almost similar characteristics, for example, traditional community, local community, forest squatter, swidden farmer, coastal community and isolated customary community (Arizona, 2013; Safitri & Bosko, 2002; Duncan, 2004a; Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2013; Persoon, 1998). This has generated multiple interpretations and revealed the government’s ambiguous stance, that is, refusing the concept of indigenous peoples while at the same time, providing space for identification. This ambiguity was reflected in the government’s response to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). In a UN’s press release of meetings among world representatives held on 13 September, 2007 regarding the declaration, the Indonesian government stated:

(Indonesia) noted that several aspects of the Declaration remained unresolved, in particular what constituted indigenous peoples. The absence of that definition prevented a clear understanding of the peoples to whom the Declaration applied. In that context, the Declaration used the definition contained in the International Labour Organisation Convention, according to which indigenous people were distinct from tribal people. Given the fact that Indonesia’s entire population at the time of colonisation remained unchanged, the rights in the Declaration accorded exclusively to indigenous people and did not apply in the context of Indonesia. Indonesia would continue to promote the collective rights of indigenous peoples. (United Nations, 2007)

Such a standpoint raises the question: **How can the government actually conceive the issue of indigeneity within the Indonesian context?** Departing from such a query, this study argues that the issue of indigeneity in Indonesia emerged as a response to the government’s nationwide imposition of policies based on developmental rationality and activity, which, according to Li, “draws on the more general logic of governmentality” (1999, p. 296). Li, in reference to Foucauldian theory, explained governmentality as:

... a distinctive, modern form of power which seeks to govern or regulate the condition under which people live their lives; the rationality that renders the activity of government thinkable to its practitioners and those on whom it is
Foucault, in his lecture on governmentality, conceptualised this idea as a form of exercising power by not only being concerned with big ideas of sovereignty but also dealing with more specific and complex elements that contain “as its primary target the population and as its essential mechanism the apparatuses of security” (1991, p. 102). Lemke conceptualised this as “technologies of government” that operate to discipline persons or regulate community in such a way that they govern themselves as both individuals and members of a larger society or state (2007, p. 49). In its manifestation as the state’s power, governmentality appeared through processes of individualisation and institutionalisation. It is in this sense that the term ‘technology’ is often used to refer to Foucault’s ideas, as expressed by Rose, O’Malley and Valverde that “technologies of the self were formed alongside the technologies of domination” (2006, p. 89).

Thus, it may be said that the policies issued by the government for those identified as masyarakat hukum adat were intended as the making of the people, either as individuals or as a collective, self-ordered, believing that they are part of the so-called ‘state’. Moreover, through its capacity to create symbolic devices and procedures, such as bureaucracies and regulations, the government attempted to integrate masyarakat hukum adat into the state’s narrative of power and development. This section discusses how the government has conceived and constructed local communities through its apparatuses, which were manifested in forms of institutions (ministries, departments, offices) and/or policies. This exploration of the government’s institutions and policies is aimed at exploring their standpoint on facing the issue of indigeneity as they represent through their technologies of government.

In doing so, the exploration is set within the timeframe that portrays the transition from the New Order regime to the following era reformasi. In supporting postcolonial perspectives that theoretically drove this study, a short step back to periods of Dutch colonialisation is also provided. This timeframe was chosen because it was implied in many studies in this field that it best summarises a whole picture of the emergence and development of indigenous issues in Indonesia. However, while marking the timeframe, it is not meant as a strict line of division. Therefore, the exploration is presented in a loose narrative style, as the emphasis is on showing how the government stands with regard to the issue of indigeneity in Indonesia.
Chapter 2 Perspectives on Indonesian Indigeneity

Under the Dutch colonial government

While the term *adat* was applied and widely accepted by stakeholders within this issue, it was worth noting that the term is historically derived from the colonial Dutch legal term *adatrecht* (*adat*/customary law), which was introduced by C. Snouck Hurgronje in 1893 and then continued by Cornelis van Vollenhoven in 1928 (F.V. Benda-Beckmann & K.V. Benda-Beckmann, 2011). Some critics argued that the concept of *adat* law was created by a Dutch scholar and derived from Van Vollenhoven and his students whose work they called *Adatrechtbundels* (*adat* law tomes) (Burns, 1989; Davidson & Henley, 2007; Fasseur, 2007). In contrast to that view, Beckmann and Beckmann (2011) stated that *Adatrechtbundels* contains ethnographic notes on unwritten varied native rules and traditions and was not to be viewed as a codified law because Van Vollenhoven opposed such an attempt as he was concerned with the reduction of the dynamic and flexible nature of *adat*. The issue concerning the use of term *adat* becomes more complex if traced back to its origin as an Arabic word, asserting exploration of the spread of Islam across the archipelagic country (Henley & Davidson, 2008).

However, while it was agreed by some scholars that the conceptualisation of ‘*adat* law’ came from the Dutch (Burns, 2007; Fitzpatrick, 2007), Fitzpatrick pointed out (2007) that the colonial government had, overall, subordinated and even neglected the customary rules or systems of the native communities. The subordination and neglect were mainly on land issues, especially on communal tenurial rights. The Agrarian Act of 1870, for instance, stated that any land that cannot be proven to have legal ownership rights is to be under the state’s territory (Fitzpatrick, 2007). Customary rules were actually allowed to be practiced, even customary court was established, but there was no serious attempt from the colonial government to implement it. This situation did not change until the last decade of the colonisation and the monumental documentation of *Adatrechtbundel* by Van Vollenhoven as mentioned above.

Meanwhile, in the early postcolonial period, under the presidency of Soekarno, as mentioned in Chapter 1, those classified as tribal groups were brought to adjustment and adaptation to what the new nation-state government imagined as national identity. It seemed that the government wanted the adjustment process to happen soon, reflecting their “progress-oriented attitude in matters of the national culture” (Schefold, 1998, p. 271). Among the attempts was an instruction for the conversion of tribal groups from their local religions to the state-recognised religions, with a threat of punishment for not doing so. However, many scholars agreed that the following New Order regime under Suharto’s administration was the one that came up with most
paternalistic and restrictive policies for native communities (Fitzpatrick, 2007; Tania M. Li, 1999; Persoon, 1998; Schefold, 1998).

**Under the New Order regime**

The period of the New Order government saw how local ethnic groups were represented under the notion of isolation or alienation. Persoon, based on his study of the Indonesian state’s policies regarding indigeneity issues in that period, stated that the main aim of the government was “to integrate tribal groups into the social and cultural mainstream” (1998, p. 289). He further observed that the government’s official view was that tribal groups had been left out of key aspects of mainstream society so they needed to take responsibility by issuing and conducting policies that addressed such issues, for example, housing or settlement, economics, culture, education, health and religion. To do so, three main sectors were assigned to address them: (i) social affairs; (ii) forestry; and (iii) religion.

**Social affairs sector**

In the social affairs sector, the program was handled by the Department of Social Affairs (now Ministry of Social Affairs), which Persoon claimed had the most explicit “mainstream policy” concerning the issue of indigeneity (1998, p. 290). Li (1999) argued that such a program had been ongoing since 1950, perpetuating the Dutch government’s resettlement program and relocating people living in isolated areas to locations accessible to the state apparatus. Li also cited Joseph and Nugent (1994) who considered such resettlement programs as part of a ‘development regime’:

... can be considered one of the most significant ‘everyday forms of state formation’, which offers, like education, public administration, and land law, an arena in which ‘the state’ can continuously restate its raison d’etre and become instantiated in routine processes and events. (1999, p. 296)

Further, Li suggested that the ‘development’ intervention is framed with “a delicate cultural operation” that consisted of identifying “a target group with a deficiency to be rectified”, “an agency tasked with planning and executing the appropriate development fix” and “the compliance of the target group” for the justification of ‘development’ instead of by ‘coercion’ (1999, p. 298). Such a frame is reflected in the following description by Li of the resettlement program logic:

The program logic defines a project to normalize bodies, subjectivities, and communities and discipline them to the nth degree. It is a complete attempt at
social engineering, governmentality in gross form. The deficiencies of the target group are identified as being nomadic or living in isolated areas, in scattered or impermanent settlements; using limited and environmentally destructive production techniques, such as shifting cultivation; inadequate housing, nutrition, clothing, and hygiene; being culturally backward, closed, undynamic, and irrational; lacking a government-recognised religion; being isolated from interaction with other people; lacking knowledge of national affairs, the national ideology, and the concepts and obligations of citizenship; and being without access to government services. The program is designed to rectify these deficiencies ... (1999, pp. 301-302)

Li pointed out that the resettlement program came with a “modernity package” (1999, p. 302) through the distribution of physical aids, such as wooden housing and farmland, and non-physical aids, such as guidance and supervision by field workers and officials from government organisations. Finally, after running the five-year program, the “modernity package” was aimed at transforming local peoples into “ordinary villagers” to be administered under the state regular system of village administration (Li, 1999, p. 302).

In agreement with Li’s (1999) views, Duncan stated that the resettlement program represented the government’s vantage point, that the people to whom the program was aimed at “need special assistance in development” (2004a, p. 87). Duncan further pointed out that this program could be traced back to 1951 when the Indonesian government, through the Direktorat Pembangunan Masyarakat Suku-suku Terasing (DBMT or Directorate for the Development of Isolated Tribal Communities), worked with the Kubu ethnic group in Sumatra. The program was then named Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Sosial Masyarakat Terasing (PKMT or Welfare Development Program for Isolated Communities) which remained in force until 1999 and then renamed Program Pemberdayaan Komunitas Adat Terpencil (PKAT or Remote Indigenous Community Empowering) (DTE, 1999; Duncan, 2004a; Wawrinec, 2010). Duncan claimed that the resettlement program represented the New Order’s ‘civilising’ mission towards minority groups. Moreover, its underlying ideas “have become an almost standardized (if not a formalized) way of thinking about indigenous minorities’ that leads to ‘the continuing disregard for indigenous minority communities in the archipelago” (Duncan, 2004a, p. 87).

There are other studies showing that, whilst being a mainstream program of the New Order regime over the indigenous minority groups, resettlement was based on a stigmatising view and had formed part of the state’s technologies for integrating the disenfranchised into the mainstream (Duncan, 2001; Suparlan, 1995; van Langenberg, 1986). Other research also revealed that this assimilation-oriented resettlement program had failed to fit the local
communities’ ways and resulted in a very minor – not to say no – impact (Li, 1999; Radam, 2001; Syuroh, 2011; Tsing, 1993).

**Forestry sector**

Forestry was also among the New Order’s main concerns. Nearly 90 per cent of Indonesia’s Outer Islands total area was claimed to be the state’s forest, most of which was seen as potential economic sources (Moniaga, 1998). There was massive expropriation of indigenous minorities from their land in the name of development during the New Order regime, and those who refused to comply were put under pressure of violence and intimidation, as well as labelled as being part of the separatist movement or proponents of PKI or *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communist Party), which is the legally banned party within the country (Duncan, 2004b; Schefold, 1998). Moreover, under this regime, the policy of state expropriation over the forest was combined with the policy of large scale forest-based industrialisation within which wholesale concessions were ‘sold’ to companies (Arizona & Cahyadi, 2013; Schefold, 1998).

Activities that were seen as impeding development, such as shifting cultivation and other forest-based agriculture conducted by tribal groups led to accusations of causing forest damage and other environmental problems (Dauvergne, 1993; Dove, 1985; Duncan, 2004a). It is within this context that tribal communities were negatively labelled as ‘shifting cultivators’ or ‘forest squatters’ (Safitri & Bosko, 2002; Persoon, 1998). Derogatory labels such as ‘primitive’ and ‘backward’ were also widespread under the government’s mission of ‘civilising’ and ‘developing’ the local peoples (Duncan, 2004a).

Such environmental and development concerns were seen as part of the government’s mission to exploit forest-based natural resources, mainly logging (Dauvergne, 1993; Duncan, 2002, 2004a; Siscawati, 2014). Duncan (2004a, p. 88) argued that using the rationale of environmental conservation to resettle indigenous forest dwellers was just a “red herring” to enable the government to financially benefit from the forest. The main strategy was to sedentarise and resettle the mobile local peoples outside the forest so that they could be carefully monitored and controlled. To support this, an effort was made to change the people’s traditional way of life, mainly in how they secure their livelihood, from shifting cultivation and other forest-based activities to permanent agricultural and industrial plantations.

Key strategies for the implementation of the government’s resettlement programs included five departments: (i) social affairs; (ii) forestry (iii) agriculture; (iv) transmigration and (v) internal affairs (Colchester, 1986; Fearnside, 1997; Moniaga, 1993), all of which were conducted by
involving the force of the military (Steinebach, 2013). Transmigration, conducted by the Department of Transmigration, was a further mainstream program, in addition to the ‘isolated communities’ resettlement, under the New Order regime. Thousands of people, mostly poor or landless rural inhabitants, from the populous Java island were forced to relocate and were given lands in Outer Islands’ remote areas (Dove, 1985; Fearnside, 1997). It is believed that the resettlement of forest dwellers from their lands to the Outer Islands was also aimed at supporting this program (Duncan, 2004a). This was more than a pragmatic rationale of population redistribution. Elmhirst argued that “by resettling Javanese people, Indonesia’s largest and most politically central cultural group, the state has attempted to achieve a presence of the “centre” in the country’s “margins”, and in turn, extend a particular imagined geography across the archipelago” (1999, p. 813).

Also, legal instruments were applied by the state (Persoon, 1998). The main law enacted concerning this issue was the Basic Forestry Law (No. 5, 1967), which ambiguously recognised the existence of indigenous peoples’ hak ulayat (customary/communal land rights) but held that all territories belong to the state (Moniaga, 1993). Arizona and Cahyadi noted that such a “conditional recognition” was aimed at “the disappearance of the indigenous peoples’ rights” (2013, p. 48). Rachman called this a form of “negaraisasi” (state-isation), which was the state’s claim of authorisation over all territories, including what the local communities regarded as their customary lands (2014, p. 29).

Siscawati (2014), referring to Vandergeest (2008), points out that the state’s occupancy over the forest was conducted through a process of territorialisation. Vandergeest defined territorialisation as:

... the process by which states attempt to control people and their actions by drawing boundaries around a geographic space, excluding some categories of individuals from this space, and proscribing or prescribing specific activities within these boundaries. (2008, p. 159)

To do so, the state applied what Peluso and Vandergeest term as “abstract space” represented by a variety of measurement units, such as ‘meters’ or ‘degree latitude’, which are actually imaginary, therefore, “territorial land-use planning is, like market liberalism, often a utopian fiction unachievable in practice because of how it ignores and contradicts peoples’ lived social relationship and the histories of their interactions with the land” (1995, p. 388).
**Religious affairs sector**

The religious affairs sector is interestingly no less important as a sphere of influence on indigeneity issues in Indonesia. The issue centred on the fact that the government officially acknowledged only six religions: (i) Islam; (ii) Protestantism; (iii) Catholicism; (iv) Hinduism; (v) Buddhism; and (vi) Confucianism. To a great extent, such ‘official’ religions contributed to the derogatory label of indigenous minorities whose ‘religions’ were regarded as ‘animism and primitive faiths’ (Colchester, 1986). The marginalisation or discrimination of indigenous peoples within this sector began in the President Sukarno era when their traditional religions were regarded to be heathen and prohibited, and indigenous minorities were forced to convert to official religions under threat of punishment (Schefold, 1998). The conversion from traditional religions to official ones implicitly created a notion of ‘modernisation’ and ‘progress’ (Grumblies, 2013; Persoon, 1998; Schefold, 1998). Within such a framework, those who remained as bearers of ancestral religions were seen as belum beragama or “not yet in possession of a religion”, and therefore excluded from state-administered entitlements that dominant citizens enjoyed (Schefold, 1998, p. 272).

Religious-based ‘modernisation’ came under the control of the state when they gained power over highly diverse ethnic groups in Indonesia (Schiller, 1996). There were attempts to represent local religions of indigenous minorities as a larger unified identity named aliran kepercayaan (literally means ‘belief system’), which was not officially regarded as a religion (Grant, 1979; Schefold, 1998), and to some extent, is merely viewed as ‘cultural performance’ (Avonius, 2003). Alternatively, they could be identified as a variant of one of the recognised religions, such as Kaharingan in Central Kalimantan and its surroundings, which in 1980 was regarded as a part of Hinduism (Schiller, 1996, 1997). By suppressing local religions, there were attempts to minimise differences, as they were supported on the popularity of the New Order’s developmentalism projects (Steinebach, 2013). The state individualised and institutionalised the life of indigenous minorities by using symbolic devices, such as the kartu tanda penduduk (KTP or national identity card) on which an individual’s religious identity is written.

There are other sectoral programs that reflect on the government’s attitude towards ethnic minorities, such as transmigration (Rachman, 2014; Roewiastoeti, 2014; Zakaria, 2014), agricultural (Colchester, 1986; Fearnside, 1997) and environmental (Brainard, 2011; Forest Peoples Colchester et al., 2006). In general, the New Order regime’s sectoral programs toward indigenous minorities reflects its vigorous civilising and controlling mission driven by its hegemonic developmentalism agenda. Despite its prevalent use of military forces, Li noted that
the New Order’s administration represents a form of Foucauldian governmentality, that through its development projects attempt to constitute “governable subjects” so that “the activity of government thinkable to its practitioners and those on whom it is practiced” (1999, pp. 295-296). Governmentality exerts power in the form of policies, laws, bureaucracy, programs, institutions and administrations through what Foucault described as a “triangle, sovereignty, discipline and governmental management” that posited population as the main target and security apparatus as the essential mechanism (2007, pp. 107-108).

Under the post-authoritarian regime

The post-authoritarian regime commenced after the fall of Suharto’s presidency in 1998 and, in general, saw a progressive changes in indigeneity issues in Indonesia. Many experts (Bedner, 2016; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2001; McCarthy & Robinson, 2016) identified that this era of reformasi signifies a turning point for the indigenous movement towards its popularity under the name of adat. Therefore, it also marked the formation and statement of a new identity of Indonesian peoples who recognised themselves with an indigenous identity, using the term masyarakat adat and the rejection of derogatory labels attached to them such as suku terasing (isolated tribes) or perambah hutan (forest squatter) (Acciaioli, 2001b; Fay & Denduangrudee, 2016). Moreover, the promulgation of regional autonomy laws marking the state’s shift from centralism to regionalism was at the heart of this reformasi era and led to the rise of local participation, including masyarakat adat movements (Antlöv, 2003; Aspinall & Fealy, 2003; Duncan, 2007; Fitzpatrick, 2007; McWilliam, 2006; Tyson, 2010).

It is important to recognise emerging indigeneity at the time it surfaced as a social movement. While it was claimed that this movement consisted of indigenous or adat communities as its members, it cannot be denied that NGOs played key roles in organising the process, starting from the early 1990s (Henley & Davidson, 2007, 2008; Moniaga, 2007). Studying Indonesian indigeneity, therefore, is about studying NGO’s indigenous activism. However, special attention to this topic is presented in Chapter 3, which focuses on changes of policies or regulations, combined with emerging indigeneity issues. Bedner described the changes that occurred shortly after reformasi began:

... resistance to the New Order’s politics of dispossession spread quickly. Many farmers occupied the lands they claimed had been stolen from them, and land relations generally became a target for reform ... An important shift was that claims to land were increasingly made under the banner of adat. In response, 39 years after the Basic Agrarian Law was enacted, the minister of agrarian affairs finally promulgated a regulation recognising adat law communities ... This
Bedner (2016) further showed that, in general, the changes affected by the emergence of indigeneity issues were mostly on agrarian, spatial planning and forestry areas. Positive developments occurred through the improvement of land laws related to the three sectors. In agreement with this, Fay and Denduangrudee (2016) added that the existing issues of coordination among institutions responsible for the three sectors should be addressed. There were also other relevant different sectors that came with legal products, indicating concerns with the recognition of indigenous communities (Fay & Denduangrudee, 2016, pp. 98-108). This excludes the rising trend of regulation promulgation in regional or local levels where territories are regarded as tanah ulayat (ancestral domain) (Malik, Arizona, & Muhajir, 2015).

Amidst these emerging legal products or regulations, Fay and Denduangrudee (2016) identified four as primarily endorsing a nationwide movement of recognition of indigenous rights: (i) Constitutional Court Decision 35/PUU-X/2012; (ii) Minister of Home Affairs Regulation 52/2014; (iii) Joint Ministerial Regulation 79/2014; and (iv) Minister of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning Regulation 9/2015.

Meanwhile, many experts (Bedner, 2016; Hauser-Schäublin, 2013; Roewiastoeti, 2014; Zakaria, 2014) in this field recognised that it was the Constitutional Court Decision or what had been popularly known among activists as ‘MK 35’ that strongly signified the state’s progressive attitude toward indigenous or the adat movement in Indonesia. Correcting Article 1 (No. 6) of Forestry Law 41/1999, the decision states that forest areas legally confirmed as ‘customary forest’ are no longer part of the state forest. Symbolically, this decision represents an important milestone for indigenous movements in Indonesia as it occurred after AMAN with two adat communities, Kenegerian Kuntu and Kasepuhan Cisitu, proposed a judicial review of some of the articles of the Forestry Law to the Constitutional Court (Rachman, 2014). Moreover, Schäublin (2013) observed that this decision would affect, not only relations between indigenous communities and the state, but also with extractive industries as, in the future, they should consult the people. Indigeneity would then gain a stronger position within the state system.

Legal discourse was predominantly the battleground for the indigenous movement and land dispossession that became the main concern for the struggle of indigenous peoples. To some extent, this reflected the emergence and growth of indigenous movements in Indonesia, which had been led by the spirit of opposing, resisting and correcting the New Order regime’s policies. The authoritarian regime, Robinson argued, had translated the Indonesian Constitution’s
mandate for the state to manage all of the lands with its natural resources for the sake of people’s prosperity into “a right and obligation to “free up” (membebaskan) the land necessary for mining projects” (2016, p. 144). This supports Li’s statement that indigeneity as a contemporary movement functions as “a vehicle to counter dispossession” (2010, p. 399). However, Li argued that beyond the past issues of authoritarianism, land dispossession had been part of a global hegemony of capitalism that, along with local democratisation processes, responsibility can no longer be referred to as only single or certain dominant actors since, on the ground, those who might be identified as indigenous have been involved in the process of commodification (2010, 2014).

Nonetheless, the progressive changes that happened along with decentralisation were actually under constant threat and contested by emerging local authoritarians called raja-raja kecil (little kings) who managed to capture the benefits of natural resources within their jurisdictions (McWilliam, 2006; Resosudarmo, 2003). It is strongly believed that the regional autonomy regime had come with the ‘New Order’s extensive patronage’ that saw opportunities of controlling resources through the local elites (Robison & Hadiz, 2004). The Indonesian decentralisation regime is described by Malley as coming with ‘New Rules, Old Structure’ by which he meant that “local governments are more likely to be captured by elites than held accountable by the general public” (2003, p. 102), therefore, reflecting the prolongation of the old centralisation regime at the local level.

This may explain why the implementation of laws concerning adat community rights in the reformasi era, including MK 35, faced many challenges at the central and regional/local levels (Siscawati, 2014). At the central level, reluctance or even fear came, especially from the forestry sector that applied strict conditions of recognition through ministerial regulation (Afiff, 2016; Roewiastoeti, 2014), was seen by some experts as against the spirit of MK 35 (Arizona, 2014; Pramono, 2014). Furthermore, the central government then positioned itself as a passive party, awaiting an active reaction by local governments to decide and legalise their own adat territories and propose an exclusion from the state forest status to the Forestry Ministry (Rachman, 2014).

Thus, the frontline of an adat territories recognition battlefield was at the local or district (kabupaten) level. A lack of regulations synchronisation, combined with diverse localities, have made the struggle even harder. Bakker and Moniaga pointed out that “land law provides guidelines but its interpretations are diverse and implementation at the local level varies” (2010, p. 188). While MK 35 has significantly implied the increase of legal products at the local level,
it is reported that based on their varied forms the regulations with firm and clear statements of the recognition of ancestral domains (by naming details of the territories) are still relatively minor (Arizona, Malik, & Ishimora, 2017; Malik et al., 2015). In a broader scope, to borrow Rohdewohld’s phrase, the Indonesian decentralisation regime has come with “major changes, minor impacts” (2003, p. 259).

Similar to policies or regulations for agrarian and spatial planning sectors, a shift also occurred in the social affairs sectors. The most notable change was, as mentioned previously, the renaming of the term masyarakat terasing into komunitas adat terpencil (KAT or remote customary communities) in 1999 (Duncan, 2004a; Suradi, Mujiyadi, Unayah, Sitepu, & Suyanto, 2013) as a response to the protest voiced by AMAN (DTE, 1999). The change was made through the issuance of Presidential Decree No. 111 (1999) which included the adoption of the word adat to replace terasing (isolated), seen as an act of removing the derogatory notion embraced in the previous term (Duncan, 2004a).

However, no fundamental changes were made to the program, which is basically based on the grand concept of social integration through resettlement (Duncan, 2004a) despite its claim of a shift from a ‘top-down’ approach to a ‘bottom-up’ one, and the use of the concept of pemberdayaan (empowerment). The inclusion of KAT within the Ministry of Social Affairs’ target groups under the categorisation of so-called Penyandang Masalah Kesejahteraan Sosial (PMKS or socioeconomically disadvantaged groups), which consists of 26 categories of social welfare issues (Kementerian Sosial RI, 2013), reflects its perpetuation of what Li (1999) viewed as a form of deficiency identification. Additionally, under such a categorisation, the issue of remoteness attached to the customary communities is also confused with the issue of poverty (Suradi et al., 2013).

Even though the PKAT program does not appear to make any major positive impact on issues of local or indigenous communities living in remote areas, its continuity shows that such developmentalism is still generally accepted, even under the dynamics of a post-authoritarian era. All of this may lead to questions and debates about how colonisation, which was then (believed to be) followed with processes of decolonisation, had affected the Indonesian diversity, especially amongst the locals. Whether the birth of a new nation-state of Indonesia, which is believed to have started with the 1945’s declaration of independence, was the end of colonisation or the transformation of, or at least still coming up with parts of, previous colonisation. However, it cannot be denied that opportunities had also come for the local natives to express their existence under the state representation. State domination had, to some
extent been accepted with positive responses. The debates that colours this study, nonetheless, are about how the representations may represent and/or suppress the local voices.

**Conceptualising Indonesian indigeneity**

Issues of indigeneity emerged as a global phenomenon, institutionally endorsed by international agencies such as the ILO through its Convention 169 in 1989, followed by the UN General Assembly’s decennial program, International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples in 1995 and issuance of UNDRIP in 2007. It is said that the UN’s first formal concern for this issue began in 1982 when it established the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (Nair, 2006). The position and role of the UN is significant in the construction of indigeneity. Nair observed that it became one of “global manifestations” of the discourse (2006, p. 4). In other words, the UN Convention became the reference for how issues of indigeneity can be understood and dealt with.

Nonetheless, there is no single fixed of agreed definition or categorisation of who may be identified as indigenous peoples (Kingsbury, 1998). The UN refused to give any official definition of indigenous peoples when considering indigenous diversity across the world, but provided a working definition or criteria based on Martinez Cobo’s study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations, namely, historical continuity with pre-colonial societies, self-definition, non-dominant, preservation of ancestral territories and ethnic identity, owning local cultural pattern, social institution and the legal system (Kingsbury, 1998; Nair, 2006; United Nations, 2008). Nair (2006), however, argued that the UN notion of global indigeneity reflects the infiltration of Western post-industrial discourse in two ways: (i) identifying the existence of tribal communities with territory/land ownership, which is part of modern individual property rights concept; and (ii) excluding their perpetuation of hereditary values from the dominant undifferentiated society. In agreement with this, De La Cadena and Starn stated that “indigeneity emerges only within larger social fields of difference and sameness” (2007, p. 4). In other words, indigenousness gains its existence from the dominant normality of non-indigenousness.

Such a view leads to the exploration of indigeneity as a discourse, instead of a fixed concept, so that it becomes a field of contestation of different views. Indigeneity, therefore, is seen as having no intrinsic meaning and objective categories but “a contingent, interactive, and historical product” (Merlan, 2009, p. 319). As part of globalisation phenomena, Friedman argued that indigeneity is about the struggle for the representation of indigenous identity within “the structure of modern national cosmologies as opposed to the real peoples classified into this
category” (1999, p. 1). He added that the identity “is constituted around cultural and experiential continuities that are only poorly mirrored in Western categories, not least in anthropological categories” (1999, p. 2).

Therefore, the articulation of indigeneity discourse into certain local contexts should be reviewed very carefully. Briskman’s criticism that “current mainstream ways of presenting indigenous affairs is through a white lens” (2008, p. 88) that needs to be explored further as a criticism towards the current global notion of indigeneity itself. The conceptualisation of indigeneity was initially introduced into particular contexts of world regions, such as Anglo-American colonies and Scandinavian countries (Hathaway, 2010; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Merlan, 2009) where there is a firm dichotomy between the ‘First People’ and colonial settlers. Some Asian countries without first people-colonial settlers dichotomy, such as China, India, Indonesia and Myanmar, tended to refuse such a concept or terminology (Baviskar, 2007; Hathaway, 2010; Karlsson, 2003; Merlan, 2009; Tsing, 2007). Also, indigeneity issues arose as part of global movements intended to voice indigenous rights and struggles against marginalisation by states and corporations (Andolina, 2003; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Hodgson, 2002; Merlan, 2009). Therefore, the application of such a globalised concept needs to be relevantly contextualised with issues or discourses that exist and to be developed within the country. In the Indonesian context, such a movement has emerged and developed through competing discourses between claims of authenticity and the invention of the meaning of indigeneity framed within vernacular term of adat (F.V. Benda-Beckmann & K.V. Benda-Beckmann, 2011; Burns, 1989, 2007; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2000a; Moniaga, 2007).

This section focuses on how to view the concept of indigeneity applied to the Indonesian context. The concern for elaboration is based on various conceptualisations of indigeneity in Indonesia, a nation-state that is no longer a case of colonial settlers’ occupation over the first nation people but comprises of diverse ethnic groups. Within such a context, indigeneity emerged as a loose concept that tended to be seen as an imposition of a global idea with no local and/or historical relevancy. The existence of AMAN with its significantly strengthening influences on state policy changes and social impacts shows that indigeneity has become a part of Indonesia’s issues and discourses. It is this standpoint that is taken within this study, similar to Baviskar’s (2005) and Hathaway’s (2010) research in identifying indigeneity as a social reality rather than arguing its compatibility within an Indonesian genealogical context. What is offered here is an exploration of different perceptions of indigeneity as it is contextualised with social, cultural, political and legal aspects in Indonesia.
Ethnicity rather than indigeneity: A state hegemony

It should be recognised that there is an issue of language in the application of key terms within this study. The terms indigeneity or indigenous, are essential here because they could be literally translated into Indonesian as pribumi (original people). However, this terminology is problematical for two reasons: (i) there is no longer a colonial settler, as mentioned earlier in this chapter; and (ii) Indonesia as a nation-state was constituted after and/or by colonialism through which previously separated local powers or kingdoms were subjugated and united. The word adat meaning ‘custom’ has been broadly used by NGOs to denote the notion of indigeneity through the term masyarakat adat. However, the word adat actually applies also to the existence of all ethnic groups in Indonesia, including those that asserted special recognition and position as the descendents of royal families instead of tribal minorities (Arizona & Cahyadi, 2013; Hauser-Schäublin, 2013; Thufail, 2013). In other words, adat can be seen as a common feature of ethnicity in Indonesia that shows the particularity of customs or traditions of each ethnic group, therefore, not bonding them to certain sociocultural groups.

While there are definitions of ethnicity offered by scholars (Baumann, 2004; Bulmer, 1996; Mackerras, 2003; Ratcliffe, 2014) that mostly highlight the aspect of commonalities, such as place of origin, language, religion, values and kinship, its usage is still vague. Ananta et. al. stated that ethnicity is “dynamic, not static overtime, and dependent upon context” (2015, p. 17). This view was confirmed by Goodwin and Finkelstein who suggested that “although ethnicity is not bound up with blood or genes, in many ways it may as well be, as it often relies on an imagined line of descent, a mythological bloodline” and “ethnicity is a set of socially constructed boundaries in political, economic, cultural, social and … time and space” (2005, p. 141). van Klinken also observed that Indonesian ethnicity is “nowhere but everywhere” (2003, p. 64) when describing its susceptibility to social, economic and political situations.

This suggests that ethnicity is a ‘neutral’ concept loosely and broadly used by any party for different purposes of identification. Under the New Order regime, ethnic diversity was managed as the representation of Indonesia’s cultural richness, mainly through its tourism sector, while critical discussions on related issues were suppressed (van Klinken, 2003). Additionally, as mentioned in Chapter 1, along with authoritarian regime’s developmentalism projects, diversity was attempted to be tailored as an archipelagic culture to be represented through various symbolic forms, such as venues, monuments and art performances (Acciaioli, 1985, 2001a; Aspinall & Berger, 2001). Indeed, ethnicity could be used to emphasise “the positive aspects of belonging to a distinct cultural group within a nation state” (Goodwin & Finkelstein, 2005, p. 141). Within such a political backdrop, the concept of ethnicity was managed in a way that
made it ‘safe’ from being used in any possible secessionist movements, which some Indonesian peripheral regions have been attempting since its beginning as a sovereign country (van Klinken, 2003).

It is worth-mentioning here that Indonesian concept of ethnicity had always been dynamic and in flux. This was suggested by some scholars when showing their perspectives of Dayak ethnic identity formation in Kalimantan. Connolly (2009) considers that the rise of consciousness of Dayak-identity as a commonal, larger ethnic group in Kalimantan began when the Dutch colonial government took a stronger control over the island population, including the fragmented local groups living in the interiors, more particularly during early 20th century. Similarly, Steckman (2011) points out that the formation of larger unitary Dayak identity from hundreds of earlier loosely-connected sub-ethnic groups was to large extent shaped by broader nation-wide political manoeuvres and policies imposed by both colonial and post-colonial governments. This explains how then ethnic group identities, while having the potential of contesting unification and nationalism, were eventually able to coexist with and join the state.

Meanwhile, the concept of indigeneity, as deployed in global discourse, is not initially familiar to most Indonesian people. What had been widely known is the connotation of backwardness concerning the existence of local ethnic minorities living apart from mainstream society. Hauser-Schäublin (2013) and Li (2010) pointed out that the Indonesian New Order regime reinvented and perpetuated a capitalistic colonial system of production by which local ethnic minorities were dispossessed of their communal land. This is a form of state capitalism when Indonesia enforced “its need and use of land as a means of production to launch plantations, systematic logging, selling concessions to companies for various purposes, and establishing mines or settlements” (Hauser-Schäublin, 2013, p. 14). It was in the modernising mode of production period that was later popularised when indigeneity gained its label as “the backward, the animistic, those who practiced a kind of primitive communism (communally owned land) and had not yet completed the evolutionary step to a civilised way of life, open to development” (Hauser-Schäublin, 2013, p. 14).

The application of the concept of indigeneity in Indonesia, thus, can be said to be contested by the widely known term and/or concept of ethnicity. It is the concept of ethnicity that has been used in the census conducted by Statistics Indonesia (Ananta et al., 2015; Badan Pusat Statistik, 2010), showing that Indonesian peoples’ diversity is based on their descent identities. Within this context of ethnic diversity, the term ‘indigenous’ or ‘pribumi’ applies more to exclude
groups regarded as foreign ethnic minorities, such as Chinese and Arabic groups (Moniaga, 2007).

**Indigeneity as a resistance toward state (non-indigeneity) hegemony**

As ethnicity is a socially constructed phenomenon that is produced and reproduced by its surrounding discourses, its “boundaries are seen as changing and permeable, with some boundaries weakening and some boundaries hardening” in which “power is important in creating and regulating ethnic boundaries” (Goodwin & Finkelstein, 2005, pp. 141-142). Reflecting on this fluctuating process in Indonesia, indigeneity discourses emerged as a political strategy that used *adat*, which can be viewed as a ‘hardening’ boundary of evolving ethnicity as a key concept. Henley and Davidson firmly demonstrated how *adat* became a ‘political cause’ for indigenous movements in Indonesia:

> What gives adat, as a political cause, its ability to attract and mobilize support? ... The first is the support and inspiration of international organisations and networks committed to the rights of indigenous peoples. The second is the prominent role which adat has played in the Indonesian political imagination since the early 20th century. The third is the oppression of marginal population groups under the New Order, and the fourth the transition from authoritarian developmentalism to the volatile and opportunistic state–society relations of the post-Suharto era. (2008, p. 816)

This function of *adat* as the major activating factor of indigenous movements in Indonesia might be better placed within a broader conceptualisation of indigeneity. This is important in order to gain a clearer explanation of how *adat* plays a significant role in establishing indigeneity issues within the reality of Indonesian ethnicity. Many experts (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005; Göcke, 2013; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2000a; Merlan, 2009) saw indigeneity emerge as a strengthening issue, nationally and globally, when responding to contemporary colonialism, thus explaining why it is similar to states governed or dominated by colonial settlers. Also, Henley and Davidson pointed out that, globally, the indigeneity issue is also related to the call for “the right to a safe environment, the right of access to ancestral land, and the right to an authentic cultural heritage and identity” (2008, p. 819) as it gained support from the emergence of what Turner names “post-national citizenship rights (ecological, aboriginal and cultural)” (2001, p. 207). As part of this global movement, Indonesian indigeneity represented by AMAN using the term *masyarakat adat* was derived from the concept of indigenous peoples (Moniaga, 2007).
Nonetheless, this still leaves an ontological question to be asked: *What makes indigeneity issues come into being in a place where there is no issue of indigenous versus non-indigenous?* Dove (2006) observed that there had been a strengthening trend that groups known as peasants are represented as indigenous peoples when involved in social movements. Those are local movements in countries where colonial settlers do not exist, such as the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico (Jung, 2003), rubber tappers’ movement in the Western Amazonian state of Acre, Brazil (Keck, 1995), Chipko movement in Uttar Pradesh, India (Shiva & Bandyopadhyay, 1986), Piaroa people in southern Venezuela (Freire, 2007) and the popular resistance against the dam construction in Narmada Valley, India (Nilsen, 2008). This shows that the representation of indigeneity has been negotiated and broadened, no longer limited by the existence of a dominant colonial settler or what is believed as internal categories of indigeneity itself. Indigeneity has seemingly shifted from issues of classic colonialism to issues of neocolonialism but is still based on the same pivotal point, that is, people’s resistance. Jung (2003) identified in her study on the Zapatistas movement that it was the people’s oppositional stance to government and engagement with international indigenous rights movements that brought them their indigenous identity.

In line with such an explanation, Henley and Davidson argued that part of the *masyarakat adat* movement “often originated at the height of the New Order Regime out of concrete conflicts between local farmers and state-backed big business over land, only later coming to recognise themselves as components of a wider struggle for indigenous rights” (2008, p. 823). Affirming this view on indigeneity, Afiff and Lowe stated:

> ... not as a mimetic description of a real kind of people in the world but rather as a deployment of political discourse and a framework for political action. Indigeneity emerged as a solution to the problem of corporate privatisation and state control of Indonesia’s natural resources in the context of late-Suharto-era authoritarianism. (2007, p. 74)

A meeting among local peoples leaders and NGO activists held in Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi in 1993¹, discussing the development of a nationwide indigenous movement in Indonesia resulted in a groundbreaking response to many local resistances against state-backed companies encroaching of their lands. For example, the Batak Toba people in North Sumatra against a

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¹ A meeting was facilitated by network of NGOs with a key role of WALHI to organise and consolidate *adat* community leaders and activists concerned with issues of land grabbing by the state and companies, which resulted in the birth of an embryonic nationwide network of indigenous movements named JAPHAMA (later known as AMAN). Further exploration of this information is presented in Chapter 4.
timber plantation company, Dayak Simpang in West Kalimantan against oil palm plantation and logging companies and Dayak Bentian in East Kalimantan against logging companies (Henley & Davidson, 2008; Moniaga, 2007). Such resistance further affirmed the concern about the local struggles when global indigeneity gained spaces of articulation in Indonesia.

**Indigeneity as an articulation of tribal slot/indigenous space**

Understanding indigeneity as a form of resistance movement reveals a broader insight into being indigenous that has been loosely delimited from the notion of colonial continuity over the local people. Merlan observed that the international notion of indigeneity, which is a product of postcolonialism, is basically about “the effort to move away from colonial relations, and not simply of direct and overt oppression” (2009, p. 319). It is under this spirit of being free from the ‘colonial relations’ that local struggles have spaces to be included. However, many scholars, as discussed above, seemingly tend to emphasise the broadened delimitation into resistance movements or political strategic actions.

Hathaway (2010) offered a concept claimed to have a broader understanding than the idea of movement or political strategies. He named it “indigenous space”, identifying indigeneity as “the ways that the concept of indigenous peoples is engaged with and used in specific locales at specific times” and hence, is “emergent and shaped by social and historical contingency, not as already determined or teleological” (2010, p. 304). Other scholars’ (García, 2005; Greene, 2006; Kirsch, 2007) viewpoints offered critical assessment on a tendency to overemphasise the narrative of politics and globalisation. This view contends that there are ‘more complex and possibly contradictory engagements’ in which indigenous identity is ‘negotiated, transformed and inflected by asymmetrical power relations’ (Hathaway, 2010, p. 304).

Such an insight is recognised by Li (2000a) who named ‘tribal slot’ to describe Indonesian indigeneity. Her concept of ‘tribal slot’ is based on Stuart Hall’s theory of articulation as cited by Grossberg:

... the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time. You have to ask, under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made? So the so-called ‘unity’ of a discourse is really the articulation of different, distinct elements which can be rearticulated in different ways because they have no necessary ‘belongingness’. The ‘unity’ which matters is a linkage between that articulated discourse and the social forces with which it can, under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected. Thus, a theory of articulation is both a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to
cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects. (1996, pp. 141-142)

Based on this theory, Li argued that “self-identification as tribal or indigenous’ in the Indonesian context ‘is not natural or inevitable, but neither is it simply invented, adopted, or imposed” (2000a, p. 151). Indigeneity, therefore, is represented by Li (2000a) as a tribal slot where the articulation of a collective or common identity is built on a constellation of different elements under certain (historical) circumstances. It means that indigeneity is not a fixed identity or characteristic but rather a form of “positioning” through which it “draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes, and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle” (Li, 2000a, p. 151). It can be implied that Indonesian indigeneity is produced by the conjoined elements of ethnicity, adat, colonialism, marginalisation, stigmatisation, labelling, customary land appropriation by the state, advocacy movements, political strategies, international issues on indigenous rights and other unidentified elements within a certain time and place. However, rather than offering uncertain conjunctures, Li contended that it is “the regimes of representation or ‘places of recognition’ that preconfigure” (2000a, pp. 153-154) what may be framed within the concept of a tribal slot.

Despite emphasising the importance of the regime of representation, Li’s (2000a) concept of a tribal slot recognises the roles of communities’ local characteristics, described as ‘historically sedimented practices’ in constituting indigeneity. This fits with Henley and Davidson’s explanation of two “abstract ways in which the term adat is used in the contemporary political context” (2008, pp. 818). The first is the complex conception of adat as something related to its communities’ beliefs of rights and obligations concerning three factors: (i) history; (ii) land; and (iii) law that make up a linked system, reflect governmental artifacts, more importantly, preserve ancient’s inheritance. The second factor, adat, is conceptualised as an idea by an ideal society that is associated with “authenticity, community, harmony, order and justice” (2008, pp. 817-818). Still, how an element such as local tradition within a community could fit the tribal slot, Li (2000a) asserted, is contingent upon certain circumstances and the support from its regime of representation in forms of, for instance, allies or mass media. Masyarakat adat, a phrase and concept regarded as representing Indonesian authenticity and traditions, had been chosen by considering the political and sociocultural aspects to frame Indonesian indigeneity that fits the tribal slot (Afiff & Lowe, 2007; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2000a; Moniaga, 2007). So far, the concept works.
Indigeneity as a legal-formal recognition

The discussion on Indonesian indigeneity cannot be detached from legal discourse. Since the beginning, especially early 1990s, the emergence of indigeneity issues in Indonesia have been prompted by issues of territorial disputes in which state or state-backed companies made claims over land the local people had been hereditarily living on. Among the initial key points of indigeneity discourse in Indonesia was about the implementation of the Basic Agrarian Law of 1960, which is seen as recognising the existence of adat or customary territories (Li, 2000a; Moniaga, 1993). However, as part of colonial Dutch legacies, the agrarian law provided the state with the power to control the status of land that was conceived, as the customary communal right of avail (hak ulayat) was put under strict requirements (Bedner, 2016). It is also recognised in the 1980s that the land status became an issue when the Ministry of Forestry drafted a map of forests that resulted in a claim that 70 per cent of Indonesian land was state forest (Fay & Denduangrudee, 2016). This consequently threatened the existence of local people living around forest areas because they were easily displaced or criminalised. Amidst the issues of legal claims, it can be understood that the pivotal point of indigenous movements in Indonesia is mostly concerned with searching for legal-formal recognition.

It was the reformasi era that marked the intense struggles of framing indigeneity within legal-formal discourse. This had been initially signified by AMAN’s robust insistence on state recognition that created opportunities for the development and enhancement of indigeneity issues. Among the early legal changes were the results that emerged from the amendment of UUD 1945 (Indonesian Constitution), which took four years to complete (1999-2003). Specifically, Articles 18b and 28i were seen as recognising the existence of indigenous peoples and their entitlement to their ancestral domain (Moniaga, 2007). Other prominent legal documents promulgated in the early post-authoritarian era that were viewed as supporting indigeneity included Law No. 39 (1999) on Human Rights, Presidential Decree No. 111 (1999) on Remote Customary Community (KAT) and Forestry Law No. 41 (1999) (Bedner, 2016; Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2013; Safitri & Uliyah, 2014).

Since late 1990s, a number of new regulations were implemented, however, it was not until 2013 when the most progressive affirmation of indigeneity in Indonesia was made through MK 35, followed by supporting policies from several sectors, mainly the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning (Fay & Denduangrudee, 2016). Afiff (2016) argued that there were two milestones of indigeneity made by the government specifically related to recognising the rights to customary forest areas: (i) Minister of Forestry’s recognition of the existence of 31,957 villages within and around state forest areas after
identification in partnership with Statistic Indonesia (BPS) during 2007-2009, which was stated in a speech at an International Conference on Forest Tenure, Governance and Enterprise in Lombok in 2011; and (ii) Constitutional Court Decree No. 35 (2013) or MK 35.

According to Rachman (2014), among key points in the MK 35 were statements that customary law communities have a status as ‘right bearers’ and, therefore, ‘legal subjects’. This meant that the state constitutionally recognised their existence and that their entitlement to their ancestral lands was inherent to their adat status and not something acquired from, or provided by, the state. This legal development suggested that indigeneity discourses in Indonesia have been directed towards a legal-formal existence, and that indigeneity issues are seen as not merely manifested in political or sociocultural articulations, but also in a definite legal formulation. While gaining success by the issuance of MK 35, AMAN and its network struggled in promulgating the legal draft on masyarakat adat (RUU PPHMHA) that had been handed over to the legislative board (DPR) in 2012 at its fourth congress in Tobelo, North Maluku (Arizona & Cahyadi, 2013; Siscawati, 2014). Meanwhile, under a decentralisation regime, legal advocacy processes were focused on recognition through the issuance of local or regional regulations (peraturan daerah) (Safitri & Uliyah, 2014), which, based on a report made by Arizona, Malik and Ishimora (2017) had been developing, especially since the MK 35, as well as supporting technical strategies applied on the ground to register territorial mapping of the masyarakat adat (Widodo et al., 2015).

Looking at the strengthening legal discourse on masyarakat adat, it could be argued that Indonesian indigeneity has its roots and, hence, construction of meaning in legal discourse. However, debate continues regarding terminological issues. On the left, debates focus on the choice between using the term masyarakat hukum adat and masyarakat adat (without the word hukum or ‘law’) (Arizona & Cahyadi, 2013; Moniaga, 2007). Such debate cannot be detached from a broader international debate on how local communities from various countries can attached to different terminologies (Alfred & Comtassel, 2005; André Beteille, 1998; Karlsson, 2003; Merlan, 2009; Persoon, 1998; Rata, 2002). In the Indonesian context, the debate began as some scholars (Arizona & Cahyadi, 2013; Bowen, 2000; Hauser-Schäublin, 2013; Henley & Davidson, 2008; Li, 2000a, 2010; Persoon, 1998) criticised the government’s use of terms (especially the New Order) that implied notions of backwardness.

Citing Van Vollenhoven, Beckmann & Beckmann provide a definition of adat law as “the totality of the rules of conduct for natives and foreign orientals that have, on the one hand, sanctions (therefore: law) and, on the other hand, are not codified (therefore: adat)” and
emphasise that “there was no sharp dividing line between legal and other aspects of adat” (2011, p. 171). On account of such a view that Van Vollenhoven tended to avoid to the use of term ‘customary law’ as it is often used by the state to describe non-state law and therefore reflects a “legalistic and state-centered perspective on law” (Benda-Beckmann & Benda-Beckmann, 2011, p. 172). He preferred to identify adat law as a “dynamic and flexible ‘folk law’ (volksrecht) or ‘living law’ (levend recht)” (Benda-Beckmann & Benda-Beckmann, 2011, p. 171). The purpose of this discussion is to confirm the transformation of the global concept of indigeneity within the Indonesian context through adat, and conversely adat through the imposition of indigeneity from sociocultural to political and, finally, to legal discourse.

**Summary**

The concept of indigeneity within the Indonesian context is better viewed as an emerging and dynamic discourse instead of being fixedly defined with certain criteria. Further, for application and wide acceptance in Indonesia, the globalised concept of indigenous peoples needs to be framed with the term masyarakat (hukum) adat, which emerged with sociocultural, political and legal consequences. In summary, Indonesian indigeneity emerged initially as a response to the spreading of local peoples’ resistance against the state (New Order regime) and state-backed companies that encroached their lands. Consolidated under the AMAN organisation, Indonesian indigeneity signified the Indonesian transition era from an autocratic to a democratic system of governance. While the authoritarian regime applied very restrictive and developmentalism-oriented policies that suppressed ideas of local diversity, the post-authoritarian era came with more progressive changes but still with extensive patronage of the former regime.

Similar to its basic global characteristics, Indonesian indigeneity emerged firstly as a movement with confrontational approaches toward the government, insisting on the recognition of existence and rights of groups of local people categorised as masyarakat adat. It is from here that Indonesian indigeneity found its varied forms of articulation. Indigeneity has emerged as a contested articulation of state-hegemonised understanding of Indonesian ethnicity, which actually emphasised a more paternalistic uniformity. More than that, indigeneity is viewed as a resistance movement used to show the existence of marginalised local ethnic minorities with their entitlement to rights rather than a merely manipulated diversity. However, the constitution of indigeneity is also seen in a broader sense as the configuration of various components, comprising of native intrinsic elements and modified modern aspects by which groups of people categorised with them were brought to transnational indigenous identity. There has been a significant attempt to articulate Indonesian indigeneity in a more defined and feasible
conceptual way, framed by the term *masyarakat (hukum) adat* through legal discourse, insisting on the state to legally recognise the existence of local ethnic minorities viewed as being entitled to their ancestral lands.

Presenting a broad perspective of Indonesian indigeneity, this chapter aims to provide a contextual background for this research. It clearly positions the specific focus of this study as an inquiry into indigenous activism among the Meratus people. Consequently, it requires a deeper exploration of NGOs concerned with indigenous issues in Indonesia as they play leading roles in growing and strengthening them. To add to the discussion of Indonesian indigeneity in this chapter, Chapter 3 discusses NGOs working on this issue in Indonesia.
CHAPTER 3:
NGO ACTIVISM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES IN INDONESIA

Introduction

In today’s increasingly globalised world, nation states no longer stand alone as the ultimate ruling power. Along with unavoidable bilateral and multilateral interactions amongst varied actors in globalisation, competing and/or counter discourses toward state hegemony have emerged. Some scholars stated that social movements have been rising as part of the globalisation process to challenge the monopoly of the state as policy and decision makers (Arts, 2003; Beck, 2011; Betsill & Corell, 2008; Della Porta & Reiter, 2011; Tarrow, 2005). Meanwhile, Piper and Uhlin (2004) prefer to use the term ‘transnational’ rather than ‘global’ as many forms of networking occur among limited regions across state borders. Beck pointed out that this form of globalisation or transnationalisation has left space for the formation of power he calls “governance without government” (2011, p. 27). It is this space that advocatory movements have gained capacity to exist as global civil society organisations competing with the hegemonic global power formation of states and corporations (Beck, 2011).

The emergence of the masyarakat adat movement, which derived its concept from global indigenous activism, needs to be located within the broad framework of global activism. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the masyarakat adat movement represented by AMAN cannot be detached from global discourses of indigeneity. NGOs played a major role in introducing and strengthening indigeneity discourses to Indonesia, while the government, along with most other Asian countries (Hathaway, 2010), denied the applicability of the term indigenous peoples within the state system. The use of the term masyarakat adat was also initially deployed by NGOs and is referred to as the international concept of indigenous peoples (Moniaga, 2007). This process is illustrated by Henley and Davidson:

Within the developing countries, new non-governmental organisations (NGOs), connected with their foreign and transnational counterparts, have also emerged to advocate indigenous rights. The result is the oxymoronic phenomenon of international indigenism, a cosmopolitan nativism embracing indigenous peoples from Inuit to Iban. Access to an indigenous identity today, some commentators go so far as to argue, is, in practice, determined less by ancestry, culture or marginality than by familiarity with the international discourse and politics of indigenous rights. (2008, pp. 820-821)
It cannot be denied, as observed by Hadiwinata (2003), that advocacy is unavoidably involved in processes of networking, not only at the national level but also at the international level. A key concern in this research is that NGO activism on indigenous issues reflects mainly on a global narrative rather than the varied dynamics of localities. Growing indigenisation may be simply perceived as an act of ‘giving a voice’ to marginalised local communities by NGOs. However, NGO representation of adat communities with global terms such as ‘forest guardians’ may oversimplify the issue and does not always fully describe the emerging sociocultural dynamics that occur among community members at the local level. What Li (2014) described as ‘capitalist relation’ has intruded into the imagined communalities of adat communities in their changing views of traditional territories and land uses that lie at the core of emerging adat movements in Indonesia.

While it is often assumed that NGOs’ stance is to apply external or even oppositional pressure on the government aimed at becoming a power balancer, it is crucial to critically study their role and positioning, both in regard to the state and its community partners, as they become another competing power. This chapter, therefore, focuses on exploring the specific background of how NGOs have taken a leading role in constructing indigeneity in Indonesia. In doing so, the broader context of the development and political situation of Indonesian NGOs is discussed, followed by NGO roles in the emergence of indigenous movements in Indonesia and how global discourses of indigeneity have been imported. Further, critical views towards NGO roles in building indigeneity in Indonesia are provided as an alternative perspective, completing perspectives on Indonesian indigeneity explored in Chapter 2 to enhance and enrich the analyses of this study.

**NGO activism in Indonesia**

Many studies on NGOs in Indonesia were conducted about or connected to the context of the autocratic New Order regime with its robust developmentalism agenda (P. Eldridge, 1989; P. J. Eldridge, 1995; Fakih, 1991, 1995; Hadiwinata, 2003; Harney & Olivia, 2003). Fakih pointed out that this reflects “a reaction to the effect of bureaucratic “developmentalism” where the government as an agent of development was less than effective” (1991, p. 2). Fakih (1991) further observed that having activities centred on problems constituted by a developmentalism ideology distinguishes NGOs from other types of community organisations. Such an understanding is seemingly too ideal and ideological, as the phrase ‘non-government’ has been applied to include all kinds of organisations outside government institutions with various
activities, even including those with no concern for the poor or disadvantaged groups (P. Eldridge, 1989; Hadiwinata, 2003).

In fact, there is no agreement amongst activists and academics about the definition of the term ‘NGO’ since it first appeared in 1945 in the UN Charter, Article 71 (Martens, 2002). Some scholars tend to provide criteria rather than a fixed definition. This includes formal, non-profit, private, having legal a framework, self-governing and voluntary organisations (Fakih, 1991; Salamon & Anheier, 1996, 1997). Also, some scholars have provided a broad range of notions of NGOs that cover, not only advocacy groups, but also those supporting the status quo through service delivery activities, from local to multinational contexts (Betsill & Corell, 2008; Edwards & Hulme, 1992; Piper & Uhl, 2004). There are also different terms or acronyms used without clear-cut differentiation, such as CSO (Civil Society Organisations), GSO (Grassroots Support Organisation), non-profit sector/organisation, voluntary sector and third sector (Carroll, 1992; Chang, 2005; Harney & Olivia, 2003; Salamon & Anheier, 1996, 1997). It was even suggested that the use of these terms identified with certain world regions, such as NGO for developing countries and charity-oriented organisations for developed countries (Salamon & Anheier, 1997).

In Indonesia, the common term used is Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat (LSM meaning self-reliant community organisation). The term LSM as the translation of NGO (previously translated as Organisasi Non-Pemerintah or ORNOP) is regarded as problematic, resulting in rejection by some Indonesian activists and academics because it represents a form of subjugation by the state that deemed the phrase ‘non-government’ to imply anti-government (P. Eldridge, 1989; Fakih, 1995; Hadiwinata, 2003). Nonetheless, the term ‘LSM’ has also been used for various forms of non-government or private organisations. In this thesis, the term ‘NGO’ is used to refer to the common Indonesian notion of LSM that accommodates all the criteria mentioned above.

Furthermore, this is related to the dynamics and development of specific typicalities of NGOs in Indonesia. David Korten (1987) classified NGO into three generations: (i) relief and welfare; (ii) local self-reliance; and (iii) sustainable systems development, while Charles Elliot (1987) grouped NGO approaches into welfare, developmental and empowerment (1987), both researchers seemingly influenced some Indonesian scholars in this field to create a similar form of categorisation. Fakih (1995) explained that from the 1970s to the 1990s there existed a transformation process among Indonesian NGOs; from being part of the state’s mainstream developmentalism agenda to being radical by seeking new alternatives. Based on such
paradigms, Fakih (1995) categorised Indonesian NGOs into three types: (i) conformist; (ii) reformist; and (iii) transformative. Meanwhile, Hadiwinata (2003) placed them into two categories: (i) development NGOs (LSM pembangunan); and (ii) movement NGOs (LSM Gerakan). In general, all categories show a similar progressive narrative of Indonesian NGOs, from being affirmative (working on capacity building to support the existing system) to being critical and transformative (insisting on fundamental/structural change) toward government policies.

In addition, the increase in transnational funding networks also contributed to greater independent and critical characteristics of national and local NGOs in Indonesia in their relationship with the state since the mid-1990s (Lindquist, 2004). Amongst the effects was a significant rise in the number of NGOs from 130 in 1981 to 4000 in 1993, based on an official list of registered NGOs in Indonesia (Linquist, 2004). It is assumed that they increased their independence from the state as they were financially supported by international non-state actors. However, this left an issue about their independence in relation to donors. To a large extent, this reflects the political position of NGOs in Indonesia that had been suppressed during the New Order era (1966-1998). Control over NGOs was strictly applied while approval was given to organisations working on non-political issues (P. Eldridge, 1989; Hadiwinata, 2003). Therefore, resistance towards the state’s authoritarian and repressive political policies became part of the typical characteristics of NGOs in Indonesia (Clarke, 1998; Harney & Olivia, 2003). It is within this context that Fakih identified NGOs in Indonesia with activities on problems of ‘development’ and described it as a “by-product of … capitalist environment” and the “modern New Order phenomenon” (1991, p. 2). Hence, paying attention to the broad range of definitions and criteria for NGOs, this thesis researches this inquiry about Indonesian NGOs working on indigenous issues within the political context of surrounding activism as an essential element.

In this research, the term ‘activism’ clearly identifies with the work performed by NGOs. Activism is more than ‘activities’ as it reflects ideological standpoints that are important for study on the construction of meanings and issues of power relations. How activism is viewed in this study may be referred by the criterion offered by Piper and Uhlin: ‘(1) based on a conflict of interests and thus are of a contentious nature; (2) challenging or supporting certain power structures; (3) involving non-state actors; and (4) taking place (at least partly) outside formal political arenas’ (2004, p. 4). The term, therefore, is applied in this study through the phrase
‘indigenous activism’ to not merely describe local people’s movements, but to critically represent discursive ideas of indigeneity brought about by NGOs.

NGOs and the emergence of the indigenous movement in Indonesia

The fall of the New Order regime opened up a broad space for critical NGOs to grow, including those that had supported the establishment of Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (AMAN or Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago) in 1999 (Fay & Denduangrudee, 2016; Henley & Davidson, 2007; Moniaga, 2007; Tyson, 2010). Henley and Davidson illustrated the situation:

In the post-Suharto state, communities and ethnic groups across Indonesia have publicly, vocally, and sometimes violently, demanded the right to implement elements of adat or hukum adat (customary law) in their home territories ... In the name of adat, Jakarta-based and regional activists have combined forces to form Indonesia’s first national indigenous peoples’ lobby, AMAN or Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara – literally, the ‘Alliance of Adat Communities of the Archipelago’. (2007, p. 37)

It is important to look closely and chronologically at the emergence of an indigenous movement in Indonesia by referring to the establishment of AMAN to observe how NGOs have taken part in its phases of establishment. The chronological depiction of this emergence is as follows:

1. In response to continuing and escalating sporadic local/rural peoples’ resistances toward state and corporate land grabbing, mainly since the 1980s, NGO activists began to build a network, including looking for international support (Moniaga, 2007). In 1990, local activists from Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi initiated the process by creating a network with national NGOs, WALHI and SKEPHI (Indonesian Network of Tropical Forest Conservation) (Tyson, 2010).

2. In 1993, although prohibited in Jakarta and Makassar, a series of underground meetings attended by activists was held in Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi with the protection of a prominent local village chief. These meetings culminated with a workshop managed by WALDA (local Torajan NGO) and WALHI on 25-29 May 1993, which then led to the inception of JAPHAMA (Network Defense Rights of Indigenous Peoples) (Tyson, 2010). The activists agreed that JAPHAMA would become a fluid network that functioned to enhance and encourage other NGOs to provide support to indigenous on masyarakat adat issues (Moniaga, 2007). Included was the conceptualisation of
indigenous peoples into the Indonesian context as *masyarakat adat* was formulated (Tyson, 2010). A working definition was set up, as cited by Acciaioli:

... social groups that have ancestral origins (which have persisted for generations) in a specific geographical region, along with possessing a value system, ideology, economy, politics, culture, society and region [territory] of their own. (2007, p. 299)

3. From 1993 onwards, the number of NGO working on indigenous issues began to flourish. Moniaga observed:

In West Sumatra young Mentawaians founded Yayasan Citra Mandiri; in West Kalimantan some young Dayak with the support of WALHI and YLBHI founded Lembaga Bela Bansa Talino; and in East Kalimantan some ‘educated’ Dayak backed by YLBHI (Legal Aid Society Foundation) founded Lembaga Bina Benua Puti Jaji. A network of indigenous peoples’ organisations and indigenous NGOs known as Baileo Maluku formed in Central and Southeast Moluccas; and in West Papua young lawyers established LPPMA (Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Adat). In 1996 and 1997, the first two regional indigenous peoples’ organisations – one in West Kalimantan and another in East Nusa Tenggara – were established. Meanwhile, a number of NGO networks dedicated to indigenous peoples’ issues were founded, as Jakarta, Bogor, and Bandung-based human rights, agrarian and environmental NGOs took up the indigenous peoples’ cause. (2007, p. 282)

4. In 1998, the New Order regime fell after an escalating wave of people protesting, calling for President Suharto to step down from his 32-year powerful leadership. This was seen as the most important turning point in Indonesian political history because it opened up a significant space for activists to strengthen their political movements. Among the euphoric movements was a coalition named KUDETA (Coalition for the Democratisation of Natural Resources Management; the acronym also means ‘coup d’état’), built by 82 NGOs and student organisations to demand equality in natural resources management, especially for local communities (Fay & Denduangrudee, 2016).

5. From 15 to 22 March 1999, 13 national Jakarta-based NGOs (members of JAPHAM) organised a congress in Jakarta where over 200 representatives of *adat* communities from all over Indonesia attended. At this event, it was agreed to establish AMAN (Indigenous People’s Alliance of the Archipelago) (Avonius, 2003; Li, 2001; Moniaga, 2007; Tyson, 2010), then known as KMAN I (First Congress of AMAN), which was to be held quadrennially and currently holds its 5th congress. In this assembly, the
participants voiced refusal of the existing negative labels of indigenous communities. Additionally, the working definition established by JAPHAMA was slightly revised:

Communities that live on the basis of their hereditary ancestral origins in a specific customary territory, that possess sovereignty over their land and natural riches, whose socio-cultural life is ordered by customary law, and whose customary institutions manage the continuity of their social life. (Acciaioli, 2007, p. 299)

This chronology shows that NGOs had taken on essential roles in the emergence of indigenous movements in Indonesia. It was mentioned that behind this nationwide indigenous movement, there were “about two dozen collaborations with international donor organisations and more than 30 national non-governmental allies” (Sanmukri, 2013, p. 117). Among the essential parts played by activists are the defining of indigeneity, and framing it within the Indonesian context. Commenting on this issue, Li observed:

Activists and academics based in Jakarta and other major cities, people who are not themselves masyarakat adat, have played an important role in the emergence of the category and the resulting mobilisation. Combining the imagery and resources of the international indigenous movement with the populist orientation of Indonesia’s independence struggle, they undertake the cultural-political labour of translating innumerable, particular instances of violation into common language, assembling them so they can be understood and potentially resolved on a national scale. (2001, p. 660)

Furthermore, Li stated that this international-oriented conception of indigeneity was mostly imported by environmental activists, claiming that “indigenous people derive ecologically sound livelihoods from their ancestral lands and possess forms of knowledge and wisdom which are unique and valuable” (2000a, p. 155). Affirming this, Tsing (2007) pointed out that international environmental NGOs had taken on important roles in constructing indigeneity issues in Indonesia after the fall of the New Order regime in 1998.

The fact that the congress and its previous years of activity were supported by WALHI and its network confirms this form of environmentalism. It was further confirmed that while in the early 1990s, activists calling for local community rights were highly suppressed, however, emerging global discourses about the important roles of indigenous peoples in conservation helped them to gain more political space within environmental issues as the New Order regime was more tolerant of this field (Affff, 2016; Cribb, 1998). Interestingly, it revealed that, back to its inception in 1980, WALHI had been advantaged by its relationship with the government at the time, especially the Ministry for the Environment (Cribb, 1998). Moreover, as Tsing (2005)
pointed out, in Indonesia, the environmental sector’s advantage related to global and national dominant political contexts in the 1980s that, along with the disintegration process of the Soviet Union, environmental politics was broadly spread as a form of anti-Communism, making it compatible with the New Order regime. Along with WALHI, there was LBH (Legal Aid Institute), an NGO established in 1971 that was allowed by the authoritarian regime to operate, to save its image of legal enforcement (Henley & Davidson, 2007).

The manner in which NGOs guided the conceptualisation of indigeneity discourses in Indonesia with their narrative of environmentalism was also reflected by an internal divide that occurred among the activists. Afiff confirmed that there was a divide amongst activists and academics concerned with indigeneity issues in Indonesia that led them into two groups he called the “rights camp” and “forest access camp” (2016, p. 125). While the former insisted on the government to recognise local community entitlements to their customary land, the latter tended to evade such radical insistence and instead demanded greater access to forest areas for the communities. The ‘forest access’ camp argued for this choice, and beside its fitting with international discourses of community forestry campaigning since the 1970s, it was also a strategy to save local community rights to access their ancestral land prior to regulations for customary forestation to be achieved (Afiff, 2016).

Overall, the leading role of NGOs and/or activists in formulating indigeneity in Indonesia cannot be disconnected from broader global discourses. The next section explores how international support has contributed to NGO roles in building indigeneity in Indonesia.

**Globally led and supported indigenous activism**

Many scholars (Henley & Davidson, 2007, 2008; Li, 2001; Moniaga, 2007; Persoon, 1998; Tsing, 2005) have shown that the Indonesian concept of masyarakat adat was derived from, and supported by, global discourse of indigeneity, as well as deployed by NGOs from the international to the local level. In general, this reflects Nair’s observation that the “global manifestations of the discourse are the United Nations, International Non Governmental Organisations, and Environmentalist Activists Groups that overlap the other categories” (2006, p. 4). He added that such global discourses were then reconstructed through local level activism by local NGOs and organisations concerned with human rights and environmental issues (2006). This is important to do because without making a link to local and national activists, transnational networks of activism would not be effective (Piper & Uhlin, 2004).
A fundamental methodology used for global discourse of indigeneity reaching national and local levels was to offer international funding programs to NGOs working on this issue. Tyson (2010) demonstrated that Indonesian NGOs and organisations working on environmental and indigenous issues for this growing movement had financial resources and support supplied by international organisations and funding institutions:

... the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the British Department for International Development (DFID), the Ford Foundation, the European Union, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), and the German Technical Assistance (GTZ). (2010, p. 8)

The donors, Tyson (2010) added, placed trust in and worked with prominent national NGOs or organisations, such as AMAN, Bitra Indonesia, the Consortium for Agrarian Reform (Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria or KPA) and WALHI. In the process of funding distribution, there were intermediary NGOs that were mostly international/transnational, functioning as program subcontractors for national and local NGOs by distributing funding and providing technical advice (Carroll, 1992; Edwards & Hulme, 1992; Sanmukri, 2013).

Intermediary NGOs usually had specific areas of concern based on how they built national and local networks. One transnational NGO that supported AMAN was the Samdhana Institute, which was basically concerned with issues of ‘sustainable natural resource management’ (Sanmukri, 2013). Once more, it was confirmed that the above-mentioned international environmentalism’s mission repressed the emergence of indigenous movements in Indonesia. Sanmukri pointed out that “indigenous peoples constitute just one type of community among Samdhana’s target groups but all of them are conceived and promoted as caretakers of the environment” (2013, p. 124). His comment may explain why WALHI and AMAN were, among all Indonesian NGOs and community organisations, often recipients of international donor funds (Henley & Davidson, 2008).

However, what made AMAN the representative of global indigenous advocacy was its networking strategies with UN bodies and transnational organisations working on Indigenous issues. AMAN’s early formation in 1993 (with the inception of JAPHAMA) was often connected with the International Year of the World’s Indigenous People proclaimed by the UN (Persoon, 1998; Tyson, 2010; United Nations, 1992). AMAN was also involved in transnational advocacy organisations, such as the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and the International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) (Henley & Davidson, 2007). As mentioned in its
website information profile, since 2007, AMAN had been intensely involved in attending international forums that were not only concerned with indigenous issues but also environmental agencies, such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), Global Landscape Forum, State of Rights and Resources and the much broader World Economic Forum (WEF), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Creative Time Summit, Global Land Forum, The Climate Summit, Tropical Forest Alliance and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara, 2016).

The afore-mentioned list of international networks shows how Indonesian indigenous or adat movements have been widely exposed to global discourses of indigeneity. However, this must not be simply understood as a form of imposition of global discourse of indigeneity into Indonesia, but rather be seen to involve a “dynamic and framing of protest and the cycles of contention that develop between social movements and states” (Grugel, 2004, p. 37). The use of the term masyarakat adat reflects such a process. Hence, as Henley and Davidson observed, the “roots of today’s masyarakat adat movement then lie in domestic Indonesian politics, as well as in international activism” (2007, p. 9). Tsing (2005) also illustrated this process as the ‘friction’ that worldwide discourse of indigeneity needs to be contextually located within Indonesian diverse localities in order for them to grow and develop.

Critical views concerning the role of NGOs in constructing indigeneity issues in Indonesia

This section explores alternative views about the indigenous movement in Indonesia, more specifically concerning the roles of NGO in its construction. Although by no means ignoring the complexity of issues surrounding the role of NGO indigenous activism, there are two important issues informing critical views in this study; (i) politics of identity; and (ii) wider global environmentalism.

Issues of the politics of identity

Some studies are critically concerned with risks that might be created by indigenous movements. Henley and Davidson (2008), in their critical assessment of adat revivalism in Indonesia, while acknowledging the empowering nature of indigenous movements, found risks ranging from political interests to potential inter-ethnic conflicts to be based on adat claims. For example, in some regions in Kalimantan, it was identified that adat had been exploited by overlapping interests of ideological struggle and pragmatic politics (2008). Bloody conflicts...
also occurred between Dayaks and Madurese ethnic groups in the late 1990s and early 2000s, mostly involving adat matters (Henley & Davidson, 2008). However, Henley and Davidson’s (2008) study did not specifically mention that these inter-ethnic conflicts had been the direct effect of adat or indigenous movements embraced by AMAN. Defending the existence of indigenous movements, De La Cadena and Starn contended that such an activism “may serve to articulate projects for social justice beyond the exclusive notion of ethnic identity” (2007, p. 11).

In agreement with Henley and Davidson (2008), Sangaji (2007) presented a critical overview of indigenous social movements in Indonesia which, according to him, should have been redefined based on the development of transitional democracy in Indonesia. Based on his experiences and involvement in adat movements in Central Sulawesi, Sangaji (2007) viewed the concept of masyarakat adat as having been intervened by the processes of migration, religious missions and politics, therefore, it cannot be defined because it is a primordial concept. Such a development, however, has made movements prone to political appropriation by some political elites to gain support through ethnic sentiments (Sangaji, 2007). Meanwhile, within the sphere of the movements, there were issues about the representation of indigenous communities that reflected elitism by which their voices were only represented by a small number of villagers and therefore, NGO activists tended to dominate in the process of networking and lobbying (Sangaji, 2007).

Criticism also came from Li (2001) who noted that the concept of ‘politics of difference’ was embraced by indigenous social movements in Indonesia. Despite her contention that politics of difference is inevitable in diverse-ethnic groups populated in a country such as Indonesia, Li noted the potential risk of “racialisation of territory” (2001, p. 647) in masyarakat adat movements in Indonesia. She found that indigenous social movements such as those embraced by AMAN bear the dilemma of recognition and limitation. While acknowledging that, based on her observation, AMAN has not borne sectarian tendencies, Li sees that the struggle for masyarakat adat recognition potentially brought limitations to its members in terms of their choices of identity within Indonesian democracy and therefore in terms of power. Embracing the Foucauldian concept of governmentality to describe the government’s pattern of exerting power, Li (2001) suggested that governmentality also applies, to some extent, to NGOs or activists in the way they work with local communities. Hence, governmentality, both in state policies and social movement spheres, possibly constitutes what Li described as “governable subjects” amongst the local ethnic minorities (1999, p. 295).
Such a process of becoming ‘governable subjects’ of social movements was also observable in Grumblies’ study of the Wana people in Central Sulawesi in their process of “becoming indigenous” (2013, pp. 93-95). Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted before and after the ‘becoming indigenous’ process, the study showed how Wana people, who previously lived in the remote interior upland of Central Sulawesi, far from access to information and unaware of indigeneity issues, then became able to access information. This resulted in the Wana people having the confidence and ability to speak to ‘powerful’ governmental departments and become knowledgeable about their rights. The Wana people become ‘indigenous’ after their engagement with some NGOs whom they had sought as allies when facing government and company claims on their illegal ownership of the land on which they lived (Grumblies, 2013). Along with becoming the empowered embedded within this alliance movement, conflicts emerged within the internal social order of the Wana people, such as leadership, repositioning of cultural leadership into merely administrative roles and distrust in religious matters. Citing Hirtz (2003), Grumblies reflected on how “it takes modern means to become traditional, to be indigenous” (2013, p. 96).

A critical point that Li observed of masyarakat adat movements in Indonesia was the emergence of a paradox within the assertion of recognition of indigenous territories by the state, “whose claim to sovereignty they wish to challenge” (2001, p. 653). Pramono (2014) also found such ambivalence in his critical analysis of the adat territory participatory mapping conducted by AMAN. The strategy of territorialisation and political forests applied by the state, as shown by Vandergeest (2008) and Peluso (2001), which activists had formerly criticised, were adopted as a form of social movement through participatory mapping. Among the potential negative effects of the program was the dismissal of indigenous knowledge of space management and affirmation of the state’s strategy of territorialisation. Pramono (2014) raised questions about such a program as an act of perlawanan atau pendisiplinan (resisting or disciplining).

Global environmentalism issues

Much research have been conducted concerning environmental issues attached to, or behind, indigenous social movements. In many of her anthropological studies on indigenous issues in Indonesia, Li (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2007a, 2007b), although not always making it a primary focus, has always been critical of environmental issues ascribed to indigeneity issues. Amongst her criticisms was the construction of so-called ‘indigenous knowledge’ by which indigenous communities are positioned as the stewards of forest conservation and therefore parallelising indigenous movements with environmental movements. Henley and Davidson (2008), borrowing Benda-Beckmann’s (1997) words, pointed out that such an attempt of conjoining...
indigenism and environmentalism may place indigenous communities in a difficult situation as it can become a ‘Trojan horse’ for communities when failing eco-friendly ways of living.

Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that environmental movements have contributed much to the construction and enhancement of indigeneity issues that have reached a crisis in Indonesia. The convergence of environmentalism and indigenism in Indonesia has been flourishing, along with environmental issues that involve state, companies and masyarakat adat. A report written by Friends of the Earth, Life Mosaic and Sawit Watch (2008) elaborated how the Indonesian government’s palm oil expansion project to cover 20 million hectares of land spreading over Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Papua by 2020 would negatively affect the cultural heritage of masyarakat adat, their traditional ecological knowledge, local languages, adat institutions and social values.

Affirming those forms of movements, Tsing (2007) found that environmental issues are among three main issues behind transnational indigenous movements: (i) sovereignty; (ii) puriethnic autonomy; and (iii) environmental conservation. Interestingly, Tsing (2007) noted that such movements in Indonesia tended to be too globally-minded and that after the downfall of the New Order regime, international NGOs seemed to take over the roles formerly played by national NGOs. In her study, Tsing tried to position the Indonesian case among global issues of indigenous peoples through what she overviews as “the history of divergent indigeneities” (2007, p. 33). Based on her overview, a flourishing Indonesian conception of indigenous peoples needs to be contextualised within diverse and even contradictory notions of indigeneity, a theory that has travelled across the world. Indeed, Tsing (2007) contended that studies on Indonesian conceptions of indigeneity should include disparate notions at the local, regional and national levels.

Globalisation of indigeneity issues was also captured by Dove (2006) who observed the rising interest of anthropological studies on indigeneity issues and realised a tendency for generalising local movements within indigeneity issues by which the formerly regarded as peasants and tribesmen are represented as indigenous peoples. As mentioned previously, such phenomena have appeared in several case studies in other countries (Keck, 1995). Human rights issues are therefore always included and constitute a global indigenous rights movement regime (Afiff, 2016; Briskman, 2014; Henley & Davidson, 2008). Environmental issues, however, are still leading in representing indigeneity as social movements by generating environmental governmentality.
The environment, human rights and indigenous peoples eventually emerged as inseparable issues (Tyson, 2010). To a great extent, this reflects the contextual underpinning of the concept of indigenous peoples in Indonesia, which often appears as forms of resistance rather than claims of authenticity. A critical view about the unexpected impact of the configuration of these three issues in activism is given by Choudry, “Tensions between Indigenous Peoples and environmentalist and human rights NGO networks can arise when NGOs do not see how integrationist approaches to development or conservation measures can violate Indigenous Peoples’ rights” (2013, pp. 30-31).

Furthermore, with its strengthening position through transnational networks emerged a phenomenon described as ‘NGOisation’ (Choudry, 2010; Choudry & Kapoor, 2013; Roy, 2014; Ungsuchaval, 2016), which is a process that draws NGOs away from their basic principle of working with (marginalised) people as they become concerned about professionalisation and management issues. This may be an inevitable consequence that many NGOs have to manage as they face more demands to be accountable, not only in addressing issues in the field, but also in their internal organisational management. It appears that, to some extent, NGOs’ advocacy works cannot avoid the mainstream development of helping profession management such as in social work field (Briskman, 2014). A cynical but noteworthy view put forward by Piper and Uhlin by citing Waterman (2001) states:

A large number of the transnational activists tend to be well-educated, middle-class people. Therefore, rather than being a form of ‘globalisation from below’, contemporary transnational activism can perhaps be better described as ‘globalisation from the middle’ ... It is hard for most transnational activists to claim that they have a genuine right to speak for anyone but themselves. (2004, pp. 17-18)

Such critical views suggest that indigenous movements in Indonesia have been growing, not merely as a form of local authenticity recovery nor as a form of global imposition of indigeneity discourses. Aspects from both forms are clearly present and contested and/or negotiated through the dynamics of local, national and global socio-political configurations. While NGOs are often identified with oppositional stances toward the state/government’s power (Edwards & Hulme, 1992), their emergence and roles cannot be separated from their surrounding discursive power of their own governmentality.
Summary

NGOs have taken on important roles in building indigeneity discourses in Indonesia through the masyarakat adat movement. While this obviously reflects a form of critical resistance toward the state’s (New Order) hegemony in defining local peoples’ identities and rights, its construction requires a complex process of contestation and negotiation through which NGOs can take leadership at the local, national and global levels. By further examining how NGOs have played their roles, it can be seen that indigenous identity is not about recovering authentic local identities. Instead, indigenous identity is a form of bringing the locals to the global and, vice versa, that is, deploying the global to the locals. This has been occurring through global(ised) indigenous activism in which issues such as the politics of identity and global environmentalism have contributed greatly. Above all, the phenomenon of dominant NGO roles that led to NGOisation is also a critical issue for analysis. All views and/or theories discussed in this chapter are presented to strengthen the study’s analyses.

Having surveyed key and wide-ranging literature relevant to this research, in order to establish its theoretical and contextual dimensions (Introduction and Chapters 1-3), Chapter 4 describes the research process as a stepping stone to the following chapters that report the data derived from fieldwork for this study.
Chapter 4: Developing an Analytical Strategy

Introduction

This chapter is specifically designed to explore the aspects that represent the methodology. By ‘exploration’, complex and dynamic processes demonstrate how this qualitative study was conducted, rather than focusing on the application of methodological jargon, fixed protocol and rigid techniques.

Chapter 4 also documents the steps applied in this study, which were built on dynamic and developing ideas during the researcher’s engagement with participants and/or data sources, as well as during the analysis and writing processes. Therefore, the description of what constitutes ‘methodological steps’ is presented, along with an exploration of the researcher’s experiences. This led to the concept of ‘analytical strategy’, rather than ‘methodology’, as central to this study. For a systematic approach, this chapter is divided into three parts: (i) foundational concepts; (ii) field research; and (iii) analytical strategy.

The foundational concept provides both general and basic ideas that underly the study’s qualitative design, which includes the exploration of relevant researchers’ methodologies to explain how this study is positioned among, influenced by, and differentiated from those studies. Furthermore, the Foucauldian concept of discourse is discussed, as it was adopted as the basic concept that illuminates information or data collection processes in this research, and how they have been analysed to reveal various discursive formations. This forms the basis of what is developed in this research, which is better defined as an ‘analytical strategy’ (Andersen, 2003) rather than a methodology.

In relation to the field research, operational and technical processes are presented to explicate the ‘what, who, how and where’ of this study. This was presented as part of exploring indigeneity discourses, inviting informants and participants, and dealing with challenges.

Chapter 4 concludes with an explanation of how an analytical strategy was developed throughout the research. More than a set of methodological tools, what is presented in this chapter is informed by a postcolonial theoretical framework. The arrangement and application of the analytical strategy is designated to support the postcolonial framework while, as
explained later, it is also a consequence of the epistemological characteristics of the research questions.

Part 1: Foundational Concept

Overview of research methods used in previous studies

Studies on indigeneity issues in Indonesia have been mainly conducted within the domain of anthropology, primarily employing ethnographic methods. Those studies usually presented rich and detailed information of research sites and participants. There have been two major anthropological studies that deeply explored the lives of indigenous communities of the Meratus Mountains in South Kalimantan, one conducted by Radam (2001) and the second by Tsing (1993). The former is an Indonesian-written report based on lengthy, deep fieldwork conducted between April 1979 and November 1980 around the upstream of Amandit river in Meratus Mountains with its main study focused on the socio-religious life of indigenous communities living in the area. The latter offered a new vantage point of inquiry, exploring meanings of cultural and political marginalisation processes of Meratus indigenous communities while presenting a deep anthropological exploration of lived experiences.

Other indigenous studies in Indonesia, also consisting of ethnographic inquiries, have focused on issues of identity formation. For example, a study conducted by van Klinken (2006) explored how identity formation of the Dayak people had been shaped along with the establishment of the Central Kalimantan province. Steckman (2011) also produced an historical reconstruction of the Dayak’s identity formation in Indonesian Borneo. No less important is a study conducted by Connolly (2009), inquiring about how world religions, especially Christianity, which came along with the Dutch colonialism, had contributed to the rise of pan-Dayak identity consciousness amongst interior sub-ethnic groups in East Kalimantan. There has also been research that applied a case study methodology, such as Lumenta’s (2003) work, which particularly focused on how Iban and Kenyah people, who live across the Indonesia-Malaysia border, had maintained their relationship under a Dayak identity. From a more global perspective, Tsing’s (2007) and Dove’s (2006) research explored the concept of indigenous identity in Indonesia and its diverse meanings in global discourses.

While being influenced by previous ethnographic studies, this study was not from the beginning intended and designed to be a long, extended ethnographic study. Rather, a mobile process of interaction was conducted to find important events and moments (later explained through the concept of ‘statements’) that contributed to the local peoples’ indigeneity. Grumblies (2013), in
her ethnographic reports of the Wana people of Central Sulawesi, represented the ‘big picture’ of this study, revealing the meaning of ‘being indigenous’ by comparing lives before and after engaging with NGOs. Prominent studies on this area had been presented by Li (2000a, 2007a) through her comparative analysis between the Lauje people and Lindu people in Central Sulawesi province. This was part of her lengthy journey of inquiries located in this area around the same sites. Some of Li’s (1999; 2000a, 2001) anthropological studies on indigenous issues applied the Foucauldian concept of governmentality, which attempted to critically scrutinise indigeneity issues within the sphere of social policies and social movements in Indonesia. The critical perspective developed through these studies contributed to the development of this study.

Therefore, this study is influenced by Li’s basic ideas of indigeneity issues in Indonesia. However, it goes further by extending and/or focusing more on the NGOs’ representation of local communities within and through the indigenous movement by applying Foucault’s concept of discourse. By this, while similarly drawing from several communities around the research sites, this study did not make a comparative analysis but set out to find and construct ‘statements’ of indigeneity. Furthermore, a strong reliance on a postcolonial framework sent this study in a markedly different direction. Above all, this study was conducted in a different research site and under a more recent, dynamic socio-political atmosphere surrounding indigeneity issues in South Kalimantan specifically, and Indonesia, more broadly.

**Foucauldian concept of discourse as an underpinning research design**

Beginning with a theoretical framework that informs “the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” requires the application of a qualitative inquiry design (Creswell, 2013, p. 44). The application of a qualitative design was chosen because this study is “interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed” (Merriam, 2009, p. 13) and “attempts to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). The issue of indigeneity addressed in this study is about how the meaning of being *masyarakat adat*, which is referred to as indigenous, is produced through discourses where there were actors engaged with competing ideas within particular social, cultural, economic and political situations.

The central aim of this qualitative inquiry is to draw out and explore how meaning is constructed through a complex constellation, mainly in speech, observations of events and, to some extent, insight into daily life when invited by participants and the broader socio-political
context that when combined, constitute discourses. More specifically, this study employs Foucault’s concept of discourse as the foundation in developing its methodology and/or analytical strategy. To position this research within postcolonialism and poststructuralism, as explained in Chapter 2, Foucault’s theories here are a part of a poststructuralist strategy but not necessarily part of postcolonial theory. Therefore the use of his theories here are more instrumental than theoretical.

Foucault once simply defined his idea of discourse as “the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation” (1972, p. 108). An explanation is given by Andersen regarding the Foucauldian idea of discourse by looking at three main elements of discourse analysis:

1. **Statement** is the atom of discourse – its smallest unit;
2. **Discourse** is the final, actually demarcated body of formulated statements – it is the archive of the discourse analyst; and
3. **Discursive formation** is a system of dispersion for statements; it is the regularity in the dispersion of statements. (2003, p. 8)

The term ‘statement’ is essential within Foucault’s concept of discourse and is applied beyond textual or linguistic analysis (Andersen, 2003; Diaz-Bone et al., 2008; McHoul & Grace, 1993). McHoul and Grace (1993) argued that what Foucault meant by ‘statement’ is more complex and dynamic than elements of language, such as proposition and sentence. It comes up with particular conditions (including time and space) by which utterances or other kinds of signs can be properly understood. This insight clarifies what Andersen (2003) observed in describing a ‘statement’ as the ‘smallest unit’ of discourse as it was meant to be a form of simplification of understanding. Foucault put ‘statement’ not as a form of units within an established structure but as:

... a function of existence that properly belongs to signs and on the basis of which one may then decide, through analysis or intuition, whether or not they ‘make sense’, according to what rule they follow one another or are juxtaposed ... One should not be surprised, then, if one has failed to find structural criteria of unity for the statement; this is because it is not in itself a unit, but a function that cuts across a domain of structures and possible unities, and which reveals them, with concrete contents, in time and space. (1972, pp. 86-87)

How statements operate, through their functional relations, to constitute a discourse can be explained by the concept of discursive formation. When connections are made among dispersed statements to create meaning and, therefore, knowledge, it is said that they are in a system
called ‘discursive formation’. It is important to note that those statements are not there in the form of already structured and grouped elements but distributed in irregularity (Andersen, 2003). In other words, discursive formation is not an already established system waiting to be found; it comes into being when “the regularity of the irregular distribution of statements” (Andersen, 2003, p. 8) is able to be constructed.

This is confirmed by Foucault:

> Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation. (Foucault, 1972, p. 38)

As this study was concerned with an inquiry about indigeneity discourses of the Meratus Dayak communities in South Kalimantan, a Foucauldian discourse research design functioned to identify which elements to search for and explore, and to examine how they functioned and connected with each other as a discursive formation of indigeneity. To reiterate, the Foucauldian discourse concept was applied as part of the researcher’s vision in grappling with the complexity of the Meratus people’s indigeneity, as represented by indigenous activists to challenge the state’s hegemonic concept of citizenship.

Indigeneity discourse has flexibility and can be directed to specific meanings within certain contexts, consequently obtaining affirmation of thoughts that are subject to each meaning. This is what McHoul and Grace simply reflected on as “what can be said” and “what can be thought” (1993, p. 36), which is further clarified by Foucault’s observation, “From the depth of the Middle Ages, a man was mad if his speech could not be said to form part of the common discourse of men” (1971, p. 9). This insight emphasises the significance of the specificity of time and place in defining something as a discourse, which is not only related to linguistic aspects, but also to correlated aspects that prevent someone from thinking of something beyond what she/he thinks it should be, and direct them to that insight. Hook, referring to Young (1981a), claimed, “The effect of discursive practices is to make it virtually impossible to think outside of them; to be outside of them is, by definition, to be mad, to be beyond comprehension and therefore reason” (2001, p. 522).

Hence, what someone knows, thinks, understands, speaks, writes and does actually reflect only her/his encounter with the encircling and prevailing social practices. This can be referred to as ‘discursive practices’, that is, practices that lead to the production of a particular meaning and,
therefore, knowledge (Hall, 1992). In Indonesia, thinking about *masyarakat adat* as a general term would embrace very broad and dynamic social groups, such as Royal families, ethnic groups and rural communities as the term *adat* applies to almost all of them. The understanding of the term *masyarakat adat* within indigeneity issues, therefore, necessitates relevant conditional contexts (social, cultural and political), certain practices and knowledge that when combined, bring about a discursive formation of indigeneity.

Instead of grappling with the broad domain of Foucauldian ideas, this study focuses on how his concept of discourse can be used to capture statements or discursive practices that build meanings of indigeneity in Indonesia. This concept also moves away from the linguistic exploration by following Hall’s explanation of the Foucauldian idea of discourse, “Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But it is itself produced by a practice: ‘discursive practice’ – the practice of producing meaning (1992, p. 165).

Capturing discursive practices is about constructing rules or procedures through which all aspects or practices conjointly form meanings within particular discourses. Hall (2001) observed that when various aspects or elements refer to the same object and then support each other to form and share a common pattern of institution, administration and political drift, it is seen by Foucault as becoming a discursive formation. He further observed that these elements include statement of the objects/things, rules, subjects, authority of knowledge, practices and time range. It is within this formation that meanings are given to objects that result in the production of knowledge.

Foucault revealed a mechanism of how discourse works through what he called “systems of exclusion” (1971, p. 11). Through this system, discourse makes limitations of how something should be understood and at the same time shows how it exercises its power. Foucault stated, “In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures” (Foucault, 1971, p. 8). It is what he termed a ‘control systems of discourse’ through which discourses exercise their power within society while applying limitations to their own processes of formation. The “will to knowledge” and/or the “will to truth”, as Foucault put it, as part of this system of exclusion (1971, p. 11), is seen as the strongest controlling element (Hook, 2001; Young, 1981b).

Such a concept supports this study in explicating how discourses of indigeneity in Indonesia have developed as a contestation of truths to win the authority of knowledge to be able to exercise power. It is the power that defines and excludes what is regarded as indigenous or non-indigenous identity. The Meratus communities had been granted with and/or adopted an *adat*
identity through competing dominant discourses of indigeneity between the government and NGO activists. To comprehend how meanings of indigeneity had been constructed, fragmented elements are attempted to be connected to construct the formation of the adat identity of the Meratus Dayak communities.

It is important to note that Foucault did not intend to create a specific methodological approach and no Foucauldian scholars have proclaimed capturing a comprehensive set of ideas of Foucauldian discourse into a fixed method (Andersen, 2003; Scheurich & McKenzie, 2005). Therefore, this study adopts ‘Foucauldian discourse’ more as the basis of analytical strategy that was developed through a postcolonial framework (explained in more detail later in this chapter) instead of adopting it as the main methodology. The employment of the Foucauldian concept in this research design is meant to support the application of a postcolonial framework in revealing the discursive formation of indigeneity in Indonesia, specifically in Meratus. It enables this research to comprehensively view the information required for exploration and how to make sense of it.

**Part 2 – Field research: Processes and experiences**

**Revealing indigeneity in South Kalimantan**

The accomplishment of this study’s fieldwork depended on building direct and regular personal communications with the Executive Director of LPMA-Borneo Selatan (*Lembaga Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Adat Borneo Selatan* or Institute for Adat Community Empowerment of South Borneo) prior to the fieldwork, which was conducted between mid 2015 and early 2016. It was initially challenging to find a contact with local NGO activists concerned with indigenous issues in South Kalimantan. Even though this province is considerably well known for its population of Dayak communities living around the Meratus Mountains, indigenous activism was unseen, hidden under the representation of local tourism. A number of environmental NGOs were found as having concerns for, or working on, this issue. However, one local NGO that explicitly used the term and expressed its main concern as masyarakat adat was LPMA-Borneo Selatan. It was through this communication with an LPMA activist that a broader provincial and even national network of indigenous activism was developed.

So, it was about finding the right gatekeeper, someone who could help find other gatekeepers and therefore, the appropriate participants. While groups of research participants had been categorised before the fieldwork, based on previous studies and preliminary fieldwork, the
The challenge faced on the ground was where or who to begin with. It was not a simple case of planning because interview times needed to be agreed with participants and strategic pathways needed to be found to lead to the ‘invisible’ world of indigeneity in a local context where the buzzword of global discourses of indigeneity became silent. In raising indigeneity issues, the *adat* community should have been positioned as the core source of information and the first party to meet. However, considering this possibly might have misled this study from its main aim to reveal indigeneity discourses in Meratus, bringing the process into an extended ethnographic exploration of local indigenous communities, the fieldwork process was adjusted to become a mobile process of interaction between three groups: (i) local community members; (ii) NGO activists; and (iii) state apparatus officials.

However, beginning the process with an NGO activist was not only about finding easy access to *adat* communities, but also, more importantly, about finding indigeneity as a discourse constructed through activism. This again confirmed that this study did not apply typical anthropological indicators to measure indigeneity or to expose the categorisation of the ‘noble savage’ but to locate and construct ‘statements’. Additionally, the engagement with indigenous activism, despite its focus on South Kalimantan, also reached a national scope as local activism was seen as part of a nationwide movement.

**Exploring the Meratus people's voices: A reflexivity**

The purpose of this study is to provide priority and the broadest space for Meratus people’s voices by presenting interpersonal and intercultural experiences of the researcher when building relationships with the Meratus people during the data collection process. A key aim was to report the data collected and emphasise the logic of the postcolonial framework adopted. Underlying the power relations issue, this study’s exploration did not deny the possibility that answers or information provided by the participants were considerably influenced by how they perceived the researcher’s background as an academic from a dominant Indonesian society. He was fully aware that the feelings of inferiority were possibly imposed by his presence, which would result in leading and framing the participants’ perception about themselves as they identified with the problems and deficiencies associated with discourse.

However, the social gap that possibly existed before the researcher’s arrival in the communities was, to a certain extent, unavoidable, constructed and shaped by years of marginalisation by their surrounding dominant socio-political structures, as well as how communities had to cope with it. This was a situation a postcolonial scholar must be aware of and make an attempt to negotiate it. Therefore, it was important to identify and acknowledge privileges that the
researcher has and how they possibly influenced or engendered power relations between the participants and me as the academic and researcher. This structure is described by Spivak (1988, p. 295) as “unlearning privilege” by which a postcolonial intellectual or activist aims to understand the subaltern.

It is revealed and acknowledged in this study the consequence of using a postcolonial framework where participants feel inferiority as local community members, presumably in conjunction with language issues. The key issue related to the use of the Banjarese language as the dominant local dialect in South Kalimantan. The Meratus people, despite speaking their own local Banjarese dialect, had been submerged into the mainstream Banjarese one. Facing a researcher with an academic background (speaking Indonesian) and of Javanese ethnicity (speaking Javanese) who was capable in using the Banjarese language, the participants attempted to adjust their language to the one they thought would be understood by their ‘superior’ interviewer, that is, Banjarese mixed with Indonesian. The response provoked a guilt in the researcher for ‘forcing’ the local people to enter his world while the study was aimed at understanding theirs.

As part of an effort to neutralise, or at least minimise, any unintended feelings of inferiority or hesitancy, the interviewer used expressions such as: ‘I would like to learn from you’, ‘I want to get information from you’ or ‘Based on your experiences …’ and ‘There is not going to be a true or false answer’ at the beginning of each interview. Regardless, a nervous moment in the beginning constantly existed which coloured the cultural gap of constructed power relations.

This reflection about such interpersonal and intercultural experiences surrounding the interviews or other data collection processes that are placed within power relation consciousness was important for logistics of the study to remain on course and perspective. Meanwhile, in presenting the data, it was assumed that the findings are actual voices of the participants based on the methodology set and applied to obtain their perspective.

2 The researcher had learned his Banjarese from living in South Kalimantan for more than eight years prior to conducting the fieldwork. So, he used mostly his Banjarese, which actually shares many words with the Indonesian language, when doing interviews with the locals. The original transcripts of interviews with the locals were in Banjarese, which were then translated into English by the researcher himself.
Inviting the participants

This study is based on fieldwork that consisted of short visits and a mobile process of interaction by which data was obtained through the involvement of mainly three groups of participants: (i) adat communities; (ii) NGO activists; and (iii) government officials. These three groups, although not comprehensively accommodating all parties associated with indigeneity issues in Indonesia, were chosen because they were considered to be at the centre of constructing indigeneity or adat identity in Indonesia.

It is important to note that along with the development of this study’s focus on indigenous movements, which involved mainly local communities and NGO activists, interviews with government officials were not directly quoted as much as the other two groups of participants. Nonetheless, in general, the interviews with the government played an important role in providing and sharpening insight about how the identity of local peoples such as the Meratus had been constructed and reproduced by the state. This insight is essential for this study to reveal a deeper understanding of what underlies the indigeneity discourse built by NGOs within the Indonesian context.

Meanwhile, rather than create a selection or definition, the community groups to whom the attributes of indigenousness is referred were selected mostly through the determination of local NGO activists who had long engagements in indigeneity activism. This was conducted in order to gain understanding about how NGO activism had constructed the meaning of adat identity among the locals. However, this categorisation cannot be detached from the long-established state’s representation of many local ethnic communities living with their local traditions as isolated groups. The Meratus Mountains was an area where the government first launched its resettlement program for the so-called ‘isolated communities’ in South Kalimantan province (Radam, 2001). This program is continuing, with changes in name and some procedures. Therefore, government officials with experiences and knowledge on the program were also acknowledged.

As names of the participants are not listed for the data collection process, this study has applied a non-probability sampling technique by which “some members of the population, compared to other members, have a greater but unknown chance of selection” (Galloway, 2005, p. 859). Considering the distinct groups of participants, at least three types of non-probability sampling were employed: (i) convenience; (ii) snowball; and (ii) purposive. The convenience sampling served the researcher with easily accessed informants and participants (Creswell, 2013; Galloway, 2005) before contacting other informants. This concerned how the first contact with...
an NGO activist and government official was made and maintained to act as an informant; a participant to develop a broader network of relevant others.

A snowball strategy was used as a technical matter to allow the researcher to capture “the dynamic of natural and organic social networks” that contributes to the data analysis process (Noy, 2008, p. 329). The potential participant recommended by the informant or previous participant to the researcher for the next interview was taken into account to enrich the analysis process. On several occasions, the research participant provided names of people suitable for an interview. It is important to note that even though this opportunity creates bias, it is not always the case. In general, the informant only provided alternatives of potential participants and assisted in inviting others for interviews.

As well as the snowball process, purposive sampling was employed to enable the researcher to invite the participants based on certain criteria relevant to the needs of this study. These included demographic representation, roles within an organisation or community group or other related formal and informal attributes (Creswell, 2013; Galloway, 2005). After sending out invitations to informants, it was a time-consuming process to await their acceptance, negotiate a time and place for meetings and determine whether the respondents were relevant to the study.

Having interviewees who fit the relevant category is considered important because an interview is “a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study” (DeMarrais, 2004, cited by Merriam, 2009, p. 87). The interviews were conducted to identify, as Patton points out, what is “in and on someone else’s mind” (2002, pp. 340-341), and as issues cannot be captured through direct observations, such as feelings, thoughts, intentions, past situations, what other people think about their world and the meanings they give to it. However, it was acknowledged in this study that an interview is not a neutral way of collecting data but a conversation between two or more persons (Fontana & Frey, 2005) in which, given the postcolonial framework applied in this study, the interviewer was positioned as a ‘co-producer’ instead of a ‘producer’ of knowledge.

The interviews were allocated to all aforementioned groups of 37 participants, which is considered adequate for a qualitative social research (Creswell, 2013; Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013). The questions posed to them were semi-structured or open-ended to allow them to articulate their voice according to their views and thoughts (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). Unstructured interviews were also conducted in the early stage of the fieldwork to allow the researcher to become knowledgeable about each situation (Merriam, 2009). While semi-structured interviews were applied in formal and semi-formal situations, such as with
government officials or NGO members, the unstructured interview was more suited to informal situations, such as participating in activities or having small talks with indigenous communities and NGO members. In addition, while not all participant responses or comments were included in this thesis, pseudonyms were applied to each name mentioned for ethical reasons. However, it was realised that identification of the person might still have been possible for those familiar engaged in this issue, especially when connected to a name of an organisation, position, location and local terms. It should be noted that the images that are in this thesis that include research participants were approved by the participants for use as part of a process of gaining verbal permission to use the images of community activities. They were shown the images and agreed that they could be included as part of their self-representation or voice.

The observation process was conducted to document each participant’s activities, behaviours, interactions, physical environments and specific or esoteric symbols and meanings (Merriam, 2009). This information served to provide a context for interview-based data to strengthen its meaning, and more importantly, to triangulate the data. In the analysis process, the observation-based data was helpful to the researcher to find the ‘momentary creation’ of statements upon which the discursive practices were revealed (Andersen, 2003). In doing so, while observing the indigenous communities’ daily life, attention was also paid to relevant events held by NGOs, such as fieldwork, discussions, workshops and other relevant activities. This was achieved via invitations to attend such events.

Additionally, documents collected and analysed in this study included “anything in existence prior to the research at hand” (Merriam, 2009, p. 140). These were official records, letters, newspapers, government documents, historical accounts and other documentary forms, either written and visual considered as contributing to the understanding of discursive formation of indigeneity issues in Indonesia.

The overall process of this study followed the concept of a ‘revisiting method’ as conducted by Li, who stated:

*Revisiting offered insights that are hard to glean from one-shot research designs, whether based on surveys or ethnographic research. It enabled me to track subtle shifts in everyday ways of thinking and acting before they had settled into a ‘new normal’ that no longer seemed strange.* (Li, 2014, p. 4)

Differing from the conventional long-term field visit, this study adopted part of what Knoblauch (2005) called the ‘concept of focused ethnography’, which applied short-term visits. This study applied ‘data/analysis intensity’ instead of ‘experientially intensive’; ‘time intensity’ rather
‘than time extensity’; tape-recordings and transcriptions rather than merely depending on field notes, and focused on a specific topic. The concept of multi-sited ethnography, as proposed by Marcus (1995), was likewise embraced as this study, even though mostly conducted in a local region of South Kalimantan, was conducted in several sites relevant to the research with different intensities of engagement.

A more detailed explanation about how each group of participants became involved in this study follows:

**Engaging Meratus Dayak communities**

The Meratus people are a large group of local inhabitants of the Meratus Mountains living in smaller groups or communities. The term ‘community’ applied for the Meratus people in this study refers to the local concept of balai that represents each kinship and ancestral domain. Each community gives themselves a balai name. However, balai territories are not formally recognised within the state-administered territory as Indonesian’s lowest level of local territory is represented by desa (village). In reality, a desa contains several balais but with overlapping outer borders.

![Note: There are two types of balai: (i) balai with rooms attached surrounding it that function as the residences for each umbun (family) of the balai members (left picture); and (ii) balai that stands alone, separated from families’ houses and residences located nearby (right picture).](image)

**Figure 4.1 Meratus people’s balai or house of worship**

It is worth noting that since the term balai originally refers to the Meratus people’s traditional house of worship, it bears a vague meaning. The application of the term balai was actually a fallacious simplification for assuming the existence of a balai as implying the existence of a community that belongs to it. Based on the information the researcher obtained during his fieldwork, there were communities that did not have their own balai, therefore, it was possible for these people to join their neighbouring communities in holding rituals.
Radam (2001), in his extensive anthropological research about the Meratus people, applied *balai* as its original meaning of house of ritual. Likewise, Tsing defined *balai* as “a neighbourhood-maintained ritual hall” without inferring its representation of a community (1993, p. 64). The term suggested by Radam to represent both the Meratus people’s grouping and their traditional territories is *bubuhan* (2001, pp. 121-135). According to Radam, the Meratus people’s grouping into *bubuhan* (also defined as extended family) is essential since it functions as the main identity that its members identify themselves with (such as *bubuhan* Kiyu and *bubuhan* Batu Kambar) rather than with their each *umbun* (nuclear family). There is no clear explanation about how the term *balai* was initially used to represent a community except that AMAN and its NGOs network applied it as the basis of units of membership, which emphasised the existence of an ancestral territory. Therefore, despite its vagueness, the term *balai* is adopted in this study – instead of *bubuhan* – as further discussion emphasised NGO representation of the Meratus people.

Overall, seven *adat* or *balai* communities were visited in the Meratus mountains during the fieldwork period. Three *balai* communities: (i) Kiyu; (ii) Batu Kambar; and (iii) Datar Ajab/Penyadnyan Mula Agung were revisited three times during five to seven day stay for each visit. The revisiting process to the three sites was intended to provide insight into the people’s daily life, routine, dynamics and emerging issues that related to their long engagement with *adat* activism. Several local religious events or rituals were also attended.

*Balai* Malairs was revisited five times for two days each time. Different from the previous two sites, the visits to this community were directed towards meetings and events held by *Simpul Layanan Pemetaan Partisipatif* (SLPP or Unit for Participatory Mapping Services) with its NGO network to organise the community’s movement in preparing the necessities, such as documents and spatial maps for the state to recognise the *adat* territory through the local government’s issuance of *Peraturan Daerah* (Perda or regional regulation).

Three *balais* located in the same vicinity were visited over a two-day period: (i) *Balai* Tamburasak; (ii) *Balai* Macatur; and (iii) *Balai* Impun to observe the local government’s monitoring and evaluation activities for its resettlement program, *Pemberdayaan Komunitas Adat Terpencil* (KAT or Isolated Customary Community). It was interesting to note that despite its use of the term ‘community’, implementation of the program was based on a family approach, which meant that the housing program was based on the family unit, not the *balai* community. Each housing unit location was distributed into three groups of recipients living in
three balai communities. The database of program recipients also did not include the name of the balai, only desa (state-administered village).

The difference in frequency and duration of each visit among the sites was related to different characteristics of data gathered from each one, as explained above. It was conducted in this manner as each site was not to be compared with, as in a multi-case study. Rather, they were compounded as a whole representation about local communities living in Meratus Mountains as adat communities. Also, the characteristic of this inquiry process relied more on the developing dynamics that happened on the ground despite following its planned protocol.

Fifteen participants considered members of Meratus Dayak communities were involved in interviews conducted during the fieldwork. This number excluded conversations with other Meratus people from the sites that contributed to the enrichment of this inquiry. So, relevant information resulted from both observation and the conversations that were documented in field notes to be analysed and presented along with the data obtained from the interviews. Among the main criteria of expected interviewees were adults with knowledge or awareness of community involvement in adat movements. The interview participants were recruited from almost all seven balais but with different compositions in number, that is, four from Kiyu, three from Batu Kambar, four from Datar Ajab/Penyadnyan Mula Ada, one from Macatur, and three from Malaris. This difference resulted from the different needs of interview-based information. For example, in Balai Macatur where the government PKAT program was in its second year, the need for interviews was based more on exploring the experience of indigeneity. The description of the government program was available in the documentation and interviews held by the officials.

In general, the interview process showed that the local people tended to be open, feeling secure and even eager when the interviews were conducted in an informal manner, flowing through to small talk. The rigid application of the research and ethics procedure, while it worked, tended to result in opposite effects. While this study was an attempt to reveal postcolonial experiences, too much concern on what might be considered an academic procedure actually shows how disciplinary power embraces the effect of a ‘neo-colonialism’. Some interviewees were anxious in the beginning about their answers not meeting the interviewer’s expectation until they were convinced to be open and honest about what they wanted to say, even with the use of their local expressions. Small talk and jokes, despite irrelevant topics, were involved to make the process relaxed and natural.
In conjunction with the interviews, the observation process played significant roles in building the construction of findings about the communities within this study. While the interviews were aimed at exploring the subjectivity and knowledge/experience of indigeneity as part of discourses of the *adat* identity, the observation targeted more the practices that also contributed to its formation, such as daily activities including small talk, rituals, events, and cases related to the *adat* identity that happened during the fieldwork. One example relates to two Italian tourists with their local tour guide and porters who wanted to go on a trekking expedition on the day when local *adat* rules prohibited anyone from entering the forest, resulting in a dispute between the tourists and their guide. This situation is included in this study as part of the indigeneity experience.

The decision for repeat visits to the sites as opposed to one extended visit provided an advantage in terms of building better emotional and social relations with community members, as it created a time-to-time strengthened feeling of acceptance, trust and familiarity with the people. Another benefit of this method, as expressed by Li (2014), was that between each visit the researcher was able to keep track of, reorientate and reflect on the direction of the study as it progressed, bearing in mind that the realities found in the field are possibly out of one’s control and new questions tend to arise. However, this method can prevent the researcher from capturing deep ethnographic data that results from a long and intense engagement with the participants. Fortunately, this study is not aimed at gathering extensive ethnography data; rather, its aim is to collect discursive formations or aspects that contribute to the construction of indigeneity among communities.

*Working with NGO activists*

In inquiring into the discourse of the indigenous movement, this study involved NGOs working on indigenous issues in South Kalimantan. The preliminary research identified that networks of informants should be expanded to include environmental NGO networks because they gave serious concern to recognising *adat* communities in South Kalimantan. WALHI (*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia* or Indonesian Forum of Environment), a prominent and well-known environmental NGO in Indonesia, has had a lengthy involvement in *adat* movements in South Kalimantan, along with other local NGOs. Despite its different organisational identity as a societal organisation (*organisasi masa*) rather than a NGO, AMAN, represented by its regional chapter of South Kalimantan, is included within this network.

However, not all NGOs working on indigenous issues in Meratus are directly involved in this study, as the fieldwork tried to focus on sites with direct encounters between *adat* communities
and NGO activists. The fieldwork took place mainly within the work areas of LPMA and SLPP. While LPMA had been working with Meratus communities in the eastern and western sides of the Meratus Mountains, this study is focused only on its works on the western side, especially in two balai communities, Balai Kiyu and Balai Datar Ajab/Penyadnyan Mula Ada.

Meanwhile, SLPP worked with balai communities in the sub-district of Loksado, Hulu Sungai Selatan District. Balai Malaris was the site chosen as it functioned as the meeting point where SLPP encountered other balai communities spread out across the sub-district of Loksado. SLPP is actually a regional representative of a national NGO network named Jaringan Kerja Pemetaan partisipatif (JKPP or Network for Participatory Mapping) based in Bogor, West Java. Within this national network, SLPP of South Kalimantan works on assisting adat communities around the Meratus Mountains to create their own spatial map of their customary territories.

Apart from local NGOs, the inquiry process also included a national level organisation, BRWA (Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat or Ancestral Domain Registration Agency) concerned with attempts to register adat communities with their ancestral domains (in the form of physical maps) and histories. BRWA is an independent body of AMAN aiming to present data from adat communities across Indonesia to the government as part of advocacy for the recognition of masyarakat adat in Indonesia. It was a coincidence that during the same period of the study’s fieldwork, BRWA was working on a project with SLPP to facilitate adat communities in Loksado and propose the local government’s legal acknowledgment of their existence and rights via the issuance of a regional regulation or act.

This study covers important stages of the process that provide rich information about how an adat identity discourse was built through activism, such as public discussions, meetings, and workshop. It explains the reason why data gathering from Meratus communities in Loksado was predominantly about observing this process instead of observing interviews or daily activities. The discussions held in several meetings were also tape-recorded with the permission from the committee or person in charge of the events.

Overall, a further cohort of 13 activists from different NGOs working on indigenous issues at the national and local levels were interviewed. The NGO activists involved in the study were not strictly based on the legal formal definition of an NGO as some were members of the
AMAN\textsuperscript{3} board, whose members also identified themselves as members of the \textit{adat} community. Some participants from this NGO activist group, for instance, can be simultaneously identified as members of \textit{adat} communities as they live and work under both categories. This applied also to the previous category of \textit{adat} community members. The participant grouping of this study generally represented the divide between those who live with their traditional culture and those who work within the modern activism culture. This shows how \textit{adat} can be fluid in its identity and loosely considered within different contexts.

The observation process was also conducted throughout the mobile and revisiting method to capture how NGOs worked with the communities. Events such as public discussions, \textit{balai} community meetings and small group discussions were held by NGO activists in different places during the fieldwork period. Some were scheduled while others took place randomly. A further aspect of the research was the analysis of relevant documents collected from the events, NGO archives and distributed publications. This complex data created a wholeness of the discursive formation constructed through \textit{adat} movements embraced by the NGOs.

**Finding the state’s discourse**

Involving government sectors was unavoidable as indigeneity discourse had arisen as a response to the dominant state’s discourse of non-indigeneity. The state’s disapproval of the emerging indigenous activism in Indonesia, while maintaining the colonial legacy of \textit{adat} community categorisation in a number of legal documents, had presented ambiguity. This study was set to unravel the complex state discourse that unintentionally served the constitution of indigeneity discourse.

Determining the right path towards the state’s discourse of \textit{adat} identity was not a straightforward process. There were numerous government sectors or agencies that could be associated with indigeneity issues or the existence of \textit{masyarakat adat} in Indonesia at the central and regional levels, such as environment, forestry, agrarian and spatial planning, law and human rights, home affairs and social affairs. This reflected the complexity of the state’s discourse of \textit{masyarakat adat} in Indonesia.

\footnote{AMAN is legally and formally a societal organisation (\textit{organisasi masa}) based on Law Number 17 (2013) regarding societal organisations, which means it was established as an organisation consisting of communities that identify themselves as an \textit{adat} community; its existence is expected to be the representation of \textit{adat} communities.}

\textit{Chapter 4 Developing an Analytical Strategy}
This research selected the social affairs sector (Ministry of Social Affairs for the central level sector and the Provincial Office of Social Affairs of South Kalimantan for the regional sector) for interviews. The reason being that, despite its minor representation within discourses of Indonesian indigeneity, it was the only sector that had run a tangible long-established program concerned with *adat* communities in Indonesia that had left a deep-rooted image of the local communities as isolated and backward (Abel, 2005; Persoon, 1998). This by no means left other relevant sectors (mentioned above), but placed emphasis on identifying how the meaning of indigeneity had been produced and reproduced by a discursive formation that the Ministry of Social Affairs had constructed through one of its mainstream and long lasting programs, despite changing the name several times to PKAT (*Pemberdayaan Komunitas Adat Terpencil* or Empowerment of Isolated Adat Communities). Meanwhile, relevant policies from other sectors, at the national and regional levels (South Kalimantan province) were included as elements that contributed to the state’s discursive formation of the *adat* identity in Indonesia.

**Fieldwork sites**

It has been explained previously that this study raises issues of indigenous movements around the Meratus Mountains in South Kalimantan province, indicating that fieldwork took place mainly around the area, although a visit to Jakarta for interviews with activists and government officials working at the national level took place. This sub-section explains the fieldwork sites where the researcher conducted interviews and process observations about the life of the Meratus people. There were also sites outside the Meratus Mountains where the researcher visited for interviews with NGO activists and government officials, as well as attending several events relevant to the study.

The fieldwork sites in the area of Meratus Mountains were situated within the administrative territory of two neighbouring districts: (i) Hulu Sungai Tengah (HST); and (ii) Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS). While another seven districts exist that share their administrative territories around the Meratus Mountains where other *balai* communities live, there are specific reasons for choosing the sites within the territory of the two districts. In HST, the *balai* communities are spread around the administrative territory of two sub-districts: (i) Batang Alai Timur; and (ii) Hantakan that can be referred to as having represented an intense indigenous activism in Meratus in the late of 1990s through the Meratus Alliance Movement against a land swap plan by the local government in conjunction with a timber company (Chapter 6). Meanwhile, in HSS, *balai* communities live within the administrative territory of one sub-district, Loksado. The researcher was fortunate to discover that during the fieldwork period, the *balai* communities in Loksado were just beginning to work with several local and national NGOs in
an effort to propose a legal draft for state recognition of their adat territories (Chapter 6). Therefore, fieldwork sites within the HST and HSS districts represent the history and current indigenous movements in Meratus. Table 4.1 lists the fieldwork sites (balais), locations of desa (village), kecamatan (sub-district) and kabupaten (district) and names of surrounding balais located within the same village.

Table 4.1  List of fieldwork sites (balai)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balai</th>
<th>Village (Desa)</th>
<th>Sub-district (Kecamatan)</th>
<th>District (Kabupaten)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kiyu*</td>
<td>Hinas Kiri</td>
<td>Batang Alai Timur</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Tengah</td>
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<td>Batu Kambar*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haraan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Datar Ajab/Penyadnyan Agung Mula Ada*</td>
<td>Hinas Kanan</td>
<td>Hantakan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Batu Kiting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munjal Pagat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tambu Rasak*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Haruyan Dayak</td>
<td>Hantakan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Macatur*</td>
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<td>Impun*</td>
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<td>Pantai Binuang</td>
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<td>Bindang</td>
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<td>Biyang</td>
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<td>Kumuh 1</td>
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<td>Kumuh 2</td>
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<td>Mianggasan</td>
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<td>Ambih</td>
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<td>Kaba</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miyulan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Datar Rambak</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Malaris*</td>
<td>Lok Lahung</td>
<td>Loksado</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Selatan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manutui</td>
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<td>Manakili</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loa Panggang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Makunting</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Sites visited
Note: The sites are situated within two neighbouring districts territory: (i) Hulu Sungai Tengah (HST); and (ii) Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS). The balai territories where the fieldwork was conducted are located within the villages represented by the light blue areas, that is, Hinas Kiri, Hinas Kanan, Haruyan Dayak and Lok Lahung.

Figure 4.2 Map of fieldwork sites in the Meratus Mountains
Note: Data collection was a mobile process conducted predominantly between the areas of community sites around Meratus Mountains and the cities of Banjarmasin and Banjarbaru where local NGO activists and government officials were based.

Figure 4.3 Map of fieldwork areas in South Kalimantan Province

Part 3: Analytical strategy

Technical processes

In general, referring to Bryman and Burgess (2002), the analysis process can be divided into two phases: (i) during the fieldwork period; and (ii) after the fieldwork. In the fieldwork period, the analysis process was more dynamic than the collection process because it changed according to the development of issues being studied. Situations that were out of the
researcher’s control were constantly changing and emerging despite a well-prepared and planned process. Under these circumstances, the researcher analysed the situation by reflecting on what had eventuated. Such reflections became part of the fieldwork notes based on capturing the observed situations, occurrences or processes, and the researcher’s feelings or impressions about other people or situations that emerged, along with the interaction process or as a result of observation. The involvement of such a reflection helped to anticipate emergent changes and to designate the direction of the study development.

Meanwhile, after the data collection process came the analysis process, which included coding, categorising and theorising. Data coding and categorising, especially for interview-based data, was processed within NVIVO for the purpose of organisation. This was conducted after the researcher manually transcribed the digitally recorded interviews. Despite taking time, self and manual transcription gave benefited the researcher by helping him to recall and connect the past process of data collection. Certain feelings or emotional expressions that could be best captured by me as the interviewer also became a consideration in doing the transcribing. For the same reason and because some interviews were conducted using the local dialect of the Meratus people, the researcher translated the interviews into English.

Primary themes for the analysis in this study emerged from three data sources: (i) interviews; (ii) observation; and (iii) documents, all processed to complement and enhance each other. The categorising process from which the themes developed was conducted according to each participant’s grouping (local community, NGO activist or government official). However, in themes developed in the data chapters, three groups of participants and three types of data sources were not strictly separated, and in some places, were mixed and/or triangulated to create consolidated themes and different treatments, portions and emphases so they contributed to each theme. For example, in Chapter 5 where the broadest space is dedicated for local community voices, most of the findings are presented through themes derived from the interviews. Still, other data sources were inevitably included, not to mention that some of the participants can be categorised as both community member and NGO activist. Meanwhile, Chapter 6 displays a more mixed and dynamic composition of participant and data sources while the emphasis is on the exploration of NGO activism. In general, this process demonstrates that between the researcher and data, there was “creative interplay” based on the researcher’s “analytic ability, theoretical sensitivity, ability to think about data in different ways, and sufficient writing ability to convey the findings” (Strauss & Cobin, 2008, p. 852).
Basically, the process of constructing themes and sub-themes followed an inductive approach or was based on data instead of an a priori approach or based on the researcher’s theoretical preconception (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). This was conducted from the beginning as this study was aimed at exploring and giving the broadest space for the participants, especially the Meratus people, to voice their opinions. However, some themes were also extracted from data using an a priori approach as mentioned in the reflexivity section in an early section of this chapter. Before the fieldwork, the researcher had preconceptions influenced by theories, information or experiences, referred to by Strauss and Corbin (2008) as ‘theoretical sensitivity’ by which a researcher can notice, reveal and explain ‘hidden’ important meanings or messages while she or he becomes immersed with the data.

**Focus of analysis**

The focus of analysis was on statements found from data sources, namely interviews, observation and documents as the target of a Foucauldian discourse analytical strategy to find the regularity in their irregularity or to construct their connections to each other to reach a discursive formation (Andersen, 2003). The findings resulted from such a conceptualisation, which were then explored and discussed using further theories derived from a postcolonial framework.

The use of an analytical strategy refers to Andersen’s (2003) conceptualisation of Foucauldian discourse as one that addresses epistemological issues and questions. Andersen explains that epistemology is “basic assumptions about the precondition of cognition of the world”, which is differentiated from ontology, “basic assumptions about the world and the being of the world” (2003, p. xi). In other words, the former is concerned with ‘how’ something has been made into being, asking the question: *How has something come into being?*, while the latter is more concerned with ‘what’ the meaning of something is, therefore, the question is: *What does it mean that something exists?*  

Thus, the questions addressed in this study were: *How has indigeneity been made/constructed among the Meratus people?* and/or *How have the Meratus people been represented to construct their indigenous identity?* Such questions reveal the constructivist nature of this research that attempts to explore the precondition of indigeneity. The use of an analytical strategy is claimed to better fit these kinds of epistemological questions rather than what is considered as ‘methodological’ steps that mostly aim to address ontological issues (Andersen, 2003).
Instead of conducting a discourse analysis, this analytical strategy is ‘borrowed’ to serve the employment of postcolonial analysis, which is central to this study. The discursive formation of indigeneity constructed through what is counted as statements is then explored using a postcolonial framework (Chapter 1) that consists of theories illuminated by the concept of cultural hybridity. These statements, as explored earlier in this chapter, were not found in a form of an already established structure but intentionally connected to construct their discursive regularity.

The concept of cultural hybridity derived from Bhabha (1994) was adopted to enable this study to perceive indigeneity as a construction of meaning built from the constellation of dispersed statements. It is this constructed regularity that was explored further using postcolonial theories to reveal ‘power relations’ that exist in it (Chapter 1). The theory of subjectivity/subjectification functions to explicate the complex power relations in which the subjected is not simply imposed with a new identity, but actively involved in its process of formation, being positioned in a tense line that polarises the concept of ‘agency’ and the ‘other’. The theory of identity/identification provides a tool to analyse how power relations emerge in identity formation that is built not merely through narrative of primordiality but also a positioning process to fit with changing discourses. Subalternity and representation were put in a pair to reveal how the concept of being in existence or present (for the subaltern) was negotiated through competing ideas of ‘giving a voice’ and ‘giving a space’; interrogating power relations borne in representations made through dominant discourses.

**Summary**

This research is primarily based on a field study that insisted on dynamic and developing processes, with a view that all steps taken could not be rigidly simplified into a set of methodological procedures. Therefore, instead of merely describing technical processes of data gathering and analysis, it was essential to provide a foundational concept. Foucault’s concept of discourse was chosen as the basis for designating the inquiry process, which led to the conceptualisation of this study as an analytical strategy instead of a methodological one. Moreover, emphasising on the essential nature of this study that is derived from epistemological questions about discursive indigeneity, the use of an analytical strategy was seen as more appropriate.

Furthermore, the analytical strategy applied provided a larger space for the operationalisation of a postcolonial framework that comes with more specific theories. Being illuminated with Bhabha’s (1994) theory of cultural hybridity, which refuses simplification of dominant-
subordinate relation, the analysis is focused on revealing complex power relations borne in the construction of local communities’ indigenous identity. Subjectivity/subjectification, identity/identification, and subalternity and representation are the three major postcolonial theories employed in this study. An explanation of how the analytical strategy works for the issues raised in this study is reflected in Chapters 5 and 6, and more robustly in the discussion chapter (Chapter 7).
Chapter 5 builds a narrative of the further construction of indigeneity from the knowledge that emerged from research participant interviews and the researcher’s process observations. The findings that are reported in this chapter respond to key research questions and reflect growth in the researcher’s understanding and knowledge of indigeneity in the communities that are the focus of the study. The narrative was constructed by using data gathered through a flowing process that developed during the fieldwork period, following the ‘where’ and ‘how’ as the meaning of indigeneity emerged and went through its discursive formation. Plans and protocols concerning groups of participants involved in the study and key questions were asked to each of them. However, a list of names prior to the fieldwork commencing did not exist except that several key informants needed to link the researcher to the potential participants. Moreover, emerging dynamics of local issues and occurrences found during the fieldwork strongly drove the journey of this inquiry.

The observation of occurrences and events that contributed to the discursive representation of the Meratus people’s identity had also enriched information pursued through interviews. How the Meratus people engaged with their daily routines and special events of religious rituals provided strong impressions about local cultural identity. At the same time, responses to infringement of customary rules, acceptance of (and to certain extent, insistence on) the state’s development intervention and ways to cope with local disputes also revealed the emerging challenges facing the local people’s representation of indigeneity.

Based on interviews with participants from the visited sites and observations of their daily practices, this chapter generates themes that are intended to open up spaces for the Meratus people’s voices in the exploration about their identity. Subsequently, the local people’s self-representation of indigeneity or as masyarakat adat is discussed. However, imbued with the Foucauldian concept of discourse, this study also relies on a presentation of contexts surrounding (and contributing to shaping) the important issues raised and to connect various statements from which meanings are constructed. Therefore, before delving into the Meratus people’s thoughts and voices, a broader historical and socio-political context is presented. The state’s construction of identity of local ethnic minorities, especially through resettlement
programs, is a focus as it provides a robust socio-political description of how the Meratus people identify and represent themselves.

A more specific inquiry starts with the exploration of the Meratus people’s self-positioning within the surrounding dominant socio-political system. This section is concerned with how local people describe themselves, which this study found to reflect more about their positioning in response to the surrounding dominant society and the state system. This leads to the next section on subjectification, which is about how the Meratus people subjectify themselves into certain identities and roles through the process of ‘othering’. The following section explains the Meratus people’s views about their use of the term masyarakat adat as their identity through which this study seeks to understand its internal construction. The last part of this chapter contains a report on the dynamics and possible decline of Meratus customary traditions. Generally, the themes that emerge reveals the complexity of what has been currently conceived and claimed as masyarakat adat, which refers to the concept of indigeneity.

**Meratus people under the state’s construction of local ethnic minority identities**

As discussed earlier in this thesis, current indigeneity issues in Indonesia are situated mostly within the problems of land disputes and human rights in which law has appeared as the leading sector. This emergence of indigeneity issues needs to be located within the past history of the state’s positioning of local communities to which indigenous identities have been applied. Under the control of the Indonesian postcolonial government, the existence of local communities had been mostly the concern of the Department of Social Affairs. According to Persoon, this department was among the earliest bureaucracy to be established for dealing with local communities, then called suku-suku terasing (isolated ethnic groups):

*Shortly after Indonesian independence, when the bureaucracy for the new nation was created, the Department of Social Affairs was put in charge of all tribal people in the country. Initially the focus was on a limited number of small ethnic groups living in extreme poverty; some Sumatran groups like the Kubu and the Mentawaians were mentioned in particular.* (1998, p. 287)

Persoon (1998) added that it is through its resettlement programs that the identity of an isolated community was constructed and implanted widely across the country. Since then, terminology applied to target communities changed several times until the current term of ‘Komunitas Adat Terpencil’ (KAT or remote adat community) was officially introduced in 1999. It is worth noting that the Department of Social Affairs’ decision to change the term ‘isolated community’
to KAT was influenced by the emerging political transition from autocracy to democracy after the collapse of the New Order Regime and the rise of an indigenous movement signified by the AMAN congress in 1999. In an interview for this research, a senior government official of the department said:

Within the government’s terminologies commonly used in programs, the term ‘masyarakat terisolir’ [isolated community], used to be used by people from the transmigration department at that time, there had also been the term ‘masyarakat terbelakang’ [backward community]. We [the department of social affairs] used the term ‘terasing’ [alienated or isolated] at the time ... ‘masyarakat terasing’ [isolated community]. Then, in 1999, the political situation in Indonesia changed, people became more open in showing their aspirations, including criticizing the use of the term ‘isolated ethnic group’ or ‘isolated community’, which was regarded as discriminatory. So, the government opened itself to input. This happened along with the congress of ‘masyarakat adat’ held in Hotel Indonesia, in 1999. Then, it was agreed that the term be changed to ‘komunitas adat terpencil’. (Budi, government official)

The implementation of the resettlement program around the Meratus Mountains that commenced in the 1970s was named Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Terasing (PKMT or welfare development program for isolated community). Radam (2001) pointed out that up until 1980 11 PKMT settlements around Meratus had been established by the government. The first PKMT settlement built in Meratus in 1974 was located in an area that incorporated two kampongs or balai, Atiran and Batu Kambar where 100 wooden houses were built for 100 umbun or families from two villages, Pambakulan and Hinas Kiri. It is important to note that the resettlement program was basically based on family units instead of local community groups, such as balai in Meratus. The families entitled to each house were chosen based on a set category developed by the government. An overview of the local indigenous social groups, as in the new settlement, shows that they were mixed with families from different balais and even ethnic backgrounds, such as Banjarese. This was the reason why many such programs did not run as expected when families chose to return to the bubuhan or balai community they originated from (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1  Early resettlement program recipients from the 1970s to 1980 around Meratus Mountains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Kampong/Balai of origin</th>
<th>Number of umbun (family)</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Atiran</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Banyu Panas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>All families returned to their balai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The resettlement program followed the ‘ex situ’ model by which people were moved outside their original community to places regarded as more accessible to public services. It was through such a model that local communities were to be integrated into mainstream society, as they were seen as estranged or isolated. This motive for resettlement or housing programs was expressed by a government official interviewee:

*In the past, there were some of them [were moved outside] as in our program for the isolated community there were two models, ex situ and in situ. The ex situ model means we resettled the people living in remote areas to the locations nearby the more developed communities ... outside their territory ... Building houses for them was part of an empowerment strategy so that we could teach them how they were suppose to live as, say, civilised humans who should have an appropriate place for living ... It was their backwardness that we targeted, so that these isolated people could benefit from development. (Iwan, government official)*

In more recent KAT programs, this ‘ex-situ’ model of resettlement is no longer applied in Meratus. However, the concept of integrating the target communities into an ideal dominant society was maintained, associating the local people with backwardness for holding onto their traditional way of life. In fact, this had situated the communities within a complex idea of being
indigenous under a hegemonic modern system that tended to absorb them into mainstream society. The KAT program was built on the assumption that the target communities are excluded, not only from access to public services, but also from their sociocultural life, compared to mainstream society. The resettlement program and its extended services were seen by the government as a form of empowerment for the local people so that they could gain skills in their own development and become equal with the dominant society instead of experiencing marginalisation:

> Our concept is not to marginalise them, we rather develop a program to facilitate them with skills in order that they could participate in many activities, to make them become empowered, self-reliant, and finally equal with other common societies. So, it is not a form of marginalisation … The people also acknowledged that they need the support. They did not feel they are intimidated by our program. (Iwan, government official)

The PKMT resettlement program was renamed *Pemberdayaan Komunitas Adat Terpencil* (PKAT or empowerment of isolated customary community) in 1999, a program directed at communities with specific criteria. In 2014, Presidential Regulation Number 168 (2014) went through many changes in its terminology and definitions, including KAT being defined as a group of people bound with geographical, economic and/or sociocultural unity and (identified as) poor, isolated and/or prone to socioeconomic problems. The specific criteria were: (i) poor access to basic social services; (ii) closed community, homogenous, and dependent on natural resources (to meet daily needs); (iii) being marginalised in both rural and urban areas; and/or (iv) live in outer state border areas, coastal areas, outer border islands and being isolated.

![A location of a KAT resettlement in the Meratus Mountains](image)

**Figure 5.1** A location of a KAT resettlement in the Meratus Mountains

In Meratus, the KAT program was launched within a state-administered territory of villages while accommodating the existence of local customary territories in its implementation and
considering the past failure of an ex situ model of resettlement around Meratus. For example, in the Haruyan Dayak village, which is one of the fieldwork sites of this study, there were three settlement areas distributed into three balais located within the village. The number of houses in each settlement site was based on the number of recipient families in each balai.

However, the term balai was not officially stated in government documents that showed the recapitulation of the KAT programs. Rather than emphasising the adat identity of the community, the KAT program worked on identifying target communities with three classifications; (i) belum diberdayakan or ‘not empowered yet’ that refers to potential target having not received the program; (ii) sedang diberdayakan or ‘in the process of empowerment’ that refers to a target community still in the ongoing program that lasts for three years; and (iii) sudah diberdayakan or ‘already being empowered’ that refers to a post-program target community. This affirmed that the KAT program was basically intended to adjust target communities with the broader mainstream society.

Furthermore, the term ‘KAT’ had developed as an identity by which the target communities were attached to and placed them in a representation of backwardness for being isolated. While it had adopted the term adat, it did not emphasise the use of the word as the main substance of the program. KAT perpetuated the concept of an isolated community embraced in its former terminology of suku terasing or masyarakat terasing that had long ago been embedded within government institutions (Duncan, 2004a), as it had been applied nationally. Despite the current widespread use of the term masyarakat hukum adat or masyarakat adat, the ‘isolated community’ contributes to the foundational concepts for the state’s views concerning local ethnic minorities, such as the Meratus people.

**Self-positioning of the Meratus people under a dominant socio-political system**

This section captures descriptions offered by the participants about their communities that emerged through the interviews as direct and indirect responses to questions asked. There were different expressions used by research participants in describing the conditions of their communities. Such views were expressed with varying levels of emotion in the exploration and articulation of the people’s condition. Some expressed a plain, short illustration of their daily routine and some had a hint of desperation about their low capacity in various aspects while others were quietly angry about their marginalisation. This variety of expression was mixed, overlapping among and between the research participants.
Based mainly on the local participants’ views, this section reveals how the Meratus people tended to represent their identity based on the standard they adopted from their dominant society counterpart. The focus was on how identity formation occurred through the local minority communities’ positioning of their social differentiation under the hegemonic normality of the state and mainstream society. This study reveals that, despite their expression of resistance against their marginalisation by the state, Meratus communities have absorbed mainstream standards by (i) positioning themselves as ‘development actors/participants’; (ii) doing ‘self-othering’ as inferior group; and (iii) constructing a binary self-identification that follows a developmental progress narrative that positions the mainstream group as the source of knowledge.

![Figure 5.2 Morning activities of a balai community in the Meratus Mountains](image)

**Development actors and participants**

In general, the narratives of the local people followed what might have represented the narrative of development and progress through which the Meratus people compared themselves with, that is, their dominant counterparts’ values or standards. Hence, the participants expressed interested about issues of concern, such as limited economic resources, poverty, poor human resources, and the lack of infrastructure. In an attempt to provide a general description of the community
he lives in, Awat Sawa, an elder of Balai Datar Ajab, chose to explore the daily routine of local people earning a living:

The first thing is about earning a living. There is one kind ... two actually, cultivating and, another one, which is to earn money, rubber tapping. There is no other alternative, there is no mining, no coal mining here. So, only rubber tapping [the way to earn money], except if there is someone who wants to pay for farming jobs, we can take the payment from it. So, there are two ways to earn a living here, firstly, rubber tapping, secondly, farming. The economy in Hinas Kanan is all about that. (Awat Sawa, community participant)

While describing what local people had to do to survive, Awat Sawa expressed his views about the limited resources that could be found in Datar Ajab. This conversation was further explained about the price of rubber had become significantly lower, resulting in local farmers reluctant to work in rubber tapping. Awat Sawa had a warung (a small kiosk selling daily needs) at the front part of his house, trying to provide a better future for himself and his family, but so far, he felt that it was not profitable. However, his business has provided him with opportunities to meet and chat with those who enter his kiosk to purchase goods.

It was also reflected by some participants that limited funds were perceived as poor human resources when describing their community members. Such term was not used as a specific, technical term with standardised measurement, but applied as a general term that the participants had absorbed from their broadening interactions with modern life to communicate their conditions to outsiders from the dominant Indonesian society.

Pak Panin, another elder in balai Datar Ajab, explained:

People in Hinas Kanan, so far, based on my observation for years, were not rising nor declining in terms of economy, societal life or forestry. We’re just stagnant. I think it’s firstly due to poor human resources and, secondly, low income. Both of them often become the sources of problem. (Pak Panin, community participant)

While humbly explaining his lack of formal educational, Pak Panin described his broad network of governmental and non-governmental organisations that had benefitted him while participating in seminars and training.

Affirming such a view was a youth from Kiyu, Asmi (community participant), “We can see that the adat community in Meratus have poor human resources, in many aspects, education, information, making decision when dealing with an issue and so on”. Asmi is among a few
youths from Balai Kiyu who completed a bachelor’s degree from a university in Banjarmasin. He had also been actively participating in social activism with local and national NGOs concerned with indigenous and environmental issues in Meratus.

These views reflect how the local people with broad networks had adopted and applied dominant standard values of progress to assess their own communities, even by using the imported term ‘human resources’. Any issue not within the standard for development tended to be perceived as undeveloped. Following this narrative has positioned the local people to be actors of development who see themselves as tertinggal (left behind). Awat Jumar (community participant), an elder of Balai Kiyu, who appeared to be always critical and cynical about whom he perceived as people or parties doing harm to local people, said, “Many of us here left behind. Why we left behind, because there is no electricity, no [proper] pathway constructed”.

Self-othering

A feeling of being ‘left behind’ resulted from being compared with the dominant society and being manifested in ‘self-othering’. Awat Jumar (community participant) was consistently concerned about how his community had been unfairly treated by local government and its apparatus. Regarding the issue on infrastructure, he added, “Until now, if we don’t do it ourselves, there will be nothing here. It can be seen from the pathway, the asphalt ended in [front of] the market. The village head just treated us as second class residents”. This describes how the Balai Kiyu community should have made their own steep soil pathway to reach Batu Kambar where the asphalt pathway that connect them with capital town in Birayang ends.

While marginalisation by external actors had positioned the Meratus people as ‘the other’, this position was internalised and expressed in a form of ‘self-othering’. The local communities accepted the external imposition of normality standards and hence, saw themselves as the inferior other with labels that signified backwardness. Awat Abun (community participant), another elder of Balai Kiyu, simply described his community in the following way, “We are orang bukit [hill people], ancient people, uneducated”. He expressed no burden when saying it but used an expression of accepting the negative stereotype that many people in Benua (the word used to name their Banjarese counterpart) used to describe the Meratus people. Describing themselves required the local people to use the normality standard of dominant Indonesian society, implying deficiencies.

The process of self-othering became more apparent when some of the participants described their communities in a way that reflected social distance by using pronouns such as ‘the people’
or ‘they’. Sani (community participant), a local who had been actively engaged with the indigenous movement for years said, “The people here have no idea about organisational rules, the people don’t know ... about politics, they tend to be innocent”. This statement was expressed within the broad context of recent efforts made by the Loksado communities’ with local and national NGOs to fight for government recognition of their status as adat or indigenous communities.

A construction of ‘innocence’ that positions the local peoples as the other was also provided by Sidi, a youth from Loksado, who was participating in the Loksado adat community recognition movement activities:

_I need to tell you something about the Kaharingan people, here, that the problem is that they do not know what their problem really is as they were concerned only with their daily routine. It is enough for them to know that tomorrow they could tap their rubber, tomorrow they could eat, tomorrow they could drink. Feels like there is no burden ... we realised that it is because people here could not think about that, there are issues about knowledge, education, and poor [quality] human resources._ (Sidi, community participant)

Inferiority emerged as a result of self-othering by the local peoples who adopted the dominant stereotyping by which the Meratus people believe they deserve the negativities.

**Binary self-identification as ‘old’ and ‘new’ generations**

Sidi represents the youth of Loksado communities who maintain a rising consciousness about indigenous activism. By engaging the activities of NGOs and working with local peoples in Loksado Sidi had significantly changed his views. Sidi (community participant) said, “My concern was only that tomorrow I could tap the rubber, cultivating, and that’s all, it’s enough to make me feel peaceful, like there is nothing to worry about”. Comparing his current views or consciousness of indigenous activism with the common local community’s tradition had created a gap where power relations emerged to constitute ‘other’. This was another type of self-othering that local community members have created, a binary of ‘old’ and ‘new’ generations among them.

Such a binary of ‘self-othering’ was also put forward by Maji, a young man living in Batu Kambar, Batang Alai Timur who had been actively involved in adat activism with local and national NGOs. He gave a description of the rising awareness among the current local community generation about the past unpleasant situation:
We are the victims of our past life cycle. What I mean is that our grandmothers and grandfathers never thought about this, about how to change, about how our civilisation could be comparable to people out there, how to get our own freedom. So, it is enough with our parents and grandparents to feel the bitter life of backwardness, being intimidated by policies and conditioned by the system, paradigm and so on. The current generation is rising, proving that the adat community can do something. (Maji, community participant)

Furthermore, the expression of resistance towards the state’s policies over the ‘old’ generation, as shown by Maji, does not mean detachment from ‘the people out there’ standard of normality and hence, keep seeing themselves as the ‘other’. The appearance of a number of local persons who had graduated from higher education was seen as indicators of the rise of the Meratus people, leaving behind the past history of ignorance:

In the past, our parents knew nothing. In the evening, when they came home, what they just did washing, have dinner and then go to sleep. In the morning they went somewhere, not realizing that were going to be evicted from their homes, the place where they used to sleep. Taken away by the policy makers. Nowadays, we can think about that as many of us went to school. It is not surprising now to know that in Julu [a balai located in a very remote area that can only be reached by walking and hiking up hilly tracks; it usually took a full day to get there from Kiyu for local people, but could be two days for outsiders] there are 2 or 3 persons already obtained their bachelor’s degree. In the past, it was hard to reach grade three of elementary school, let alone being graduated from higher education. (Maji, community participant)

Such views seemingly spread among the local youth, criticising their predecessors for being weak, powerless and uneducated. This form of binary self-identification as old and new generations also occurred when related to declining local traditions (explored later in this chapter). In contrast to the issue of ‘human resources’, criticism on traditional preservation was directed towards the youth for being negligent to adat and contaminated with modern life. Therefore, what was implied as the new generation’s ‘rising awareness’ might be more properly referred to the youth actively involved in indigenous activism with NGO activists.

Having what was perceived as better ‘human resources’, especially through education, was presented as the turning point of the existence of adat communities in Meratus. Self-identification of deficiencies based on dominant Indonesian society’s standard of normality was needed to show the existence of the locals’ identity to dominant surroundings, especially in Banjarese. Being marginalised by surrounding dominant groups seemingly led locals to continue absorbing the mainstream society’s standard for a ‘civilised’ life. The Meratus people required mainstream standards for gaining recognition of their identity and existence, which comes at a cost of positioning themselves as inferior.
This section is positioned as the underlying basic assumption of how Meratus communities had constructed their identity. The poststructural perspective embedded within this study, however, does not allow an assumption of objective identity as it was always a result of discursive formation (Hall, 1997b). The Meratus people’s identity formation emerged along with the state’s processes of marginalisation. It is where the process of subjectification occurs, that the Meratus people were not passive recipients of identity imposition, but to some extent, they actively acted to consolidate their existence and roles within an existing governmentalised dominant system. Further exploration of these understandings is the main concern of the next section.

**Subjectification of identity and roles**

A closer look at the Meratus people’s socio-historical experiences of marginalisation, in which broader political discourse interfered with the local cultural life of the communities, revealed a deeper insight into how their cultural identity as adat communities had been shaped. This is mostly about past experiences of the Meratus people under the autocratic regime of the New Order during the presidency of Suharto where the local state apparatus applied a strict surveillance system over any entities or social groups regarded as deviating from mainstream social values (Abel, 2005; Acciaioli, 2001a). The researcher’s interview questions with local participants were mainly based on deeply felt experiences of being suppressed, therefore, participants were able to express their views about the marginalisation of their cultural identities, which they did with great enthusiasm.

It was through exposing the stories of marginalisation that they found a way to explain their cultural identities. All of the participants who revealed this story shared similar expressions and feelings of fear. A particular focus was on how they dealt with the state apparatus, especially the police or the army. The threat of being caught (even for reasons they did not understand) and sent to jail had forced the local people to obey what was expected of them, even if it directly affected their cultural or traditional practices.

It is important to note that while this research is focused on marginalisation by the state, the core initiative is illuminated by the Foucauldian concept of ‘governmentalisation’, that is, identifying people as not merely becoming the object of, but participating in, the exercising of power. Bacchi and Goodwin (2016) called ‘subjectification’ through which people are subjected or shaped into particular roles or identities. In the case of the Meratus people, this section shows how communities have been subjected as practitioners of distinctive cultural practices, political voters and potential ‘program recipients’.
Practitioners of distinctive cultural practices

One of the stories told by Awat Jumar was about his experience of being criminalised for disobeying a local government’s policy of resettlement:

We established this settlement [in Kiyu] ... [then] we were relocated [from Kiyu] to Hinas Kiri [Batu Kambar], and being in Hinas Kiri we know that the land is not ours, so we thought that if we live in Hinas Kiri we could not do planting since people there wont give us land, for planting trees, coconut trees. So, we retained [our land] here [in Kiyu]. After that, I was reported [to the police] by the village head. I was then put in jail for retaining this kampong, for two hours and half in the police office’s cell. But I kept saying that no matter what I will keep living in Kiyu. It was the former head village, as the resettlement project contractor, who asked us to move there while we do not have land there ... having a house but we cannot plant trees as the landlords did not allow us ... it’s useless, we cannot plant our seeds ... So we thought better to build house in our own kampong ... Then I talked to the police chief, could we get land there? we will accept it [if we get land], if there is no land for us how could we cultivate crops, we cannot plant coconut trees in that place, how could we eat, how could we do farming ... I was freed then (Awat Jumar, community participant).

Awat Jumar’s story reveals the weak and vulnerable position of the local people in the past when faced with the state apparatus, given that prosecution was easily applied to anyone refusing to accept the government resettlement program. Similar stories were confirmed about how the Meratus people lived under the state’s surveillance over their traditions. The practice of Aruh rituals were strictly watched by state officials, especially the police. Awat Abun observed, “In former times, if we did not inform, ask for and get permission from the police chief, we could not hold Aruh. So, we really did it [ask for the permission]” (community participant).

Based on face-to-face interviews conducted during the fieldwork, many participants expressed strong views regarding their experiences of fear. On one occasion, Awat Abun said, “In the past time, we knew the shoes, the footfall of the shoes [of the military members] and thus made us run away for being afraid” (community participant). Similar expressions of fear also came from other participants:

We feared if he [the police] came to this kampong. There was only one person who was brave enough to accompany, just to make a conversation. Other people feared being punished, being put in jail ... In the past, we were really afraid even though we did not do anything unlawful (Awat Sawa, community participant).

During the New Order regime, we, adat communities, were afraid just to go out when there was a police or army nearby. If they said this thing belongs to the
government, it’s the government’s policy, or if there is a customary territory they want to claim, we just could do nothing (Maji, community participant).

In the past, not one of the adat communities dared [to fight], no one dared, being intimidated, ‘if you keep holding the rituals we are not responsible for the possible incidents’ [imitating what the police usually said]. That was what usually happened that made the elders afraid (Asmi, community participant).

The above quotes revealed how the state interfered deeply into the cultural life of the local communities and how it had become part of their cultural experiences as indigenous communities living under an autocratic regime. A further report of practices of extortion was expressed by Awat Jumar (community participant), “We were suppressed by the government in holding the rituals of Aruh, by the police, we must pay, must pay to get the permission”.

Awat Abun added:

When we wanted to hold a traditional ceremony, holding Aruh in Balai, we must get a license from the local police chief, from the sub-district level military headquarters. ‘So, you have to get a license from me to be able to conduct the rituals’ [imitating what the police/military officer used to say]. So, we have to pay, for instance, two million. (Awat Abun, community participant)

Such forms of state apparatus practices left memories and feelings of being restrained and marginalised:

Yes, we were ... always watched when holding the traditional rituals, by the security officers. We had to get a license. We felt like ... being restrained, being ... watched. That was the case. So, it was the security officers who indirectly controlled us [when conducting the rituals]. The adat communities were treated like ... how do you say it ... people said ... like being marginalised, being ignored. (Asmi, community participant)

The background stories that reflect feelings of being marginalised are part of the essential elements of how Meratus people identified themselves in relation to their surrounding dominant society and the state. They identified state officials being abusive towards their cultural practices as representing the state’s discriminatory policies that recognise certain dominant religions and formally attributed to the local community’s traditional belief system with the
term *Penghayat Kepercayaan*⁴, meaning ‘follower of local faiths’ (not a recognised religion) and previously identified with animism.

Against a backdrop of cultural practices being represented as distinctive elements of who the Meratus people are, the repression of cultural practices by the state affirmed marginalisation, and in turn, viewed cultural practices as central to their identity. In other words, state suppression of the local culture placed the Meratus people within a process of governmentalisation that produced a specific type of subject and, therefore, identity.

**Political voters and potential program recipients**

Experiences of marginalisation and discrimination continued until the post-authoritarian era through local political contestation that reached its peak in every regional election when political parties and candidates of regional leaders competed to win people’s votes. As explored in Chapter 3 regarding the rise of the indigenous movement in Indonesia, it is argued that the era of *reformasi* that came up with regional autonomy-based political system had prompted the growth of localities. These events should have produced positive opportunities for the Meratus communities to have their voices heard. But in reality, the people viewed it as another form of marginalisation as they had experienced becoming political commodities many times.

> We also felt that we had been sold. It happened in the times such as election periods when we were sought out. That was what had happened. Meaning that we were utilised [for political interest]. After he [the candidate] got the position, that’s it, we were neglected, only those in down areas got the attention. (Asmi, community participant)

> We once [talked] with the regent [candidate], ‘Sir, if you want to win and asked for votes, build for us asphalted road, just from the market to this location, it’s not long, just 2000 meters’. ‘Yes’, he responded, ‘in year 2014’. It did not happen. No more talk about it. (Awat Abun, community participant)

The people’s voice was heard in the form of a ballot box. However, this did not prevent them from hoping that a new candidate would fulfil his promises. In the last regional election held at

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⁴ *Penghayat kepercayaan* is seen as a cultural rather than a religious expression so that its registration – to be officially recognised by the state – is referred to the Ministry of Education and Culture instead of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. To be accommodated by public services, the followers were required to identify themselves with one of six ‘official religions’ written on their ID card (*KTP*). Fortunately, in 2017, a judicial review on articles in *Law on Population Administration* proposed by a number of the local faith followers was approved by the Constitutional Court, implying the state’s recognition of local faiths as being equal with the six dominant religions and being mentioned in the ID card. However, it is a long and complex process before this new policy can be implemented.
the time of this study’s fieldwork, adat communities gave their support to one of the candidates. Pak Panin was quite convinced that the promoted candidate would fulfil the adat people’s demands detailed in a written contract:

*If he was to win the election, there will be programs for the Balais, for the adat peoples. I saw that those six points are to be programmed through his vision and mission. So, we would not be confused with the programs we proposed since in the previous [governments’ administration] there had been really no program for adat peoples, for the Dayaks, no program at all for the Balais and their cultural revitalisation. So, he [the preferred candidate] intended to make all these as the government’s programs, meaning that [we are] recognised by the local government* (Pak Panin, community participant).

Political processes made the local people, with their distinctive cultural practices, a particular constituency. This illustrated that the state’s imposition of power over the local communities did not simply occur by force, but again, through the process of governmentalisation, producing Meratus subjects as political constituents and program recipients. Under the state hegemonic political system, the Meratus people represented as a local identity being shaped through the government’s social programs, flowing on from being constructed as a constituency.

Furthermore, this revealed the Meratus people’s subjectification despite their claim of distinctive localities by the state’s system of citizenry. The emphasis on distinctive localities, along with issues of marginalisation, was managed to voice the government’s ignorance of citizen rights to claim entitlement to programs that the dominant society received. “[We] *hope that the government’s concern about education in remote areas would make adat communities no longer marginalised. They are also Indonesian citizen, having rights to education ... and health* [services]”, said Maji (community participant). Awat Abun (community participant) expressed a similar view, “*Now, to have a hope from the government ... you know [expressing desperate] ... but we do hope [aid/programs] from the government because ... we are part of Indonesian citizens*”.

This process of subjectification into political voters and program recipients demonstrates that the Meratus communities’ self-representation of their local identity cannot be detached from the state’s governmentalisation. Claims of localities coexisted with issues of marginalisation by which citizenship equality and program entitlements are insisted upon to affirm indigeneity. This confirms the hybrid identity constructed through this representation.

Beyond the Meratus people’s subjectification of their entity into a local cultural identity and political processes is their absorption of the term *masyarakat adat*, therefore, implying self-
representation when using the term. This fundamental concern about cultural practices and identity is presented in this section. The emphasis is on how the imposition of a nationwide term is widely accepted in the local entity, being absorbed as if regarded as an organic name for the the local identity. The importance of this exploration (presented in the next section) is to reveal the internal construction of Meratus identities built within the emergent discourse of indigeneity.

**Meratus people’s self-representation as masyarakat adat**

How the Meratus people expressed and described their own identity as *masyarakat adat* is the concern of this section. The issue of identification is very much related to how they absorbed the term *masyarakat adat*, which refers to the widespread, even global, use of the concept ‘indigenous peoples’. In this inquiry, the underlying argument used is that the identification of the Meratus people as *masyarakat adat* was not derived from their native self-identification, nor was it imposed as a completely new identity. *Adat*, either in a terminological or practical sense, had played an integral part in the lives of Meratus people for some time. The debate that emerged was about the association or imposed equivalence of *adat* with ‘indigenous’ when the latter emerged from across the globe, assumed to be a general concept that could accommodate all forms of localities that might fit the discourses of indigeneity.

The Meratus people do not see that *adat* exists as an exclusive term for their own community but is supposed to belong to every community. “*Adat community exists along with its adat institution. Every community has adat, right?*”, said Sani (community participant) from Loksado. Adan from Kiyu (community participant) also stated, “*We are not [the only] community who has adat, it’s not only [our] community who posses adat, all [communities] have adat, that’s what I know*”. A similar view was expressed by Awat Angkiah (community participant):

> *Concerning adat, frankly speaking, to me, we all have adat, in Islam, Hindu, Christian, all have adat otherwise there will be disorder. Here is adat for living in balais, kampongs, villages. There are rules for practicing the hereditary adat. There are rules for the lands to avoid conflict among the families.*

*Adat* is believed to play an integral part in every community, without which people would live in disorder and conflict. Nonetheless, it is more than just a general term that applies to all communities. The Meratus people are generally strongly attached to their *adat* traditions, such as rituals and local rules, as inherited from their forebears. Adan (community participant) from Kiyu illustrated how the Meratus people conceived *adat*, “*So, adat, to us, consists of three*
[kinds], firstly adat for birth, adat for marriage ... they are adjusted to each [community’s] faith, [and adat for] death as well”. It was based on the concept that adat as traditional practices identity as masyarakat adat was confirmed, as expressed below:

I myself and the people here, not out there, yes, until this time, we realise that we are adat community. And ... why ... we feel that we are adat community, it’s because ... since long time ago we’ve been living here. But there are some of us...who no longer believe in the existence of adat community, it’s because of the influence from out there. (Asmi, community participant)

Yes, I feel it [being part of masyarakat adat]. A community should have its adat rules, so it [masyarakat adat] fits us as we have the adat rules, concerning how to conduct betandik [spiritual dancing rituals], the rituals of Aruh, how the adat, for instance, for conducting the big Aruh, the Bawanang ... that cannot be changed as they were hereditary. (Adan, community participant)

I think it [masyarakat adat] fits us, as there is no other better ways. Why I said so, it’s because it represents us, since we practice Aruh, the ritual of Balian, and therefore there are adat and ulayat. Adat is for humans and ulayat is for the lands. It’s basically about that, ulayat for the lands and adat for humans. If adat is gone, ulayat is also gone since there is no rule. So, adat community is about adat law, adat rules. (Awat Abun, community participant)

These statements suggest that applying the term masyarakat adat was accepted by the Meratus people because it suited important aspects of their lives, of which one relates to the locals’ hereditary belongingness to the land they lived on since time immemorial. This also shows how local rules had been long established to regulate human behaviour in relation to their surrounding natural environment. An interesting aspect about the acceptance of this identity is the feeling of being represented. While this reveals that the application of the term masyarakat adat does not come from the communities themselves, it is regarded as being able to represent the Meratus people’s localities within a broader society or even a state. In this sense, it can be said that the use of the term functions as a representation of existence within a context of a marginalised local identity.

Therefore, an interrogation of the Meratus people’s use of the term masyarakat adat in this section is required. Based on interviews with the local participants, at least two issues needed to be presented specifically: (i) adat identity and the issue of ‘naming’; and (ii) religious practices/rituals, livelihood and natural preservation. These two themes are important to explain how Meratus people imagine and represent their own local identity under the emergent discourse of indigeneity.
**Adat identity and the issue of ‘naming’**

This research found that the term *masyarakat adat* is not a native phrase of the Meratus people. However, it is worth noting that to question how the people feel and see themselves as *masyarakat adat* via the interviews during the fieldwork tended to result in easily predictable answers, such as: *Yes, we are* or *Yes, I feel it*. The answers came without further explanation of what the people understood from the term, not to mention a critical response to it. This gave an impression that the term had been taken for granted by the locals. Therefore, posing the question had caused some momentary discomforts for both the participants and the researcher as it somehow suggested doubt about their claims of the *adat* identity. However, more detailed questions on personal experiences and feelings about what made the Meratus people self-identify as an *adat* community and different from other communities facilitated participants to reveal a basic assumption of the use of the term.

> It’s [we’re] basically different since [the use of] *adat* cannot be changed, because *adat* people will always be *adat* people, [those who practice] *adat* is different from [those who] do not, so [we] remain using *adat*. The name of [our] religion is *Balian*, cannot be changed. Since we follow the government then we use the Indonesian term ... The truth is that we belong to *Balian* religion. The use of [term] *adat* was because we follow the government ... It’s not a problem. We are grateful for being called ‘*masyarakat adat*’ but it’s okay if we are not. *Still*, we have name *Balian*, our custom remains the same, cannot be changed (Awat Jumar, community participant).

A similar understanding saw the term *adat* as an imposition of the Indonesian language, implied by Asmi (community participant), “*Why we are called adat community, unlike people out there, because we obey and believe the [adat] rules ... they came from Balian, our faith ... So, adat is the Indonesian term for the rule.*”

Therefore, *adat* is seen as a term imposed by the state government that the Meratus people had adopted and absorbed. It became the term used to represent Meratus local traditions and faith. However, interestingly, it also means that the Meratus local identity or name was submerged under the dominant term of *adat*.

The matter of ‘naming’ included an investigation of what term the Meratus communities used to identify themselves in the past. This topic was mostly derived from the question: *How did you used to name your community?*, which was applied to encourage participants to genuinely express a self-description of their identity. The idea was to explore how they represented their identity, rather than intended to be an historical or anthropological question aimed at the truth of origin or authentic identity. This was illuminated by Anderson’s (1987) view that a community
is defined by how it is imagined rather than claims of its authenticity. The aim, therefore, was to explore the communities’ native words or terms to reveal how they are imagined, and then to represent their identity.

How some participants identified themselves with a name was challenging because it entailed the many possibilities they perceived as related to their past. Perceptions about identity revealed complex relations between faith, ethnicity, rituals and even the shapes of their Balai stages.

_Kaharingan. As far as I know, Dayak Tayangan. Orang bukit. We were known by others as orang bukit because we live in mountains. Well, it’s named Dayak ethnic, without [term] ‘ethnic’, just ‘bukit’ ... no more name ... Related to our Balian [rituals], we belong to Rungkah ethnic (Awat Jumar, community participant)._

_Orang Bukit ... Dayak, Dayak. In the past, Dayak Kaharingan, because we believe in Kaharingan. Balian. So, Dayak Kaharingan believe in Balian. Because it’s like what you saw last night [Aruh ritual held in balai led by a person who acted as a balian or shaman]. So, it is Balian. Mm...not, it is Kaharingan, Kaharingan Balian (Awat Abun, community participant)._

Awat Jumar and Awat Abun’s explanations revealed complex perceptions of the identity of their community. Kaharingan is the name for the local faith or religion that has been widely attached to Dayak people living across Kalimantan, along with the term orang bukit, which the Meratus people had been widely recognised by its surrounding society. Meanwhile, they could not detach their identity from their ritual balian conducted in every adat ceremony. However, the term ‘Balian’ is also applied to a person who has special abilities as a shaman who heals sick people by using traditional methods.

_Regarding the name, as far as I know, since a long time ago until nowadays, we are called Balian. It’s because we practice the rituals, betandik [a dancing ritual; part of Balian rituals]. Along with the time, there were changes that made us submerged in name ‘Dayak’. As there is similarity between Central Kalimantan and South Kalimantan that we eat pork, frankly speaking, so we made it as our resemblance, as our scope, that wherever we live [in Kalimantan], as long as we have no word ‘haram’ for eateries such as pork, means we belong to Dayak. (Asmi, community participant)_

_Our elders, in the past, called it Balian. Balian is like doctor, concerned with healing, people used to invite them for healing treatment. So, our traditional language is Dayak, but ... there was not ... Dayak is actually new. In the past, I never heard from the elders term ‘Dayak’ nor ‘tribal chief’. (Awat Abun, community participant)
It was beyond the expectation of this study that the participants would deconstruct their own widely known identity as Dayak people based on their memories about their past. However, central to the issue of naming, this reflects how the locals feel about changes that had occurred to their identity, including the names of the land they live on:

*The Meratus Mountain was formerly named Bantai Mountain, it was called Bantai because it is bantai, meaning ‘big’, big mountain. It was then changed into ‘Halau-halau’, so the name ‘Bantai’ was left behind. Then it became Meratus Mountain and the name ‘Halau-halau’ was left behind. So then the name Meratus Mountain became widespread across the country … even overseas. The two names were left behind. That was also the case with the name ‘Balian’. (Awat Abun, community participant)*

The issue of identity naming has placed *adat* at the centre of Meratus people’s lives. Beyond a question of authenticity, *adat* has become integral part of the Meratus people. An exploration of their identity, therefore, requires a closer look at how *adat* is conceptualised and practised in daily life.

**Religious practices/rituals, livelihood and environmental protection**

For Meratus people, *adat* is primarily linked to a concept of life wholeness, which comprises of faith or religion, livelihood and relationships with the natural environment. *Adat* also plays an essential role in shaping the life pattern of Meratus people through faith, rituals, daily activities (local economic life, social relation, local/traditional rules), folklore and attitudes towards their surrounding environment. All traditional practices are generally still well perpetuated while it cannot be denied that changes were also occurring, especially for the younger generation, along with a more intense interaction with the ‘outside world’.

During the interviews and based on the researcher’s observation, the Meratus people often used the term *adat* interchangeably with their local faith or religion, Kaharingan or Balian. It was evident that *adat* is mostly related to a belief about the existence of ancestors’ spirits living in the forest whose existence is believed to be the guardians of the forest, which functions as the main source of livelihood for the Meratus people. They also believed that the spirits are able to bring good and bad to the communities. This belief is strongly related to the concept of a traditional hereditary territory connected to *Balai* communities.

[The importance of] *adat* territory is, as I said before, is the sacred forest … if the forest has gone … people lose their ancestors whereas they pray for their ancestors, the guardians of the forest. In the sacred forest, there live our ancestors. So, we conduct the *adat* ceremonies such as after harvest, called Aruh
Bawanang or Mahanyar, we give [offerings] to the spirits of those who already passed away, the supernatural spirits. It is the time when we ask them for preserving our sustenance. If we cultivate and get the result of a hundred ‘balik’ [local measurement for rice grain] but then we do not give [offerings] to the spirits, not conducting Aruh and other required rituals, we might still have food to eat but there would be something following us. So, if the rice supposes to be enough for one year, it could possibly run out before the time. The Dayak people here call it ‘uhang’, means followed by ‘pidara’. Pidara is the local term for the ancestors’ spirits. Because there is no ritual for them, no Aruh, no offering, so they just take it from us. That is what we really concern with. Because in the forest, there live all the guardians. That is why as we conduct the shifting cultivation, there should be the replacement [for the used land] (Pak Panin, community participant).

Adat, especially religious rituals along their sacred objects, were conducted as offerings to the spirits from which the people asked for goodness, abundance of sustenance, and protection from any harm.

We give lamang [rice cake cooked in bamboo tubes] as an offering to honour the spirits of those already passed away. If we don’t do that, not conducting the ritual, we could be sick, they could take [something] we have, our cultivation could fail. So, we conduct the rituals, asking for preserving our sustenance we planted in the land, I mean the lands they formerly used for cultivation. So, we cultivate on the land they used it formerly, our grandmothers and grandfathers... it was our ancestors who had firstly opened the dense forest that was then inherited to us. (Awat Angkih, community participant)
The neglect or abolition of adat could cause disorder as the spirits would have no place to enter and spread their blesses.

*If adat is to be abolished it would give trouble to our ancestors’ spirits ... If adat to be abolished, where will the ancestors’ spirit go for the adat [rituals]? The ancestral spirits of our grandfathers and grandmothers, who live up there [in the hills], where will be the place to come down to? Where will they move? So, if we move they will lose their places. So, we are [here] to safe the places.* (Awat Sawa, community participant)

Such a view about adat amongst the Meratus people has led to a belief of interconnected aspects of faith, livelihood and the natural environment, as within the idea of wholeness, one affects the other. The neglect of one aspect could result in an adverse impact on, or even abolish, the others. What the participants tended to emphasise was the implication of their adat to their surrounding natural environment. Some were eager to convince the researcher that the local people’s traditions were in line with a mission of environmental conservation. “Basically, conserving adat means conserving the forest. It’s automatic,” said Pak Panin (community participant). A similarly strong statement was also made by Maji (community participant):

*The sacred religious ritual of the Balai communities is strongly related to their forest life. If the forest area of the Meratus is to be taken and concession is to be given to the investor to exploit, there will be no adat ritual to be conducted. No place for [rice] cultivation since the area would be totally used for plantation, which does not belong to adat communities, but other people. We would possibly become their labour.*

_Bahuma_ or the cultivation of rice paddies is the main activity of the Meratus people. A series of _Aruh_ ceremonies conducted every year involves prayer for the protection and abundant harvest of their rice paddy crop. _Aruh_ illustrates the sequence of the Meratus people’s activities of rice paddy cultivation, described as follows:

1. *Mamuja Tampa* or praying for metal-made tools used for cutting trees and farming activities held in their forging place.
2. *Manugal*, a ritual at the beginning of planting seeds in fields that have been cleared or prepared.
3. *Bapalas/basambu*, a ritual involving prayer for growing rice in the paddies in abundance.
4. *Bawanang/mahanyari*, the harvest ritual, the biggest event among other _Aruh_ to express gratitude to their ancestors’ spirits for the results of the harvest.
5. *Bapisit*, the last phase of an *Aruh* series within a cultivation period, representing the activity of storing the harvested grain.

There are even more *Aruh* rituals other than the five steps within a cultivation period. The above series, however, represents the main activities of *bahuma* conducted according to the traditional calendar. The Meratus people spend most of their time during the year on these cultivation activities, leaving approximately two months for *maharing* (spare time) or allowing the previous cultivated land to dry (Radam, 2001). The areas of *bahuma* are usually used for one or two periods of cultivation before moving to a new area. They could come back to the same area after seven to ten years when the land is converted to a forest again. This shifting cultivation is locally called *gilir balik* (turning back).

The tradition of rice paddy cultivation of the Meratus people reveals an unseparated connection among the three elements mentioned above. It requires the Meratus people to perpetuate and protect them all as a unity. Rice paddy crops do not only function as a main food source, but also play a central role in religious rituals that cannot be replaced with other crops or plantations. Therefore, the tradition becomes a strong reason to refuse any form of external encroachment of the land, especially by mining or plantation companies, that can threaten the existence of religious practices:

*The adat community, if they do not cultivate [paddy], they cannot practice the [Aruh] rituals. The rituals cannot be done if we don’t cultivate [paddy crop] because it is the paddy that we give as offering to the [ancestral] spirits, to Ninings Bahatare [Meratus people’s name for the Almighty]. If we plant oil palm trees, what would we … [give as offering]?* (Asmi, community participant)

The adat concept had contributed to the Meratus people’s self-representation of their identity. Religious rituals, livelihood and environmental preservation were the main elements of *adat* they affirmed with identity. There was even a view that the negligence of one or all of these elements could mean exclusion from the *Kaharingan* people identity. A case was mentioned about one family from a *Balai* community who had given up their local tradition by converting to a major religion and deciding to make their livelihood from running a *warung* (small kiosk selling foods and daily needs) instead of farming. Sani, who lives nearby explained:

*They said that it’s hard to conduct the ritual [Aruh] every year, three times in a year. And it’s binding, the Kaharingan people are bonded to it, cannot stop, should keep cultivating. As long as we are Kaharingan, we are demanded to conduct it. If we stop doing it, we are no longer Kaharingan. The Kaharingan people should conduct the ritual.* (Sani, community participant)
However, this was not a form of total exclusion that prevents someone who has converted to another faith from keeping a relationship or even living within the Kaharingan community that still holds local traditions. It was more about changing a faith and no longer practising the local rituals.

_Dayak [identity] cannot be abolished, it always remains. If a Dayak person converts into Moslem or Christian or Hindu and Buddhist, the change is only on the faith, the tradition remains the same ... When there is worship ritual, those who have converted into Christian and Moslem are suggested to attend otherwise people would likely regard them as arrogant, thoughtless of the surrounding people._ (Pak Obi, community participant)

Pak Obi’s statement reflects his status in Balai Batu Kambar where some of the Meratus people had converted to Moslem or Christianity. There is a mosque and a church within the Balai territory, as well as the local worship prayer house. Batu Kambar comprises a more diverse population in terms of religion and ethnic background compared to its neighbour Balai Kiyu, where 100 per cent of the population are local Meratus Dayak people, of which almost all practise their local religion. This indicates that the Meratus people are open to change, even in relation to religion.

The Meratus people’s belief in their _adat_ extends to traditions in healing and medicine, which includes a shaman called _Balian_ who treats sick people using local customary healing methods. The people believe that a _Balian_ is a gifted person who has the capability and willingness to learn and fulfil this important role that includes leading _Aruh_ ceremonies within Balai communities. A _Balian_ is also required to become an _adat_ chief. In treating a sick person, the _Balian_ healing ritual should be conducted before any modern medication procedure is performed.

_If we need ritual treatment, it should be provided first based on our faith. If it is solved using the traditional treatment, so we don’t take the [modern] medical treatment. However, whenever we found that the traditional herbal medication cannot solve or cure the illness, we can use the [modern] medical treatment. If we directly use the modern medical treatment it means we do not carry out our tradition, our experience or our faith._ (Pak Alen, community participant)

The reports of how the Dayak Meratus people give meaning to and represent their _adat_ as an unseparated part of their life depict the basic construction of identity. _Adat_ had emerged in various forms of articulation as religious rituals as ways of livelihood and the relationship with the natural environment they live with. Apart from an identity, _adat_ is basically a whole concept of how the Meratus people live and imagine their life.
Adat preservation and changes

A case of two Italian tourists (emblematic case)

There was a case in Balai Kiyu where adat left a negotiable space when faced with a complex situation between persisting with tradition and tolerating unanticipated external values. It was an invaluable experience to witness how adat faced the shifting attitudes of the locals in my first field visit. Two Italian tourists accompanied by a local guide from Loksado stayed in Batu Kambar, the closest neighbour of Kiyu. They were engaged in planning a trekking expedition in the Meratus Mountains where Balai Kiyu is the main gateway to the trail that leads to the highest point. The Meratus people, including the locals of Kiyu, had become familiar for a long time with domestic and international tourists who enter their kampong. However, that specific encounter was a good indicator of what is occurring with the Kiyu people’s adat.

The two Italian tourists’ visit happened at the same time that the Kiyu people were holding their Aruh Bapisit (ritual of storing the harvested rice paddies). During the night of ritual held in Balai adat, the tourists observed on the activities. The next day they were to leave the kampong for the forest trail. I was curious to find the tourists with their local guide and three porters (from Batu Kambar) standing in front of the adat chief’s house with many Kiyu people gathered around. One young man explained that they were stopped from entering the forest because there was a pamali (taboo or traditional rule) that prohibits anyone to leave the kampong for three days after Aruh, including the Kiyu people. The Kiyu people had forgotten to advise the tourists about the pamali on the night they had attended the ritual.

A young Kiyu man then asked me to explain to the tourists about the local rule in English. I then tried to deliver the message. However, it appeared that they had already been informed by their tour guide who was negotiating the issue with the adat chief. They decided to wait for the result, saying that they had a fixed schedule for their trip and would choose to cancel the trekking trip if negotiations failed.

Resulting from this interaction, debates emerged between the Kiyu people and the local porters. I realised that I should not go further into the issue and keep my distance. Intense discussion occurred between the Kiyu elders and the local guide and porters in the adat chief’s house while other people waited outside in scattered groups.

I was informed that one of the porters was from Batu Kambar and a relative of the adat chief. This created a complex issue for the adat chief to face. For economic reasons, the tour guide and porters tried to negotiate the Kiyu’s adat. Meanwhile, the Kiyu people waited outside nervously about the decision to be made. A rumour spread that an amount of money was offered to allow the tourists to continue their trip.
Someone was then asked by the people to tell the elders not to accept the money as it would mean their *adat* could be negotiated and that it was better to let them continue the trip without accepting any money. Some Kiyu people expressed their disappointment toward the *adat* chief for not being strict and firm about the *adat* rule.

The result was that the tourists, along with their tour guide and porters, were allowed to continue the trip but should be fined using certain traditional rules and subjected to small rituals intended to protect them from possible harm. They were also reminded not to take anything from the forest, such as leaves.

It has been broadly explained that *adat* is at the very centre of the Meratus people’s lives. Nevertheless, it is important to look closely at how *Balai* communities hitherto see and deal with their traditions in terms of religious practices/rituals and daily practices, including their relationship with the natural environment. This exploration raises issues about possible changes or dynamics within the communities’ views and practices as they became exposed to the modern world.

In general, based on what they have expressed, *balai* communities still believe they should preserve their hereditary *adat*. “*As far as there is human, we keep holding, keep following [our *adat*], as long as there is human [here]***” said Awat Abun (community participant). Awat Jumar was strongly confident that *adat* “cannot be changed ... it’s already as it was since the beginning, because we cannot change adat, not even a thing, because it’s what Sanghyang [God] told us to do. What we got from our former elders was actually from Sanghyang” (community participant).

Such a view was confirmed by Awat Sawa (community participant), saying that ‘*the hereditary adat remains the same, there is no change, still survive’*. He continued by clarifying his previous statement, “*What I mean is that adat community can keep their adat but at the same time can be like people out there***”. He mentioned that access to telecommunications is an example of what he means by ‘like people out there’. A similar view was expressed by Pak Alen (community participant), “*Indeed, we want to live like prosperous people out there. Indeed, it is what we hope. Still, we don’t want to lose our adat***”. Living in a remote area in *Balai* Tamburasak, Haruyan Dayak village, electricity and better road access were his concerns when discussing about this issue. While these were the views of *Balai* elders, a young man, Daman (community participant), had similar views:
It [adat] needs to be preserved. I think it needs to be preserved … such as Aruh and other [traditions] … not to let them extinct … There is no longer Meratus if they are extinct. Indeed we want to change but adat still remains, don’t want it gone or changed. About economy, we want changes like people out there, but adat should remain.

Such views confirmed how the Meratus people give meaning to adat, that adat has no connection with the changes they want made in their communities. Adat is seen as remaining unaltered, along with the possible changes and modification in their daily social life, understood more as religious rituals and traditional rules, rather than a broader scope of their life. This insight becomes clearer when connected with the issue of adat infringements by community members themselves. Asmi argued that the increasing number of adat infringements does not mean that there are changes in adat practices:

Indeed, [adat] does not change, like ceremony, ritual and suchlike, they remain. But … it’s been long time, especially after [year] 99, there were many infringements. What I mean by infringement is that when holding adat ceremony there is ‘pamali’ [taboo]. As the number of the people is increasing, the rules were infringed. So, there happened the shifting, but the adat rules, ritual and suchlike remain unchanged … So, [adat] is not left but infringed. (Asmi, community participant)

The case of the two Italian tourists (see boxed section above) represents this situation. Certainly, most of the Kiyu people were disappointed with the decision but felt that there was nothing they could do. Some said that the chief was reluctant to impose the rules as the porter was his relative. Others said that possibly a bad precedent was set for the next case, which could lead to a decline of adat practices. The researcher examined the chief’s explanation about his decision at the end of his interview not long after the occurrence. The adat chief had argued:

Yes, they broke [adat rule]. We tried to prevent them [from continuing the trip]. Indeed, we were thinking that we just finished conducting Aruh, we said that we are adat people, we have adat rule, adat law. But it was going awry. The people who came with them are our relative. They are adat people as well. One of them is my wife’s brother in law … the other one is my wife’s sibling. So, that’s why we didn’t … we decided to compromise that they need to give rice [a mug size], amount of [money] IDR 250.000, but then we gave it back to them IDR 200.000, so we only accepted IDR 50.000. Any acts were like going awry. My people outside said that this was weakening [adat]. So, I was like going awry. If I was strict [with the adat], I felt pity for them [the tourists]. They came from far place. So, I was thinking that it would be fine as they are only going to take a picture, not to take any plant seeds … They would not make any harm to the nature, to forest, so that’s fine … We also have casted a spell on them, and told them it’s an infringement. But my people kept saying that it weakens [adat]. I said, that’s fine, I accepted it. That’s a risk a leader should take, as I have to find out a middle way … We already fined them as they broke the rules.
Furthermore, the story of the two Italian tourists is an example of how issues of tourism have contributed to changes in Meratus communities in social, cultural and economic aspects. During the researcher’s second visit to Kiyu, close to two months after the first visit, it was reported by a participant that a dispute had just occurred. The position of the Balai Kiyu people to manage the main gate to the Meratus trekking tourism had just been taken over by the village head, using the name balai Batu Kambar people. Assuming the Kiyu people had greatly benefited financially from charging tourists and some Batu Kambar people are entitled to family-based inherited land, they are expected to also enjoy similar benefits. Regarding this reason, the Kiyu people argued that the Balai communal territory should be prioritised over family land ownership. The Kiyu elders, however, chose to avoid any possible escalating horizontal local disputes between the two neighbouring Balais. The big billboard to welcome visitors displayed on Kiyu’s entry gate during the researcher’s first visit was no longer present when he made his second visit.

This case also revealed complex – not to say paradoxical – internal relationships within the Balai people concerning their claims of ancestral communal territories and family/individual ownership of the land. Such complex issues had also occurred in some Balai communities in Loksado, which had been an iconic tourism destination in South Kalimantan. A relatively deluxe resort had been built along with other nearby lodges and homestays, owned by an outsider who bought the land from a local. The claim of traditional communality is prone to changes along with the emerging, what Li (2014) described as the ‘capitalist relation’ by which tourism is becoming an important part of the Meratus people’s lives that provides new opportunities and challenges.

The issue had illuminated that the Balai community strongly believe their unaltered adat have been facing challenges that possibly change their adat practices. They acknowledged that their unwritten traditional rules are prone to infringements and changes as the current generation has a weak memory of rules compared to their elders. This led to two main issues related to the preservation and changes of the Meratus people’s adat life: (i) local leadership; and (ii) the declining adat generation. An exploration of these issues helped to further reveal the Meratus people’s views of their adat practices, which are fundamental to constructing their traditional identity.

**Local leadership**

Leadership is an issue raised in this study because it provides important clues to how the Meratus people give meanings to their adat, as well as provides information about how changes
happened to sociocultural aspects of the communities. According to participants, the manner in which the Meratus local leadership operated had contributed to the dynamics of *adat* practices, including how the community members viewed the existence of their *adat* institution. This happened as the position of a leader in traditional communities such as the Meratus people is very central and therefore, is inevitably a key issue in this research.

The local leadership of the Meratus people is based on a long-established, patriarchal structure. Unlike the state, a local leader or village head who is chosen through a mainstream democratic mechanism of elections, that is, the *adat* chief, is assigned through a process by which Balai community members can agree by acclamation on appointing someone to be the successor of a chief who has passed away. The criteria of leadership is mostly based on a person’s strength of personality (character). Since *adat* rituals are important events, a leader’s capability to conduct Balian rituals is a necessity. “An adat chief should be an experienced person, having many experiences ... can cure a sick person. In principle, he must be able to conduct a Balian ritual. There is no chance for someone who cannot,” said Sani (community participant).

Once an *adat* chief is assigned, he will be the leader for the *Balai* community for the remainder of his life. This ensures an *adat* chief is highly authoritative within a *Balai* community. However, this was not always the case among current *Balai* communities. Many decisions had been made through meetings with all community members.

*An adat chief comes with a plan [to a meeting] when there is a problem. He acts as a leader of a meeting. In the meeting, the decision is not made by an adat chief himself but just offering a solution to solve a problem and then being responded by each person to get the best alternative to be used. So, [an adat chief] cannot make a decision by himself, there should be the best solution chosen from several alternatives. The adat chief makes a decision for what we together have agreed upon.* (Awat Sawa, community participant)

Instead of imposing a strong authority, an issue with the current *adat* institution of a *Balai* community was its weakening roles. Some *balai* members saw that their *adat* chief was not firm enough in enforcing *adat* rules. For example, the Italian tourists case in Kiyu was criticised by *balai* members who were disappointed with their *adat* chief’s decision. Similarly, Sani from a *balai* in Loksado also expressed his disappointment with the current *adat* leadership that, according to him, was weakening compared to the former one, “In the past, *adat* laws were very strict. If there was an infringement, it was immediately responded to be solved. Different leader comes with different thing” (Sani, community participant).
In Balai Datar Ajab, since its last adat chief passed away in 2012, no decision had been made about who was to be appointed the successor because few elders in the community had the capacity to become an adat chief. Therefore, the adat chief’s role was performed by two elders, of which only one was capable of conducting Balian rituals.

The issue of a weakening adat leadership in Meratus, to some extent, cannot be detached from the existence of a state local leader, especially the village head, which had been localised using the name pembakal. The power relations that emerged between the adat and state institutions had blended as a hybrid local institution but still created gaps and tensions. This had created potential horizontal conflicts among Balai communities since both positions were filled by adat people but with different roles and power.

_Pembakal and adat chief are equal, they are supposed to work together. However, concerning adat issues, it is the adat chief to make a decision ... such as in adat agreement to solve a problem, pembakal functions as the witness by putting a signature ... not to make decision, since he has no capability in dealing with adat issues, despite his belongingness to Dayak. He has no experiences on it._ (Pak Panin, community participant)

_Pembakal comes with a state-mandated power by which a person in charge has the authority in deciding or, at least, directing the implementation of a state’s policies or programs at the village level to which Balai territories belong. It was within this area of the state’s program distribution being contested between two local authority institutions that usually occurred. In this case, pembakal has the legal authority to make final decisions despite adat chiefs having social legitimation from their community members.

Within such a contestation, adat leadership had been possibly reduced and marginalised since the state apparatus basically has no space for the representation of adat institution. Moreover, under the state’s hegemonic system, the local peoples’ cultural subjectivity is changing as they are becoming more dependent program recipients. It might be ideal to have a village head who is also an adat chief so that Balai community’s voices could be accommodated. However, disputes may remain as the core issue is about unequal power relations with which the state apparatus tends to take over the adat institutions’ functions and roles.

**The declining adat**

The weakening adat institution among Balai communities in Meratus appeared more clearly in research participant expressions about the future of their adat being placed in the hand of the younger generation. Balai community members involved in this study generally agreed that the
current youth of Meratus have no concern for the preservation of adat. As a modern lifestyle becomes easily accessible, the old local traditions are no longer seen as attractive.

*There is a slight decline [in practicing adat]. The decline happened as we are getting older, many of us have passed away ... We no longer have successor. No one is able to continue. Many youths were more attracted to modern life, they like to get drunk, forgetting their predecessors. They don’t listen to advice. I found it difficult.* (Awat Angkhi, community participant)

*I think, in recent time, [the youths] are no longer interested in [adat], affected by their social environment. Most of the youth are more interested in going to Barabai [the capital town] when there is karaoke or other shows. They will not go home before the shows end. It’s different from my time.* (Pak Obi, community participant)

*I see, in Malaris, there is decline among the youths. They are reluctant to continue [the tradition] as they see that becoming Kaharingan people demands them to do cultivating activities all the year.* (Sani, community participant)

Pak Panin (community participant) also suggested that the balai people are currently at their lowest rate of practising adat, “Formerly, there were still many children taught [adat rituals] ... Nowadays, it comes to the lowest level. So, when conducting adat ceremonies we only have him [pointing to a house located across the street] who can lead”. As implied by Pak Panin, the decline of adat practices is caused by the number of elders who had passed away, resulting in few successors to be appointed as Balian. This was affirmed by Rendi (community participant):

*I feel now it’s declining, especially for adat ceremonies, some of them were no longer held whereas it should be conducted every year, now it’s becoming rare. The number of the elders who act as Balian is declining ... can be counted on the fingers of one hand.*

During this study’s fieldwork, it was found that many participants from different Balais expressed similar anxieties about the decline of concern about adat practices, especially among younger people. The decline, as suggested by Asmi (community participant), was reflected by the many infringements of adat rules, “*There were too many infringements, too many infringements*”. Regarding this issue, Pak Obi (community participant) stated that “not all of us want to follow the pathway of our ancestors”.

It is important to note that the use of the word ‘declining’ or ‘weakening’ here articulates the expression of the local people’s (participants) point of view, that the trend of changing practices concerning their tradition is seen as negative or unwanted. The changes have happened, not only in terms of practices, but also in the key principles of faith. Indeed, the Kaharingan people of
Meratus gradually converting to one of the six major religions in Indonesia has become widespread. This unavoidably affected adat practices among the Balai communities, at least in terms of the number of adherents. To date, no information exists that examines the number of people converting their faith in the reverse direction, that is, from a major religion to a local one.

Faith conversions also happen through a reluctance of continuing ancestral traditions and marriage, usually between the Meratus and Banjarese people who are predominantly Moslem. A Kaharingan or Balian follower who wants to marry a Banjarese is required to convert his/her faith to Moslem. This applies to both male and female Meratus people. In two of the study sites in the Batang Alai Timur subdistrict, two marriages were conducted during the fieldwork period. The bride who married a male Banjarese, and the groom who married a female Banjarese converted from their local faith prior to the nuptials.

Local faith conversion also happened in Loksado, as told by Sani (community participant) in responding to the decline of adat practices in his community, “In the past, a hundred per cent of us are Dayak, Kaharingan people, but now many Kaharingan people in Loksado had converted to Islam”. For the Meratus people, faith conversion was not an issue they were concerned with. They were open and tended to be passive with this phenomenon occurring in their communities, including within a family, when one of its member decided to convert to another religion.

*It is individual matter, if someone wants to follow other [religions]. it’s up to him/her, we cannot prevent, it’s not allowed [to prevent]. If nowadays the youth want to stop from [following] Kaharingan, become a Christian, we cannot forbid. As well if they want to convert from Kaharingan to Islam, we cannot forbid. It depends on what is believed in heart.* (Awat Jumar, community participant)

Religious conversion, however, was not the main factor in the decline of adat practices as those who had converted continued, based on my observations, to participate in or attended adat rituals, especially Aruh. The influence of the conversion was not as strong as the attractiveness of a more accessible modern life that had affected Meratus people’s adat practices, especially among the youth.

**Conclusion**

This chapter is specifically focused on exploring and revealing how the Meratus people view themselves. In keeping with the notion of giving a voice to the subaltern, the themes emerged from the Meratus people’s voices and their narrative of their identities. Their narrative tells the
story of the dismantling of their identities and how they understood it as a way of reproducing their definition of their own identity. It is how a postcolonial framework was applied in this study to allow the subaltern’s voices to be heard.

This chapter reveals how prolonged experiences of marginalisation have contributed to the Meratus people viewing themselves as ‘poor human resources’ and measuring themselves, using their surrounding dominant society’s standard of living. Moreover, the past state’s suppression over local practices of traditions through the military and police had left the Balai communities with memories of fear. At the same time, past experiences have contributed to their affirmation of attaching to the *adat* as their identity.

While not derived from local native articulation of naming, the new identity of *masyarakat adat* was generally well accepted and affirmed by the communities, although the term *adat* derived from well-established living practices that communities could easily accept and establish as its new identity. It was through this new identity that communities were able to better position themselves within the dominant state discourse. It was also evident that applying the term *adat* to the Meratus function helped communities to articulate and represent their localities to their surroundings and the broader dominant society. The Meratus communities relied mostly on their conceptualisation of *adat* that embeds three main elements: (i) faith or religion; (ii) livelihood; and (iii) relationship with the surrounding natural environment, as represented by their main ritual of *Aruh*.

Although *adat* is becoming widely accepted by the Meratus communities as their new identity, this research has found that essential *adat* practices among the communities are declining. This was admitted by the local elders and other elements of the communities when responding to the current development of local cultural dynamics in Meratus, especially when determining how the young generation would deal with local traditions in the future. However, the case of the two Italian tourists showed that the local traditional leader or *kepala adat* (*adat* chief) had contributed to both preservation and changes in the Meratus communities.

While holding multilayered local identities of *Balian, bubuhan balai, Kaharingan, orang bukit* and Dayak, the Meratus people have gained a broader nationwide identity with their customary tradition, *masyarakat adat*. This recent identity was carried by a NGO-led indigenous movement to enable local communities to claim their indigenous slot under national and international representation of indigeneity. *Masyarakat adat* emerged as a hybrid identity that came out from interstices between local and global representation. Therefore, it is never a simple nexus constructed through a binary power relation, alleging NGOs’ imposition of
identity over the locals. Other significant elements include government policies contributed to the local community subjectification of their roles and identity. However, it is undeniable that NGOs have become key actors of the discursive representation of indigeneity. This thought has led the researcher to give concern to the significant role of NGOs representing the Meratus people’s indigeneity (Chapter 6).
CHAPTER 6:
NGOs AND INDIGENOUS ACTIVISM AROUND MERATUS

The initial encounter (emblematic case)

Accompanied by a local NGO activist, my first trip to the fieldwork sites in Meratus was ‘naively’ informed by questions about NGO activist legacies imprinted in local communities that had made their indigenous identities more visible. Assumptions based on an overly simplistic view of dominant and subordinate power relations about indigenous identity construction had initially driven my views until I found that it was more complex than I had expected. It is important to provide this clarification, again, as a form of the ‘unlearning privilege’ principle of a postcolonial intellectual by which I recognised the influences of my pre-conceptualisation of indigeneity.

Reporting my initial process of encounters with local-community participants, this section is presented to illustrate how this study had been informed by my developing ideas of indigenous identity as a socio-political construction. A perspective influenced by concepts of identity formation derived from Hall’s (1990) dynamic cultural identity, Bhabha’s (1994) cultural hybridity and Li’s (2000a) idea of ‘tribal slot’, as affirmed by Hathaway’s (2010) concept of ‘indigenous space’ and Harris’ (2013) concept of ‘emergent indigenous identity’.

Having departed from Banjarbaru at around 10.30 am, we arrived at Balai Batu Kambar or Hinas Kiri village at around 16.30 pm. This village is located more than 20 kilometres from the provincial road in Birayang, a sub-district within the area of Hulu Sungai Tengah (HST), South Kalimantan. As I anticipated (based on my previous experiences), the situation was typical of kampongs in remote areas of South Kalimantan. Batu Kambar is a relatively developed kampong as it has asphalt roads and electricity access. At Batu Kambar, we stopped by a house of an older woman whom my NGO friend called ‘Julak’ (a Banjarese unisex word for ‘uncle’ or ‘auntie’). People surrounding the house appeared surprised and excited at my NGO friend’s unexpected arrival. Such reactions showed that he is quite well known in the kampong.

My NGO friend introduced me to Julak and explained the purpose of our visit. The conversation turned to a past story about the years when my friend, in his early career as an NGO activist, had stayed and worked with local communities there. I was also informed that Julak’s house used to be a ‘base camp’ or transit house for many NGO activists, university outdoor clubs and researchers. Some photos of outdoor clubs hung on the wall and many stickers with names of clubs and NGOs

5 A city where I mostly based during my fieldwork, located around 27 km from Banjarmasin, the capital city of South Kalimantan province and around 160 km from area of fieldwork sites in Meratus Mountains.
were adhered to a wooden door. Julak previously worked as a trekking tour guide for some of the guests until she became physically weak due to her age. I realised then that the local communities were accustomed to outsiders appearing, a situation I thought would be helpful in building communication with the locals and at the same time, challenged me to explore potential outsider footprints of indigeneity discourses.

We then continued our trip to the next site at Balai Kiyu by motorcycle, venturing over a two-kilometre mountainous pathway. Upon our arrival at Kiyu at the top of the hilly pathway was a sign declaring: Welcome to the territory of the Kiyu customary forest. Under Constitutional Court Decree No. 35/PUU-X/2012, THIS IS OUR CUSTOMARY FOREST, NOT STATE FOREST. It was the first sign of a powerful indigeneity claim I had come across. As I was at the beginning of my fieldwork trip, it helped me deal with anxiety about finding the right sites for my data collection. We arrived at the Kiyu people’s kampong when the sky grew darker and the electricity generator had just been turned on, allowing the Kiyu people to light up their houses (usually to around 11pm).

Figure 6.1  Sign on the pathway to the territory of Balai Kiyu

Our arrival to Kiyu coincided with the commencement of Aruh Pisit, a traditional ritual that represents the activity of storing harvested rice held once a year at the end of the rice paddy cultivation period. In Kiyu, we stayed with a family of an LPMA activist who was originally from the kampong. I found my NGO-friend engaged in friendly conversation with the local people who came to our home stay. He introduced me to them and explained the purpose of my arrival. I learnt later that some had been actively involved in adat movements at both the regional and national levels.
During the conversations, these local activists raised issues on the upcoming regional election for the Bupati (head of district) of Hulu Sungai Tengah. The discussion mostly focused on issues that should be prioritised to take advantage of the political campaign period, between having better infrastructure and gaining legal recognition of the adat community by the local government.

The people in the ‘forum’ actively gave their opinion and provided information. My NGO-friend acted as the mediator of the discussion and at certain points of issues, he gave his opinion.

Observing the discussion with a developing sense of indigeneity, I was overwhelmed with information about activism’s legacies in a local community. This occurred very soon after my arrival so I did not have a chance to record the details. However, this raised questions for me. Does the critical discussion represent exclusively certain groups/individuals or a larger local community? Are most of the local people well informed with adat identity and broader movements that the NGOs are working on? How were the power relations constructed between the communities and NGOs? More importantly: How had indigenous activism emerged and developed there? These questions drove me to direct my inquiries deeply into the local people’s adat or indigenous identity construction at the beginning of the fieldwork.

The Aruh Pisit rituals I was fortunate enough to witness at my first encounter showed how indigenous identity is possible and how it was reproduced in Kiyu. Nonetheless, indigeneity appears as a complexity that consists of various components, such as: a typical rural community’s (in a remote/forest area) lack of infrastructures; certain traditional practices; broader legal issues of territory (as represented in the signboard) and NGO interventions. Even though it is not the only factor, it should be acknowledged that NGOs’ activism has profoundly contributed to the growth and development of indigeneity discourses in Meratus. Therefore, there is a need in this study to trace a broader historical background that signifies the rise of indigenous activism among Meratus communities along with the historical appearance of NGOs.

Introduction

As presented in Chapter 5, the study on Meratus people’s identities revealed the complexity of issues that had led to the peoples’ representation of themselves with an adat identity. Encounters with external dominant social, political and economic powers, despite leading to marginalisation, have provided the Meratus people with the opportunity to negotiate new representations. Identity articulation as masyarakat adat emerged as a cultural hybridity that local communities had absorbed from NGO activist counterparts in contesting the state’s concept of non-indigeneity. However, questions of subalternity emerged as the Meratus people’s localised identities became submerged into a wider identity representation for the sake of state recognition.
Drawing on evidence gathered during the researcher’s involvement in observing the process in the field sites, this chapter builds the external context around the voice of the Meratus people, as presented in Chapter 5, as well as explains and reports on the views of NGO activists about government in order to gather evidence of externalised impositions on the Meratus people’s sense of indigenous identity.

After the fall of the New Order regime in 1998, international environmental NGOs contributed to the transnationalisation of indigeneity in Indonesia by taking a leading role in campaigning against land grabbing and resource extraction by state and private corporations (Tsing, 2007). This explains how the global concept of indigenous peoples had been adopted and that the use of the term masyarakat adat was produced as a “cultural and political frame”, since global indigeneity needed to be adjusted to the “histories of national classification and management” (Tsing, 2007, p. 39).

The discursive formation of indigeneity issues in Indonesia occurred under a changing political configuration in the 1990s that had pushed the growth of what can be categorised as a ‘movement’ (Hadiwinata, 2003) or as ‘transformist’ (Fakih, 1995) NGOs characterised with their critical stance toward the authoritarian New Order regime. These critical NGOs played a central role in raising indigeneity issues onto the public agenda by building a network of national and regional indigenous organisations entitled JAPHAMA (Network of Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Defenders), which later led to the birth of AMAN.

While an explanation of the emergence of Indonesian indigeneity is explored in Chapter 3, the central question in this chapter focuses on how NGOs have built indigenous activism among the Meratus people, which led to the adoption of the volatile, nationwide identity of masyarakat adat by the local communities. In analysing this, three main concerns are covered that show social, cultural and political processes and dynamics by which related elements were configured by NGO activism to build and strengthen indigenous identity among the Meratus communities.

First, the emergence of indigenous activism in Meratus led by NGOs is explored to show how the narrative of local indigeneity had been constructed and produced. This section covers two issues: (i) the root of indigenous activism; and (ii) the legacies it left in Meratus. This is continued with a section on the dynamics of indigenous or adat movements under the changing state’s policies. In general, this section illustrates the state’s policies at the national and local levels affecting the direction of adat movements in Meratus and shaping the local communities’ cultural identities. The last section includes a comprehensive exploration of NGO roles in building indigeneity in Meratus. It is important to note that the three main themes were
developed by following the Foucauldian concept of discursive practices, categorising and developing elements seen as contributing to the construction of indigeneity. At the same time, voices of those involved in this study were allowed to take a lead in explaining the complexity of issues that emerged within each theme. The overall emphasis is on how NGOs working on indigenous issues in Meratus have represented local communities within the discourse of indigeneity through the main roles they played. Reporting in details of events and NGOs’ activities are included to show how hybridisation of local community’s identities occurred through discursive practices of activism while at the same time operating within the hegemonic state system.

**Activism by NGO and the Meratus people**

The Meratus communities became actively involved in a widespread and intense indigenous movement in late 1999. The inception of AMAN in early 1999 possibly contributed to the rise of identifiable indigeneity among Meratus communities because their representatives had attended the congress. However, it is arguable that the specific initiating factor was due to the local government’s plan to provide concessions to a Korean timber company around the central Meratus Mountains area through a land swap mechanism. The policy triggered massive resistance by the local communities, facilitated by a network of NGOs named the Aliansi Meratus (Meratus Alliance). This alliance signified the rise of indigenous activism around the Meratus Mountains. The following section further explores how indigenous activism was built and consequently what it has left behind in the local communities.

**Roots of activism: The Meratus Alliance Movement**

Located deep in the Meratus Mountains, the Balai Kiyu community is an example of how local communities have engaged in activism through joining the nationwide indigenous movement led by AMAN. The above-mentioned sign regarding Constitutional Court Decree No. 35 demonstrated one way in which this traditional community had leveraged the modern legal discourse of indigeneity developed by AMAN. This gives rise to an important question related to this study: *What was the process by which the local communities living in a remote area became involved in a wider indigenous activism?*

The Meratus people had suffered from cultural marginalisation through being suppressed by the state apparatus during the New Order regime (1966-1998). The experience of marginalisation provided this study with clues about the process by which indigenous identity had been constructed through the appearance of NGO activists who had come to help the community.
“Before the appearance of NGOs, we had been suppressed by the government in holding the rituals of Aruh, by the police, we must pay, must pay to get the permission”, said Awat Jumar (community participant), a community elder. Another elder explained:

So, after LPMA came to work with us for years ... we no longer need to ask for permission to hold Aruh, the police did not come to us anymore, LPMA has informed the people that we don’t need permission to hold Aruh ... We, adat community, have no experience in politic, we know nothing [about it] ... then our friends from LPMA came to work with us. So, now security apparatus, the police, cannot act arbitrarily to us as adat rules have been enforced. (Awat Abun, community participant)

Some reports from activist and community participants suggested that the appearance of an NGO in Meratus began with the Lambung Mangkurat University student outdoor clubs’ mountaineering activities around the area. Their intense interactions with local communities had led to further processes of community engagement by establishing an NGO. LPMA was one of the pioneers of local NGOs working with Meratus communities.

Meanwhile, reports from local participants suggested that there had been a story of local resistance long before the NGOs’ arrival. The earliest story reported by some Meratus elders was a conflict with a timber company named PT Daya Sakti Fass Forest in the early 1980s that was found to be committing illegal logging. The story was confirmed by Awat Jumar (community participant), saying, “The company [came] in 1982, Daya Sakti, logging ... They said they would plant cocoa. They opened a road until Periuk and here, Hulu Alai. All [trees] finished [cut]. They broke the agreement”. He went on to clarify that someone from Jakarta came to help them deal with the case but he was unsure about the status of that person as the term NGO can mean activist, researcher or journalist. However, this story does not apply to the intense activism of broader NGOs and local communities in Meratus that followed. There was a gap in information between that period and the one surrounding emerging indigenous activism in Meratus.

An analysis of the interviews with NGO activists working on indigenous issues in South Kalimantan suggested that the root of indigenous activism in Balai Kiyu can be best related to the efforts of the Meratus people’s opposition to the previously mentioned provincial government’s plan to grant a concession to a Korean timber company in 1999. This project would have forced indigenous peoples of the area to engage in a land swap. An area of 46,270 hectares of protected forest in Hulu Sungai Tenga (HST) District, approved by Minister of Forestry Decree No. 741-1999, was to be given to PT Kodeco Timber and was to become a
‘limited production forest’. Balai communities of the Meratus people voiced their disapproval by responding with a series of protests.

Certainly, the Meratus people were not alone. To support the struggle, several local NGOs and university outdoor clubs, which had been engaged with the communities, invited broader networks of NGOs to form the Meratus Alliance. It was the Meratus Alliance Movement, consisting of 33 local and regional NGOs and the Meratus people, that was often referred to by activists in South Kalimantan when reporting advocacy activities with the Meratus people. “LPMA has been supporting [the recognition of] adat communities’ territories, we were involved in Meratus Alliance ... refusing land swap plan by Kodeco, in 1999”, said Uli (NGO activist) when asked about the main concern of LPMA in Meratus.

A challenge to collecting information on this issue was the limited sources available who could inform or confirm details about the initial period of LPMA and other NGO engagements with the Meratus people. This study involves investigating and contacting former board members of LPMA, many of whom had moved to other cities and workplaces. Unfortunately, they could only provide a general picture of the process as most of them had forgotten the details and did not hold relevant documentation, therefore, their reports were mostly based on recollections. The current board of LPMA confirmed that documented archives or notes about past occurrences do not exist. The challenge then, was to compile fragmented reports, gathered mainly from stories told by LPMA activists, along with several news articles and written reports found on the internet, which provided dates and years of occurrences to form a timeline and chronological narrative.

In Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection, based on Tsing’s (2005) research on Meratus communities between the 1990s and 2000s, Tsing wrote briefly of this case, using Aliansi Advokasi Meratus (Meratus Advocacy Alliance) to refer to Aliansi Meratus (Meratus Alliance), terms confirmed by local sources in this research. Explaining the main point of the case, Tsing (2005, p. 208) commenced by stating, “A new logging threat emerged in the central Meratus Mountains.” Tsing then pointed out that the case began when the government planned to build a special economic zone near to the East coast and required areas to be used for water catchment. She described the East area of the Meratus Mountains as showing dramatic ecological change “ranging from total loss of tree cover … to the skimpy residual forest” (2005, p. 208). This was the location where the Kodeco Company operated. It was selected by the government planners in exchange for the densely forested area around central Meratus. Kodeco then began to conduct a survey around the proposed areas even though environmental studies
had not been prepared. Tsing described the reaction of NGO activists and some Meratus people to gain support against the plan:

Activists at multiple levels organized against the plan. Thirty-three regionally based NGOs formed the Meratus Advocacy Alliance [Aliansi Advokasi Meratus] to advocate for the Meratus and their forests ... They contacted national and international news media, asking them to bring eyes of the world to their campaign ... Meratus village leaders also became active in the campaign. Meetings were convened, bringing many participants from many villages into common discussions of the problem. (2005, p. 209)

In November 1999, a study on legal decrees on the case reported by an activist of LPMA stated that 33 NGOs (including student outdoor clubs) held a meeting to formulate strategic plans and declare their joint movement as the Meratus Alliance (Rahmina, 2004). It was also mentioned in the report that the Meratus people also organised their own meeting in December 1999, which was attended by a number of elders and youths from different balais, declaring their opposition to the land swap plan. Following this, a series of actions were taken by the Meratus people and the alliance to voice their resistance to deforestation.

However, as Tsing (2005) pointed out, the local people’s resistance was not well consolidated because the Meratus people were divided into anti-Kodeco and pro-Kodeco groups. The former were allied with NGOs and local tourism industries; they felt threatened by the devastation of the forest possibly being affected by the exploitation plan. The latter saw that the presence of a global company in the area would benefit the locals economically. Tsing (2005) stated that the emergence of the pro-company group was a result of Kodeco’s efforts in approaching community elders and offering them cash as a form of ‘community development’ funding. At this point, how local communities’ identities had been hybridised through their engagement with outsiders became more obvious. Identification of local communities as masyarakat adat did not deploy a single meaning and narrative, as the NGO activists expected, through their campaign for indigenous people’s rights. Representation of the local was open to multiple and even contradictory meanings and narratives. This reflects how discursive practices have been built amongst them.

Conflict occurred, but there were no reports of physical violence. A local newspaper reported on an escalation of the conflict. On 13 March 2000, facilitated by the Meratus Alliance, 40 persons from Meratus claiming to represent 105 kampongs protested at the office of the regional peoples’ representative of South Kalimantan (DPRD Provinsi Kalimantan Selatan) in Banjarmasin, insisting on the cancellation of the plan (Banjarmasin Post, 14 March 2000). On
the following day, the pro-Kodeco group consisting of approximately 100 Meratus Dayaks were reportedly demonstrating at the provincial government office of South Kalimantan (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Kalimantan Selatan) in Banjarmasin, voicing support for the government to continue the plan (Banjarmasin Post, 15 March 2000). In the presence of a high-ranking official, the latter group read a supporting statement and claimed that it had been signed by 113 representatives of balai communities. A representative of the pro-plan group stated, “We are ready to welcome investors from anywhere to benefit from the Meratus Mountains, because we want to be prosperous as well.” It was reported that the newly elected governor at the time met the pro-plan group and indicated his agreement.

Faced with the absence of information about the final stage of the movement, I met with a former LPMA board member who worked on indigenous issues at a national NGO. The information she provided helped to develop a clearer understanding of how the case ended, which resulted in a newly implemented regional autonomy policy across the country. The policy gave greater powers to district governments in determining spatial planning for their administrative territories. While the central government had issued a ministerial decree and the provincial government had just revised the provincial spatial plan that enabled the land swap, the key decision was on two districts directly affected, HST and Kotabaru. Gaining support from contact persons in the inner circle of policy-making from both district governments had become strategic and crucial for the Meratus Alliance. It was the HST district government that initially announced that the proposed concession area within the HST district would remain a protected forest, that is, any industrial activity was to be prohibited. It was then supported by the district government of Kotabaru, which decided not to revise their spatial plan.

The conflicting policies among inter-level governments left uncertainties. Based on the report provided by the researcher’s informant, there was no clear legal solution to the case. The initial ministerial decree issued to approve the plan was never revoked. The situation forced Kodeco to halt its development plans. This uncertainty, nevertheless, could have been attributed to the successful advocacy of the Meratus Alliance saving the heavily forested areas of the Meratus Dayaks from the threat of exploitation.

The Meratus Alliance movement against the land swap had become a significant moment in the creation of indigeneity discourses around the Meratus Mountains. The emergent NGO activism found the Meratus ‘tribal slot’ or ‘indigenous space’, not only from hereditary local traditions,
but also from a threat arising from the state’s policies and an extractive industry company’s encroachment that raised local resistance. Moreover, this revealed that the Meratus people’s indigenous identity emerged as part of a broader discursive formation of indigeneity. Seven months prior to the consolidation of the Meratus Alliance, balai community representatives attend their first AMAN congress held on March 15 1999 in Jakarta, which resulted in a strong statement: ‘If the state does not acknowledge us, we will not acknowledge the state.’ The congress’ spirit for indigeneity recognition was brought to Meratus through a meeting held in Banjarmasin in September 1999 attended by 155 balai representatives (Rahmina, 2004). The conjoining of those various components had contributed to the formation of indigeneity discourses in Meratus. However, it was the Meratus Alliance movement that had directly left legacies of activism in Meratus.

While the activism narrative may suggest a general impression of heroism in a struggle against oppression, a postcolonial perspective allows this study to capture complexities that emerged in the process. The narrative of identity representation is amongst the complexities within this story, which later reveal issues of power relations. The following exposure of legacies of the Meratus Alliance reflects how the representation of identity pursued through cultural hybridity, after massive unrest, had further affected how the Meratus perceived their life and identities.

**Legacies of the Meratus Alliance Movement**

Having succeeded in preventing the concession, the alliance did not continue its existence and therefore disbanded, as it was not intended to be a permanent union. However, the alliance movement did leave a new orientation among NGOs concerned with indigeneity. While LPMA was initially the only local NGO with special concerns for adat community issues, the land swap case had called for other local NGOs, particularly those with basic environmental concerns, to pay more attention to indigenous issues. Danur (NGO activist), who had been an activist of YCHI (Green Horizon Foundation of Indonesia) and is currently running SLPP’s advocacy program for adat territories recognition with communities in Loksado, stated:

> After the Meratus Alliance, there was more concern [among local NGOs] on adat community issues, including YCHI. I was in YCHI, worked for adat communities. While LPMA worked for communities in HST district, YCHI was more concern with communities in Loksado. They both had relatively similar

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6 In 2000, apart from PT Kodeco, many extractive industry companies operated around the conflict area, such as PT Aya Yayang, PT Meratus Sumber Mas (PT Placer Dome Indonesia dan PT Scorpio Placer Dome) and PT Bina Alam Lestari Indah (Wulan, Yasmi, Purba, & Wollenberg, 2004).
concern even though YCHI basically was dealing more with issues of territory protection, especially in Loksado, rather than adat communities.

Unfortunately, the 33 NGOs involved in the Meratus Alliance Movement could not be located in the process of this research. The NGOs that remained working with the Meratus people on indigeneity issues after the alliance movement were apparently listed as network members of WALHI of the South Kalimantan chapter. Later, AMAN, as part of the South Kalimantan chapter played an important role. A more detailed exploration of this activism network and building indigeneity in Meratus is presented in the next section.

Based on reports about occurrences after the Meratus Alliance Movement, it can be concluded that NGO activism was a key reason for the Meratus people to become involved in an adat movement. While having been represented within the national AMAN organisation, the Meratus communities also consolidated themselves in their own local organisations. Supported by AMAN and local NGOs, the balai communities of Meratus held a congress in Banjarmasin on June 23-26, 2003. The congress claimed to involve 750 participants, including representatives from 300 balai communities (Kalimantan Post, June 27, 2003). It was through that meeting that their own organisation named PERMADA (Adat Communities Union) was established

In interviews, some activists pointed out that the congress had, although informally, affirmed the spread of a new identity for Balai communities, Meratus Dayak, to replace its derogatory label orang bukit (Hill People) which was widely used by the locally dominant Banjarese ethnic group. One NGO activist argued that the use of the term had been widely deployed by NGO activists rather than the balai communities themselves:

[The use of term orang bukit] started to lessen after the name ‘Meratus’ echoed by NGOs … Around 2000s, after the Meratus Alliance. Started in 1999. So, [the peoples’ identity] became the Meratus Dayak. In the past the names found were the Alay Dayak, the Loksado Dayak, the Pitap Dayak … Seemingly they are proud of the name ‘Meratus Dayak’ [laughter], while it was actually the influence of the NGOs, as an attempt to erase the stigma attached to them through term ‘orang bukit’ [hill people]. (Uli, NGO activist)

The Meratus Alliance movement created a space for the Meratus people to reconstruct and reproduce their new identity as part of a broader indigenous activism and a union of balai communities of the Meratus Mountains. The local communities learned about the importance of having a more recognised and respected identity. This may represent what Bhabha called “moments of historical transformation” when a social articulation of difference was pursued by
the minorities and formed as a negotiated cultural hybridity with other actors, rather than through forms of ‘authenticity’ (1994, p. 2). The Meratus communities hybridised their identity not only through a process of naming, but also through their organisation’s affiliation to AMAN in which the people were part of the national indigenous movement and becoming more familiar with the term *masyarakat adat* as self-identification.

Interestingly, the Meratus Alliance movement also came up with emergent local figures of Meratus people, who were *balai* community elders actively involved in opposing the land swap plan. Their intense engagement with local and national NGO activists caused their names to become widely known throughout the region. Some investors even tried to take advantage of them:

> After LPMA and other NGOs came to the [Meratus] communities, local figures began to come to the surface … These figures were represented through NGOs’ reports as leaders who fight with their peoples to defend their lands so that their images [as local figures] rose … Therefore, investors who came to HST tried to offer the elders facilities such as house and things they want in order to make them agree with the land swap plan … They were well-known figures within their own communities but had not been known before by outsiders … When they were then invited to regional and national meetings by [NGOs] network, they were becoming more widely known. (Uli, NGO activist)

The land swap case placed Meratus on a contested ‘battlefield’ of interested parties. At the same time, it created a momentary phase where the Meratus people gained opportunities to represent themselves and to be represented by NGOs within indigeneity discourses so that they were able to transform their own identities. During the land swap case, the Meratus Alliance movement implanted legacies of activism within their developing dynamics with the Meratus communities that remain in existence today.

Spivak’s postcolonial analysis, which concluded that ‘the subaltern cannot speak’ meaning they should not be left as is, as ‘someone’ needs to bring them out from their “woodwork” to the “circuit of hegemony” (De Kock, 1992, p. 48) can be applied to the Meratus activism. This, however, leaves a critical question about how, in the process of ‘bringing out’, issues of unequal power relations may be dealt with, considering the central involvement of hegemonic actors is inevitable. The next section further examines this issue.
Adat movements under state policy

Moments of indigeneity

Although central to joining the global network of the indigenous movement, the *adat* identity had also been used by activists for national framing so that the movement could continue to exist and even gain more prominence in the state system. This observation directed this research to take a closer look into the key roles and ‘moments’ that helped to retain the movement.

In this regard, a ‘moment’ includes emerging critical issues, key actors, places and time that conjointly create widely-distributed and long lasting effects or influences. The meaning of ‘moment’ is derived from Hall’s conceptualisation of a Foucauldian discourse, that is, “a group of statements which provides a language for talking about … a particular topic at a particular historical moment (1997b, p. 44).” In this study, indigenous or *adat* identity is seen as the expected impact or influence created and/or endorsed by certain moments. In other words, the Meratus people’s identity as *masyarakat adat* rather than perceived as “pre-given ethnic or cultural traits”, is viewed as a “social articulation of difference” that “from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 2).

Therefore, it is important to identify the moments that had led to the growth of indigeneity discourses in Meratus. Since the emergent indigenous movements in Indonesia cannot be detached from the growing-popular global discourse of indigeneity (Henley & Davidson, 2008), the identification needed to locate moments within that broad context. These moments are important to explain how a global-national movement of indigeneity has been transferred and translated into a local area such as Meratus. This question becomes critical when considering the government’s refusal to acknowledge the concept of indigeneity. Moments, rather than a continuing process of activism, essentially need to be revealed to know the ‘moments of historical transformation’ of indigeneity.

The initial indigeneity moment of the Meratus communities is most clearly evident from local events that happened in 1999, namely, the above mentioned land swap plan and the Meratus Alliance movement that led to an increasing awareness among local peoples about the need to organise themselves in the *adat* movement. This important initial indigenous moment was then followed by other local signature moments of indigeneity. While many local moments occurred...
during years of the activism process, the following occurrences are based on reports by participants in this study:

1. **First congress of PERMADA in 2003.** This was the first moment when the local people of Meratus Dayak community declared their *adat* movement and affirmed their identity as part of a larger indigenous movement. Held in Banjarmasin, the capital city of South Kalimantan, and attended by hundreds of local and national representatives (Meratus communities, NGO activists, national figures, high-ranking government officials), this event gained wide attention from local and national news media. A second congress was held five years later in 2008, in Balai Atiran in Meratus locale, attended by mostly local participants. This was the last congress of PERMADA as this organisation was made inactive after 2011 or since its central figure passed away (information about the current status of the organisation is not in existence).

2. **First regional meeting and inception of AMAN South Kalimantan in 2010 in Hinas Kanan (HST district).** This regional chapter of AMAN was not meant as the replacement of PERMADA but a step towards ‘formal involvement’ in AMAN as a member of the *adat* movement in South Kalimantan, which was developing and strengthening. Despite having a local elder or *adat* chief from Meratus as the coordinator, the direct involvement of NGO activists was significant. If the coordinator passes away before the end of his five-year term, the position would be replaced by a senior non-indigenous NGO activist.

3. **Second regional meeting of AMAN South Kalimantan held in Loksado (HSS district) in 2016.** This recent moment was considered to be at an advanced phase where the local people of Meratus appeared more confident in leading their own *adat* organisation. This can be implied from their refusal to accept that their organisation needed a non-indigenous NGO activist to become their leader as in 2010. At the same time, there was a strong indication that AMAN South Kalimantan was becoming integrated into the more ‘formalised’ and ‘managerialised’ organisation of AMAN as the newly elected coordinator was concerned on improving the organisational structure:

   *We see that AMAN [South Kalimantan] organisation structure is not well managed, that might impede the process of adat movement’s struggle ... So, for the next step, there is a need for improvement on the organisation structure that just ended.* (Hara, NGO activist)
These important local moments of indigeneity, however, must be connected with broader level events. Several global and nationwide indigeneity moments had influenced the state’s changing policies that supported the emergence and development of indigenous movements at the local level. One international moment of indigeneity that had reinforced an indigenous movements in Indonesia was reported by an activist from BRWA who spoke about the moment when the long struggle of the indigenous movement finally gained support:

[Since the beginning] there wasn’t [government’s support] at all, we faced so many conflicts as the peoples were evicted [from their customary territories] ... until then the UNDRIP [was declared] in 2007, indigenous movements were getting stronger and gaining more attention in international level. (Jaka, NGO activist)

This view affirmed the secretary general of AMAN’s statement that the Indonesian indigenous movement gained its first significant progress in 2006 when the Indonesian president attended the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples in Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Indonesian Miniature Park) and promised to issue the Law on Masyarakat Adat (Basuki & Mujayatno, 2014). On September 13, 2007, the Indonesian government joined other countries to promote the UNDRIP, despite stating the inapplicability of the concept in Indonesia (see Chapter 1). AMAN, as a national representative of global indigeneity, has played important roles in its distribution to local levels through its regional chapters and networks. This broader context reveals that indigeneity is a grand narrative through which the local subalterns were brought into the circuit of hegemony. At the same time, this explains that identification and, then, subjectification of the local communities as masyarakat adat occurred through discursive processes in which unequal power relations existed as a manifestation of what Bhabha (1994) named ‘hegemonic normality’.

Despite its unchanged stance on the concept of indigeneity, the Indonesian government introduced policies that enabled the creation of moments for the growth and spread of the masyarakat adat movement during the last decade (Chapter 2). While such moments emerged at the national level, they have led to the emergence of indigenous discourse at the local level, such as in Meratus. A local NGO activist stated that Constitutional Court Decree No. 35 had given significant impetus for the rise of adat movements:

Prior to 2012, there were not many ... not firm ... policies ... on adat territories recognition. After 2012, the constitutional court, I think that’s the moment, the constitutional court’s decree was the moment. It is quite firm concerning the recognition ... Yes, I think the moment was in 2012, the Constitutional Court’s Decree No. 35. (Danur, NGO activist)
After the issuance of Constitutional Court Decree No. 35, many local communities affiliated to AMAN conducted *plangisasi*, an action of placing a signboard on their land, stating that based on the decree, the area was customary territory belonging to *adat* communities, not to the state (Rachman, 2014; Siscawati, 2014), similar to the sign found near the pathway entry to *balai* Kiyu illustrated at the beginning of this chapter. Likewise, the recent movement of state recognition in Loksado and surrounding areas, as observed by Uli, a senior activist of LPMA, was triggered by the decree. This reveals a process by which the local minorities accepted their otherness and tried to modify it to fit, therefore exist in, the circuit of hegemony; not to be totally absorbed in it but to initiate “new signs of identity” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 1) - not resistance but negotiation. This led the locals to be drawn into the national bandwagon of political engagement stirred up by the central board of AMAN.

**Engaging the political arena**

Under the dynamics of state policies that influenced the discourse of indigeneity, the *adat* movement in Indonesia in its early phase, mainly represented by AMAN, had shown political concerns in its struggle for state recognition of *adat* communities. The early AMAN strategy was confrontational until 2007 when the government demonstrated concern about indigenous issues, causing AMAN to change its relationship with the state and become dialogical (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara, 2017). During the 10-year dialogical period, four regulations were passed by the government to support and recognise *adat* communities: (i) Constitutional Court Decree No. 35 (2013); (ii) Ministry of Internal Affairs’ Regulation No. 52 (2014); (iii) Ministry of Forestry and Environment No. 32 (2016); and (iv) Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning No. 10 (2016).

Since its inception in 1999, AMAN had shown that the political arena had become part of its main battlefield for advocacy in gaining its goals. Adi, a board member of AMAN National explained:

> This was part of political participation expansion agenda ... as it fits the organisation’s vision and mission, that is, politically sovereign, economically self-reliant and culturally dignified. (Adi, NGO activist)

This involved encouraging AMAN’s cadres to compete in political contestations at the local, provincial and national levels. Adi further added:

> This is the organisation’s mandate. Since the beginning ... one of the [AMAN] board’s decisions was encouraging the adat communities’ political
participation. This had been mandated by the organisation from the first time, encouraging and preparing cadres to gain positions of policy making ... We have interests in politics as a collective, not individual. Therefore, AMAN [began] being massively involved in the [political] arena since 2009, in the election period. There were hundreds of cadres encouraged to compete for people representative positions in local, provincial and national levels. There were dozens who successfully gained positions. (Adi, NGO activist)

A similar view was described by Sena, another AMAN board member, who emphasised the movement’s need for its political network to reach its goals:

In an attempt to make a network ... we involved resources from various backgrounds. There are many AMAN’s members who became people’s representative members or head of districts ... this step was within the last five years ... because we felt it’s hard to get past the bureaucracy both in executive and legislative domains. (Sena, NGO activist)

Under AMAN’s narrative of the indigenous movement, the adat identity had been constructed through an emerging political contestation that may be comparable to what Acciaioli (2007, p. 302) described as an “officialising strategy” by which the concept of adat was attempting to be formally legalised and even institutionalised within the state’s policies and administration.

Similarly, local indigenous movements in Meratus had been utilising political manoeuvres in strengthening adat identity. The Meratus Alliance Movement, as previously mentioned in this chapter, leveraged gains from contact persons who held positions in the local parliament and therefore were able to influence the policy-making process. Therefore, indigenous movements in Indonesia, mainly led by AMAN, had been continuously progressing and gaining a place within the state’s system through successfully influencing policies. This had been achieved through intense involvement in the political arena at the national and local levels with active endorsement from a nationwide network of NGOs.

Building indigeneity in Meratus

Explaining how the constellation of indigeneity discourses in Meratus had been constructed through a broader scope of discursive contestation at national and international levels, this section reports on how NGOs, as the main actors in the adat movement in Indonesia, worked with the Meratus people in building indigeneity. While presenting various activities that the NGOs had been working on, this section explores how cultural identities of the Meratus people had been represented through various activities, such as advocacy, economic empowerment and territorial mapping. This chapter’s final section begins with a description of NGOs activities and
roles with the Meratus people and is followed by analyses about how such activities had affected the establishment of indigeneity amongst the Meratus.

![Figure 6.2 Community meetings facilitated by NGO activists](image)

**NGOs working with the Meratus people**

The Meratus Alliance Movement was the most important mechanism for growth and continuity of Meratus communities. However, after the land swap incident lost momentum, the alliance discontinued. No clear information or the exact date of the alliance disbandment exist, but it appears that it occurred in 2003. Lesti, a former activist of LPMA directly involved in the process observed, **“They just disbanded. When the case (land swap) ended, they broke up. There was an issue with money, they suspected each other.”** This information might reveal the dynamics of the local NGO constellation in South Kalimantan. However, this was not part of this research. It was evident that local NGOs still existed, involved in a network dealing with issues in Meratus and its surrounding areas.

**Table 6.1 NGOs working on indigenous issues in the Meratus Mountains**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO’s name</th>
<th>Year of inception</th>
<th>Site areas</th>
<th>Issues and strategies</th>
<th>Affiliation/networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. WALHI South Kalimantan (Indonesian Forum of Environment)</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>South Kalimantan (province)</td>
<td>Main issue: Environment</td>
<td>WALHI National Executive, AMAN, Sawit Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO’s name</td>
<td>Year of inception</td>
<td>Site areas</td>
<td>Issues and strategies</td>
<td>Affiliation/ networks</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. LK3 (Institute for Islamic and Cultural Studies)</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>South Kalimantan (province): covers communities working with NGOs network</td>
<td>Main issue: Interfaith and intercultural relation Activities: Interfaith youth camp with <em>balai</em> communities</td>
<td>WALHI South Kalimantan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. YCHI (The Indonesian Foundation of Green Horizon)</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS) district: <em>balai</em> of Loksado, Malaris, Haratai</td>
<td>Main issue: Environment Strategies: Policy advocacy, economic empowerment</td>
<td>WALHI South Kalimantan, AOI (Alliance of Organic Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. LPMA (Institute for Adat Communities Empowerment)</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Tengah (HST) district: Datar Ajab (Hantakan) &amp; Kiyu (Batang Alai Timur) Kotabaru district: Limbur &amp; Gadang</td>
<td>Main issue: <em>Adat</em> communities Strategies: Economic empowerment, advocacy, participatory mapping</td>
<td>AMAN, AMAN South Kalimantan, KpSHK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sumpit Community</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Balangan district: Pitap</td>
<td>Main issues: Environment and spatial planning Strategies: Policy advocacy, participatory mapping</td>
<td>WALHI South Kalimantan, JKPP, BRWA, Sawit Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. AMAN of South Kalimantan</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>South Kalimantan (province)</td>
<td>Main issue: <em>Adat</em> communities Strategies: Community organising, policy advocacy</td>
<td>AMAN, WALHI South Kalimantan, BRWA, JKPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. SLPP (Unit for Participatory Mapping Services)</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS): Loksado (currently) Basically provides mapping services to all communities in South Kalimantan</td>
<td>Main issue: Territory and spatial planning Strategy: Participatory mapping</td>
<td>JKPP, BRWA, AMAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among NGOs currently dealing with issues of adat communities in Meratus, WALHI of South Kalimantan plays an important role. While having environmental issues as its main concern, it also experienced a long history of advocacy with local communities around Meratus. Together with other local NGOs and student outdoor clubs, WALHI plays an important role in coordinating and supporting activities on indigenous issues.

As indicated in Table 6.1, each NGO has its own basic concerns and work areas. The NGOs included within the WALHI network are mostly concerned with the environment as their fundamental issue. As previously discussed, they began to express more concern about the Meratus adat communities after the land swap case. WALHI, as an umbrella organisation, has no special department or division on adat communities. Meanwhile, the LPMA, while stating it is not an official member of the network, however, concerned with economic empowerment programs for adat communities, also showed concern about environmental and territorial issues. The target differentiation between the environment and adat communities has become blended through networking and the partnership process among NGOs. (Further discussion of environmentalism within the adat movement is presented in the next part of this section.)

Besides the differentiation of issue, a division in the field sites existed where NGOs had to focus their programs or activities. Each NGO previously had its own target population located in different balai communities or districts in South Kalimantan. However, this is not a rigid division of work sites as they often worked in partnership when dealing with issues of adat communities and the environment in South Kalimantan. The division of work areas occurred with intense encounters between each NGO in question and the communities it was working with.

Two local NGOs are involved in this study: (i) LPMA Borneo Selatan (Institute for Adat Community Empowerment of South Borneo); and (ii) SLPP (Unit for Participatory Mapping Services). As pointed out Table 6.1, each NGO has different concerns and field sites. Their involvement was based on LPMA representing the long history of the adat movement in Meratus while SLPP provided a more current representation of the indigenous movement in Meratus. Focusing its works mostly around balai communities within the area of the HST district, LPMA had been at the heart of the adat movement in Meratus with its key role in the Meratus Alliance Movement and the inception of AMAN of South Kalimantan that took place in balai Datar Ajab. Meanwhile, SLPP has been leading the recent movement on the state’s recognition of the Loksado people as adat communities through legislation processes.
LPMA Borneo Selatan

LPMA Borneo Selatan or Institute for Adat Communities Empowerment of South Borneo is among the few local NGOs establishing work on indigenous issues in South Kalimantan. Initiated by a student outdoor club, it began in 1998 as a response to various issues faced by local communities living around the Meratus Mountains.

Unlike other local NGOs working on indigenous issues as part of their basic concern for environmental issues, LPMA claimed that since its beginning, it had worked on a program of economic empowerment for *adat* communities in Meratus.

_Economic aspect is very important. If they are economically empowered, they would not be easily tempted to sell their lands to people out there, converting forest area for mining and so on as they would say, ‘We have enough money’ ... they would think that there is no need to sell their customary forest, fields and so on. So, that is the point of our struggle._ (Uli, NGO activist)

_So far, the LPMA’s strategy to strengthen the adat community was through economy ... the reason was because LPMA is working on seeking the alternatives [of income sources] ... The aim is that the communities will not sell their lands for mining industries._ (Deri, NGO activist)

The initial step taken by LPMA in its early engagement with the communities in 1998 was the provision and establishment of a small-scale financial institution to be managed by *adat* communities. The Meratus people started their own credit union (CU) in 2002 that operated similar to a bank, providing services, such as saving accounts and loans. The CU allowed *adat* communities to access such services which was unobtainable from conventional banks. Some of the local people required to work at the CU were sent to training courses conducted in West Kalimantan where financial institutions had developed earlier. LPMA also initiated the establishment of a cooperative named *Koperasi Dayak Alai* (KDA), which was established mainly to facilitate local rubber tappers in selling raw rubber to buyers from outside the locality.

It is interesting to look at the ‘modern’ financial system introduced to the local communities with the aim to protect their traditional institutions. Some Meratus communities were trained to manage modern financial systems with the use of current equipment, such as a computer. While this was conducted as part of a resistance movement against the dominant system that did not accommodate customary economic activities of *adat* communities, LPMA had demonstrated that part of the dominant modern system should be brought into the traditional life of *adat* communities, or that they needed to be adjusted to a dominant system to provide a space for communities to speak within a broader context of economic development.
Cultural hybridity becomes inevitable in attempts to strengthen indigenous issues. The credit union remains part of adat communities in Kiyu and Datar Ajab, and its surrounding Balais. It even expanded to become a bank for the wider surrounding society when its office was moved to a location near to Barabai, the capital town of HST. Funds in the credit union reached over 10 billion rupiahs, which enabled its members to take up loans of 150 million rupiahs.

Apart from economic matters, LPMA has contributed to community capacity building in dealing with outside parties they previously were afraid of. An LPMA activist said, “What had actually changed was basically their courage when dealing with outsiders, their courage in insisting on their rights” (Uli, NGO activist). As a pioneering NGOs, LPMA has left many legacies of activism in Meratus.

**SLPP**

While LPMA had operated in Kiyu and Datar Ajab since its earliest activities in Meratus, it is SLPP (Unit for Participatory Mapping Services) that currently holds special concern for the communities’ traditional territories. Using a method of participatory mapping, modern techniques and tools were introduced to designate the coordinate points of balai territories.

In 2011, SLPP of South Kalimantan was established as a regional representative of a national NGO network named JKPP (Network of Participatory Mapping Tasks) based in Bogor, West Java to support adat communities around the Meratus Mountains in creating a spatial map of their customary territories.

Since August 2015, SLPP has been working in partnership with BRWA (Ancestral Domain Registration Agency), an autonomous body of AMAN, on a set of processes for legal recognition of the adat territory of balai communities living in the sub-district of Loksado, the district of Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS). SLPP and BRWA facilitated the balai communities in Loksado to prepare the required documents and facilitate the procedure for the state’s recognition of Loksado adat territories. While acknowledging that the district government of HSS had recognised the existence of adat communities in Loksado, an activist from SLPP argued that its recognition had not included balai community territories:

*Their adat chiefs were recognised, but regarding the space, their rights to their lands, was not. We want the adat territories to be recognised as well. The existing recognition is only for the communities’ chiefs while all the things related to their territories are still totally controlled by the government.* (NGO activist)
In an attempt to obtain tenure rights for the Loksado communities, the struggle for indigeneity recognition led to legal processes. SLPP assisted 38 *balai* communities in Loksado by proposing a legal draft of issuance of regional regulation (*peraturan daerah*). *Adat* territory mapping was among the essential requirements. Once their territories were mapped, there remained a process of awareness raising, public discussion, socialisation of regulations, document preparation, and audiences with the district government, in order to apply to the Regional People’s Representative Council for a regional regulation to legally establish their tenure. (This process was considered more successful than applying for a District Head’s Decree, which is susceptible to change or annulment with political succession.) At the beginning of 2015, the *Balai* communities of Loksado in Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS) District (neighbouring district of HST) were the first Meratus communities to engage in such legal processes.

It was a long and complex process that communities with a spoken tradition were struggling with. Even at the final meeting before submitting the draft legal documents to the legislative board, some *adat* community members did not understand where the legal proceedings were heading and what the regional regulation would mean for them. When asked about his thoughts on the legal process, Awat Angkih (community participant) replied, “Just agree to follow it, I won’t oppose it”. The *Balai* communities tended to rely on the roles played by NGOs during the process.

Even though it is a relatively new NGO in South Kalimantan, SLPP has played an important role in the current *adat* movement’s main mission of gaining state recognition of *adat* territories. With its national support network, SLPP of South Kalimantan is able to take strategic roles in Meratus, due to its management by local senior activists who already have a strong rapport with communities in Meratus.

**AMAN of South Kalimantan**

Since its inception in 2010, AMAN of South Kalimantan has been at the centre of indigenous activism around Meratus. This organisation is at the regional level of AMAN and, therefore, its legal-formal status is *organisasi kemasyarakatan* (societal organisation) instead of a NGO. This regional level is headed by the chief of the regional executive board working under the supervision of AMAN National, based in Jakarta. However, the regional chief is elected by a representative (member) of each community within the area through a regional meeting (*musyawarah wilayah*). Although it is not meant to follow the state’s administrative territorial
division, in practice ‘regional’ means ‘provincial’. The scheme of AMAN’s structure is shown in Figure 6.3

AMAN of South Kalimantan oversees local chapters based in seven districts and claims to have 171 balai communities as its members. Regarding membership, it was stated that there is no coercion for any balai community to join AMAN. “AMAN does not force the communities join as member. If they say I do not want to be AMAN’s member, that’s fine. There is no coercion from AMAN”, said Hara (NGO activist), representing the board of AMAN of South Kalimantan.

Currently, the recruitment process of AMAN’s membership starts with distributing forms to balai communities. A community meeting is held before filling out the form to decide whether to join AMAN. After the form is completed and signed, it is submitted to the AMAN board for processing sequentially from the local to national level and verification. Thereafter, the application is discussed at a board meeting to decide whether the community meets the criteria. Regarding this, Hara (NGO activist) said that AMAN of South Kalimantan is still working on its membership administrative requirements:

*There are 56 balais in Hulu Sungai Tengah (HST) district listed as AMAN’s members. Almost all of them have not met the administrative requirements yet despite their current membership in AMAN ... So, we are going to work on this, identification and verification.*
It was acknowledged by an AMAN local activist that procedural problems in the recruitment were caused by some AMAN local board members collecting the completed form without holding a meeting and discussing with balai community members in question. Deri (NGO activist), a local board member, said:

*I acknowledge that sometimes the local board members did not conduct [the recruitment process] procedurally. Just because they already knew one or two persons from a balai, they asked them to fill and sign the form, and that’s it, submitted. That had become an issue in the following stages, especially in the process of raising awareness among the AMAN’s members.*

Based on the researcher’s observation during the fieldwork, it appeared that certain elders or youth were aware of and cared about their balai’s membership in AMAN. “I know AMAN [but] not really understand about it ... I don’t know about it [AMAN’s membership]”, said Rendi (Community participant), a youth from balai Datar Ajab who recently became involved in
LPMA’s activities. The uneven distribution of knowledge about AMAN in Meratus was also confirmed by the chief of the AMAN of South Kalimantan executive board:

*The [AMAN] movement hasn’t spread evenly [in Meratus], but at least 50 per cent of the movement has been built in several locales. What needs to be done is to strengthen the adat communities’ movement, I mean going further for organizing adat communities in the seven districts ... Those who have declared support for this movement actually still did it half-heartedly. Not all the communities declared to join this movement. So, we need further organizing processes to raise their awareness about what the adat community is. Because, even though we can say that they are adat community, they actually have no idea about the term.*

Furthermore, staying at the *balai* Datar Ajab, the researcher’s three fieldwork visits gave him the impression about how ‘quiet’ the kampong was compared to the ongoing contestation of indigeneity that AMAN was struggling with at the regional and national levels. This *balai* was the location where AMAN of South Kalimantan was conceived and its former adat chief was chosen as the first person in charge of the regional executive board. However, it was easier to identify the kampong with issues of poverty and a lack of public facilities rather than indigeneity brought to the forefront by AMAN and NGOs. The glorified national adat movement seemed hardly evident in the daily life of the local communities.

**NGO roles and self-positioning in building indigeneity**

While starting an adat community as its basis for membership, AMAN’s organisational management provided a complex representational nexus between local community members and NGO activists within this study. Its historical existence cannot be detached from NGO activism. Some AMAN board members had been, or were concurrently, active board members of an NGO. This raised an issue in Meratus when AMAN of South Kalimantan held its second regional meeting in early 2016 when a debate emerged regarding the leadership succession of AMAN of South Kalimantan between supporters of a candidate from an NGO background and those who wanted a member from the local community.

An activist who supported an NGO activist as the leader of the regional executive board of AMAN of South Kalimantan argued that direct and active involvement of an NGO activist as a leader was necessary, especially in dealing with issues related to legal and political processes, at least until local communities have the capability to manage themselves. Danur (NGO activist), a senior activist, when asked about local communities’ capability in running the organisation, said, “Not [capable] yet. I don’t mean to be arrogant. I think, the reason why we are still there working with them is because we see them as not capable yet [to work] by themselves”.
While it cannot be generalised that all activists hold such a view, it demonstrates a tendency of the NGO activists’ dominant roles over communities in building indigeneity discourses in Meratus. When asked about his view regarding this issue, an activist said:

“Well, it could be the case. It was about transferring the knowledge. But, actually, the NGO activists never forced the communities to call themselves masyarakat adat. For instance, the people in Hinas Kanan, if we ask about their identity, they would still answer that they are [balai] Ajab people, but when they want to show their political status, they would say ‘we are masyarakat adat’. To some extent I see that NGOs had played a role in constructing that." (Razin, NGO activist)

Furthermore, NGO activists believed that their advocacy works in Meratus were imperative to protecting the existence and continuity of local community traditions. In responding to a question about the significance of the role of NGOs to the Meratus people, Uli pointed out:

"[Without NGOs] would be [gone] faster. Why? Because the existing policies are structurally and massively leading to the extinction of adat, such as the policy of electronic ID card [e-KTP]. Because their tradition is not written, there is no written document of their marriage or divorce. Just imagine if the activists did not voice that the people do have [their tradition], they would not be respected. Even after we have worked on all of these, they were still not recognised ... it could be worse if there was no advocacy." (Uli, NGO activist)

In general, NGO activists suggested that they limit their roles and to position themselves as merely facilitators in raising local community critical awareness so that communities can be responsible make their own decision-making.

"[The objective] is not to make the adat community to just follow the instruction but to raise their critical consciousness. So, when they are, for instance ... going to engage in activities that may negatively impact their territory, they could rethink about it ... we facilitated them to really have a critical consciousness about their knowledge and decisions." (Razin, NGO activist)

What the activists wanted is that the peoples can really own their territories. So, even if the land is to be converted into mining area it should be on their own decision, not the other. If they want to sell it, it is the peoples who should make the decision, not the head of district ... It’s their lands. However, it’s not the case, the concessions, for mining or other industrial activities, were issued by the head of district or the National Land Agency. No space for the peoples, just compensated with CSR." (Uli, NGO activist)

NGO activists placed themselves in the stressful position between being the dominant ‘saviour’ and the empowering agent. It is through this complex power relation in activism that indigeneity had been constructed among the Meratus people.
As part of a wider movement, indigenous activism in Meratus was also directed towards constructing local communities’ identity, which represented locality and, at once, broader recognition. Amongst early NGO activists’ tasks was the naming of diverse local communities with identities that represented authenticity and popularity, so they could be easily accepted by the wider society. This process added to attempts to strengthen new signs of identity in order to be seen as different and to be accepted.

We [NGO activist] did the representation. It’s the NGO activists who named the community with ‘Meratus Dayak’. We want to change the public’s view, that the community is not orang bukit [hill people], who are uneducated and having no religion, but the Meratus Dayak. They have their own faith, Kaharingan or Balian, it’s their religion. They have their own rules on forest management. That’s what we had intensively built up. Even though it did not always represent the fact in the communities, still we put that illustration in our reports. All forms of media were used by the network of activists to represent that. (Uli, NGO activist)

The use of the term ‘Meratus Dayak’ had been popularised by local newspapers during the land swap case in Meratus. Its identity was seen as an effective strategy to position local communities within the discourse of indigeneity. Even though the name is ahistorical to the communities’ identity, the local people responded to it positively:

[Adat identity] in South Kalimantan is specifically attributed to the Dayak people living in the balais. I personally still question the use of term ‘Meratus’. However, as it has been popular to be identified with the Dayak, It’s fine, it’s just a matter of naming. (Nadi, NGO activist)

This is similar to findings presented in Chapter 5, concerning the Meratus people submerging their local identity into broader ones that could be recognised by the larger society, including the state. NGO activists worked with the Meratus people by embracing their concept of an adat identity that they regarded as an effective means of securing the existence of local community traditions from the state’s policy encroachment. While assuming that indigenous activism is about securing or maintaining the people’s traditions, it was believed that creating a new identity could help the community to better position themselves when dealing with possible threats.

While deploying new identities in local (Meratus Dayak) and national (masyarakat adat) levels, another scheme of indigenous activism is to recover the authentic traditional identity of local communities. AMAN National devised a plan for revitalisation by which adat communities were encouraged to recover their lost traditions affected by the past regime’s policies.
AMAN as an organisation encourages revitalisation, there should be revitalisation of the adat institutions so that the peoples could identify who they really are and where they come from. [It’s done by] encouraging [the peoples] holding meetings in their kampongs to discuss about their history. The 30-year period of the New Order’s authority had dismissed such thoughts [about traditions], omitting the communities’ understanding about their adat, being replaced with new forms of thoughts. (Lusio, NGO activist)

Nonetheless, in the locale of Meratus, such an idea of revitalisation emerged only as a sporadic opinion among the activists in responding to the phenomenon of declining local traditions. Furthermore, it was said by Razin, a former local activist, that there were actually different perspectives among the activists in viewing cultural dynamics within adat communities. Some activists suggested identity recovery while others saw that the changes were part of an unavoidable dynamic within the communities and, therefore, placed more concern on natural resources protection and social justice.

The local AMAN activists realised that Meratus communities were changing, some of which had already changed their faith, including many youths becoming increasingly attracted to the outside ‘modern’ way of life. Even some elders became concerned about economic matters over traditions. The idea of revitalisation or maintaining local culture then emerged, as expressed by Nadi (NGO activist), “Just to preserve the remaining [traditions] ... adoption has occurred.” Another AMAN activist expressed concern about the complicated situation, one without a solution:

Until now, we still have no idea about the way to anticipate it [the decline of local traditions]. It happened as a result of the influences that we couldn’t prevent ... the young people no longer want to inherit the sacred things from the elders and preserve traditions as their identity. The Meratus young people tend to no longer use their identity as the Meratus Dayak ... it’s the influence of modernity. (Hara, NGO activist)

Indigenous activism in Meratus works as part of a broader movement with its main purpose to build and strengthen indigeneity discourses. Revitalisation or preservation of what is seen as local traditions is a key mission set apart from issues of natural resources protection and social justice. However, it is evident that the ideals of the broad indigenous movement tended to lose control of what was happening in local communities like Meratus, for example, declining traditions, which the local activists found hard to deal with. Within the local cultural context, the concept of indigeneity emerged more as an idea of the reinvention of traditions of changing communities to be represented in a broader society. Indigenousness was given its meaning through its contestation with mainstream society.
Meanwhile, cultural aspects are seemingly a lower priority for the movement, that is, placed after the environment and social justice. This becomes more evident in the next exploration of environmental concerns in indigenous activism.

**Environmentalism-led indigeneity**

The background of environmental activism drove activists’ basic values while working on indigeneity issues that bear many dynamic aspects of culture. Environmentally-based indigenous activism often represents indigenous communities as forest guardians. The active involvement of environmental NGOs in the *adat* movement in Meratus was seen as part of the strategies for strengthening environmental missions.

*The reason they became concerned with the issues [of adat community] was related to the threat of companies’ investments toward the territories [in Meratus]. WALHI came with main aim to save the territories together with the communities. The easiest way to organise [the communities], to raise their emotional drive, was through the issue of adat community and territorial mapping. That’s what I saw.* (Razin, NGO activist)

*Since the forest areas left in South Kalimantan were located mostly in Meratus … which is the territory of adat communities, it is unavoidable to involve in that issue. That’s the case of YCHI [one of local NGOs]. As the forest protection took place in the territories of adat communities, we then took ‘adat community’ as our issue as well.* (Danur, NGO activist)

Interestingly, NGO activists in Meratus mostly focused their activities around the West side of the Meratus Mountains. This appeared to relate to the abundance of extractive companies on the East side, that is, too many to deal with. Realising that severe environmental degradation had occurred around the area, activism was then focused on securing the West side.

*In fact, as we saw that Meratus had an East side and a West side, we thought, we would not be able to do something to save the East side since there were so many companies there … in 2003, if I’m not mistaken, YCHI and other friends [NGOs] agreed to focus on saving the West side, [covering districts of] Hulu Sungai Selatan, Hulu Sungai Tengah, Balangan and part of Tanjung and Tabalong. So, many activist friends then became more focused on the West side, for protection. As we could not save this [East] part, then we decided to not let the West side be devastated. It was in 2003. So, that’s the issue.* (Danur, NGO activist)

Similar activities happened on the West side, when in its early activism, LPMA decided to stop working with a *balai* community that accepted an oil palm plantation company making an investment. This demonstrated that indigeneity issues in Meratus are represented by NGOs
through environmentalism. Meratus communities living on the East side have been represented as an example of a ‘failed’ adat community due to extensive environmental damage around its territories. Therefore, while believing that adat communities are more capable compared to outsiders in preserving their forest, NGO activists have realised that this was not always the case.

_I believe that our forest would be well preserved if managed by the adat communities. This applied especially in Loksado, I am not sure with other places. In Tanah Bumbu, it has been damaged, right [laughter]. In Loksado, we believe that the forest would be safe in the hand of the adat communities and we expect that it would be adat forest._ (Danur, NGO activist)

It is at this point that an activist supported the state’s doubt about local communities committed to forest preservation.

_The department of forestry is not fully wrong to worry about this. In Tanah Bumbu ... it’s [the forest] nearly finished. It’s the communities themselves [did the logging], supported by potential buyers with tool like a chainsaw._ (Danur, NGO activist)

It was also acknowledged that illegal logging activities happened in one balai community in Loksado. It was argued that it was conducted by individuals who once fought the elders when reminded. It is claimed that the tradition in the balai is fading. This shows that environmental preservation is seen as an integral value in building local indigeneity where local people’s contradictory acts signify their weakening adat institution.

Such a strong view of environmental activism often manifested in justification for the comparability of local traditions with the concept of environmental conservation:

_In fact, it is in their very nature that the adat communities in Meratus have a commitment to guard their forest, because they live in the forest and intensely interact with it. They are very wise in preserving the forest. So, if it was said that they are active in preserving the forest, it’s actually their nature. That’s why they don’t want the company to come._ (Hara, NGO activist)

Such a robust environmentalism, however, at some point, found its internal contradictions within the local culture. Apart from the issue of protected forest areas that had been criticised over the years by local activists for restricting adat community activities, there was resistance towards three emerging issues of environmental protection: (i) converting Meratus areas into a national park; and (ii) prohibiting a local practice named manyalukut; and (iii) burning an area
in the forest to open a field for farming. Hara (NGO activist) said that the ideas would threaten the local hereditary traditions of farming, shifting cultivation and field clearing. Also, criminalisation of the local communities was among the concerns for its refusal. He further insisted, “The local culture needs to be considered ... the regulation might apply in Java, but not in South Kalimantan, in Meratus.”

NGO activists also supported such a view, contending that the local environmental conservation approach to be applied does not follow the global concept.

Our conservation approach does not follow the Western concept of conservation that tends to prohibit the appearance of communities. Our conservation approach respects their local wisdom. (Razin, NGO activist)

There emerged critical points in indigenous issues where the ‘modern’ concept of environmentalism inevitably needed to compromise, and even justify, local cultures. However, such a justification potentially raised debate about whether community practices of protecting the forest results from a built concept and consciousness about environmental preservation or merely daily cultural practices as a consequence of living conditions. Each view bears different consequences. While the former might lead to a perpetuation of local values, and therefore, a way of life, the latter is more prone to change or decline. It seems that within this slight overlapping polarisation, NGO activists conceptualising environmental conservation ideas is an integral part of the construction of indigeneity.

Despite encouraging a community to self-identify as an adat identity, NGO activists have control over the articulation of indigenous identity through environmental discourses. Such a control means that, in spite of having a strong belief in the communities’ commitment to environmental conservation, activists are aware of the possibility of infringement. Regarding such a possibility, a local NGO activist leading the legal recognition process of Loksado communities stated:

I believe that there is a risk. We have pushed for the recognition but then the forest become degraded, you could just imagine how we should be responsible for this. I have said this to the communities that this would be stated in the perda [the regional regulation for recognition], that if you people make infringements, the perda could be withdrawn. I said it so that [they] could understand the consequences. We would recommend cancelation if they no longer [hold the commitment] ... we want the forest to be preserved, the communities have their rights to space. If they won’t preserve their forest, not in line with our view ... if the perda [regional regulation] become counterproductive to the forest conservation, then it’s useless. (Danur, NGO activist)
Indigeneity discourse constructed in Meratus has given significant space to environmental conservation ideas brought on by NGO activists. Conversely, this means that an indigenous or adat identity attached to Meratus communities is not simply an issue of preserving or recovering an authentic identity. Identifying Meratus Balai communities with an adat identity can be seen as representing local communities within the discourse of indigeneity in which environmentalism has control in its articulation. Among the articulation of such an indigeneity is the promotion of adat territorial mapping as an effort to gain state recognition. An exploration of this issue follows.

**Adat territories mapping and the state recognition**

Among the current adat movement’s main strategies to gain state recognition is the acceleration of territorial mapping of adat communities’ ancestral domains, a process called participatory mapping, which facilitates adat communities to take a key role in recognising their own territories. This sub-section does not present the technical process of the method, but rather sees it as an adat movement representation strategy to build a stronger indigeneity discourse. The main objective is to show and affirm the existence of adat communities throughout their territories.

In relation to adat territories, AMAN (umbrella organisation for adat communities), through its autonomous agency, BRWA (Ancestral Domain Registration Agency), worked on consolidating the adat maps that were submitted through the registration process. BRWA worked in partnership with other organisations, specifically to deal with technical tasks of the mapping process.

Until early 2017, BRWA claimed to have covered 953 adat territories across Indonesia. These registered adat maps were used to support advocacy work for state recognition and policies that protected the existence of adat communities. In 2016, BRWA submitted 665 adat territory maps to the government, expecting that they would be used in making policies related to adat communities (Badan Registrasi Wilayah Adat, 2016).

Territory mapping is seen by NGO activists as fundamental for strengthening indigeneity in Indonesia. A board member of BRWA said that the emphasis of the state’s recognition is on adat community territories:

> Everyone would acknowledge that they are adat communities, but when it comes to the issue of adat territory ... [showing cynical facial expression]. It is the real
It’s useless to acknowledge the subject [adat community] but not the territory. (Jaka, NGO activist)

Furthermore, it has also been stated that adat territorial mapping is expected to provide operational data about adat communities, that is, information about spatial maps, sociocultural histories and local customary rules. It is expected that the availability of such comprehensive data could be accommodated in the state’s recognition documents to allow for acceptance from all parties.

Those working on the mapping and registration process, they do it very seriously so that the communities can show the history of their territories. It is because there are economic and political interests in there ... [that could] prevent the recognition process. To recognise the subject [adat communities] without their territories is useless, it is their living space. I think, the issue of territory is the hardest one. So, we would like regional regulations to be really clear about this. We even encourage that the maps are attached [to the regulation documents]. Otherwise, it would not be operational. (Jaka, NGO activist)

Meanwhile, local NGOs working in Meratus started to conduct mapping techniques since its early period of activism, including LPMA who worked on participatory mapping in some balai communities, such as Kiyu and Datar Ajab. Other local NGOs also included mapping in their work areas. Local community members were provided with training on participatory mapping techniques, including using the relevant tools, such as GPS. During this early period, participatory mapping of adat territories was expected to prevent horizontal conflicts and to gain local recognition to anticipated encroachment threats from companies without resulting in a legislative process.

The aim of the mapping ... we wanted that there would be no more conflicts between the communities ... in managing their forest. When all the communities have their maps, we planned to bring them to the local and provincial government to be included in the spatial planning documents. (Deri, NGO activist)

We expected regional recognition that would cover the schemes of borders, land use and adat institution of the mapped territories. The further aim was to prevent [companies] investments that ignore the local communities ... [that come] without an appropriate socialisation process. (Razin, NGO activist)

While adat territory mapping had been conducted since 1990s, it was not until after the issuance of MK 35 in 2013 that mapping activities were encouraged and accelerated. Some communities began putting signboards that displayed the decree to confirm their claims over their adat
tTerritories. The national NGO network became focused on registering *adat* communities and their territories by establishing local networks, such as SLPP (unit for participatory mapping services) and UKP3 (unit for the acceleration of participatory mapping) in most provinces.

Concurrently, the government developed regulations for different sectors that brought forward opportunities and challenges for the *adat* movement while trying to gain an advanced level of state recognition. The proof of *adat* territories is a compulsory requirement. Using the participatory method, the mapping process of *adat* territories involved local communities, especially elders from *balai* communities, who would lead the team and show the routes and traditional borders that were previously based on signs from nature, such as hills, stones or trees. The mapping team was trained to take notes and record GPS points of the borders.

Nonetheless, such a process of mapping created problems. Some community members refused to accept the mapping process of their territories. One reason for the refusal was a fear of potential horizontal conflicts that mapping may cause. Danur (NGO activist) said, “Among their reasons was that the borders are no longer clear so that the mapping would cause conflicts among them”. It was also acknowledged by Deri, a local AMAN activist, that refusals emerged because the mapping process did not always follow the correct procedure:

*It cannot be denied that some of my [activist] colleagues, [for instance] due to just knowing a little information about the territory and information of a *balai* community, and that it is located next to a *balai* that already become an AMAN member, they simply put it in list of *balai*s to be mapped. The problem came when we were about to begin the mapping in that location as the local people then questioned [who we were]. Another problem was that the agreement form for the mapping was only signed by small number of the people so that they did not understand when we came to do the mapping.* (Deri, NGO activist)

Deri further said that until now there was an unresolved conflict between two *balai*s about to be mapped. With such an unexpected possibility, *adat* territory mapping has become crucial in strengthening indigeneity discourse, showing the existence of *adat* communities through a territorial representation so that it can be accepted by a broader society, especially the state.

*We want to show it through a scientific method, using cartographic and geographic approaches. Actually, the communities already have their own map but only apply among themselves, which cannot be used at a global level, where we should use the cartographic and geographic forms.* (Razin, NGO activist)

Throughout the mapping process, the *balai* communities’ traditional territorial system previously based on nature’s border signs was replaced with Peluso and Vandergeest’s ‘abstract
space’ (1995, pp. 388-389). This was represented by a variety of measurement units such as ‘meters’ and ‘degree latitude’, which are actually imaginary, and hence, potentially dismiss the “peoples’ lived social relationship and the histories of their interactions with the land”. While customary territory mapping is intended to contest the state’s administered territories, Pramono (2014) questioned whether it was a form of resistance or discipline. This is how masyarakat adat cannot be viewed simply as a representation of the subaltern, as it contains complexities and/or paradoxes that need to be negotiated.

**Conclusion**

It is evident from data presented in Chapter 6 that NGOs have contributed significantly to the growth and development of indigeneity discourses in Meratus, specifically in the Meratus Alliance movement that had become a moment of historical transformation of indigeneity for the Meratus people. It is evident that the Meratus peoples were able to reconstruct their new identity as part of the broader indigenous activism. The movement clearly left legacies of indigenous activism that still remain.

The global and nationwide indigenous or adat movements have also played major roles in affecting the state’s changing policies so that the emergence of indigeneity moments is considered. It was through these moments of indigeneity that indigenous movements spread throughout the Meratus communities, offering opportunities for local communities to voice their issues on marginalisation. Meanwhile, despite its progressive policies toward indigeneity issues, the state did not change its basic stance, which had its roots in the long-perpetuated concept of an ‘isolated community’. It is within this ongoing contestation that the indigenous movement led by AMAN viewed the political arena as a possible medium for encouraging its cadres to take over strategic positions of policymaking.

Under NGO narratives of indigenous movements, the Meratus people appeared to be competing with indigeneity versus non-indigeneity representation. Works of representation in the form of advocacies became the main concern of NGOs when building the local people’s indigenous identity. The narrative of representing the Meratus people in indigeneity discourses had inevitably compromised the nation-state hegemonic system. This, again, affirmed that the construction of indigeneity in Meratus consists of a form of cultural hybridity, absorbing any possible aspects that conjointly contributes to its discursive formation. It gained its existence mostly from the technologies of hegemonic discourses that it had contested or had no previous access to: legal recognition, population administration, a modernised economy and organisation, global values of environmentalism and state-administrated territories. While indigeneity
represented through *masyarakat adat* in Meratus has been echoed by NGOs as a form of resistance, it was also about negotiation of hybridised identities in practice. It is important to view indigeneity in this context as a representation always in flux, underlaid with continual shifting imbalances of power among actors involved.

In Chapter 7, the complexity of issues are more intensely discussed, and includes analyses of the study’s findings based on a postcolonial framework.
**CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

**Meratus people indigeneity within the Indonesian paradigm of postcoloniality**

This study argues that those categorised as the colonised do not only include people with direct experiences of colonisation but have been expanded to include people “in zones of dependency and peripherality, stigmatized in the designation of underdeveloped, less-developed, developing states” (Said, 1989, p. 207). This led to a postcolonial analysis applied in this study by firstly locating the Meratus people within a broader historical and political context of the Indonesian nation-state before moving on to more specific analyses. In doing so, this section is focused on three main issues that constitute an underlying analysis. Firstly, the concept of marginalisation is seen as the best means of contextually articulating how the process of ‘othering’ has occurred for the Meratus people under a hegemonic state’s development narrative. However, marginalisation discussed here involves the process of how the Meratus people represented themselves as ‘the marginalised’, which became the basis for analyses, using a theory of representation. Secondly, the global discourse of indigeneity adopted by national and local NGOs has brought the Meratus people out from under the state’s hegemony towards a narrative of activism, representing the local community within the nationwide adat movement. This provides a more contextualised, basic postcolonial analysis of how the Meratus people were actually ‘subaltern’, as they needed another (competing) narrative of modernity to be able to be represented in dominant discourses. Thirdly, introducing the global indigenous movement to a local context, such as in Meratus, may reflect an act of constituting an ‘imagined indigeneity’. Dynamic and diverse localities were ‘imagined’ as if they inherently possessed definitive categories comparable to, and hence make them part of, a larger (national and global) indigenous identity.

In this chapter, the three post-structuralism-informed post-colonial theories, subjectivity/subjectification, identity/identification and subaltern and representation, play a more rigorous roles in developing this study’s discussions. However, it is worth noting that these theories were not applied here as structurally separated theory-categorised discussions. They rather work to support and explain each other through discussions that developed from a starting point this study found important in exploring the complexity of postcolonial perspectives applied to local minorities such as the Meratus, marginalisation. It is from here that the three main theories
found their ways to lead the discussions while being strengthened and enriched with other relevant theories.

Representing the marginalised

It is the process of othering that best describes how the Meratus people identify themselves. This was apparent from how they positioned themselves under the narrative and hence, wanted to meet the standard of normality of the mainstream society surrounding them. Accustomed to being referred to as ‘orang bukit’ in the past, the Meratus people saw themselves as the ‘other’ and ‘backward’. Therefore, communities living in the interior area were led to believe that people living outside the area lived in an exemplary model of civilisation where modern public services could be easily accessed.

Grumbles (2016) suggested that the Meratus people’s lives is a reflection of marginalisation of local communities living in Indonesian interiors. The Indonesian government had inherited the previous Dutch colonial system of managing diversity. Emphasising centralised control of power over its colonies, a dichotomy between Java and its outer islands had created a sociocultural bias of a central-periphery relationship. Marginalisation occurred in terms of public service distribution in a sociocultural sense. Local minorities living with unrecognised traditions were seen as estranged and/or backward. This phenomenon strengthened during the New Order regime along with the deployment of the term ‘isolated tribes’ or ‘isolated communities’ through resettlement programs.

Furthermore, Haug et al. (2016) observed that the pattern of centre-periphery relationships in the ‘outer islands’, especially in Sumatra and Borneo, mostly took the form of an upstream/downstream relationship. Populous downstream areas where district towns or capitals exist became the centre of economic and political activities while marginal, sparse upstream areas functioned mostly as providers of forest product goods. Within a broader state context, it can be said that local communities such as the Meratus were living under double marginalisation, that is, as part of marginal outer islands and marginal upstream people.

This may explain why the Meratus people perceived their backwardness by describing what they identified as low quality human resources. The narrative of ‘center’ civilisation had offered no alternative but a discursive formation of development with all its ‘statements’ about being developed (e.g. modern health services, formal education, official religions, permanent housing and regular income) and underdeveloped (e.g. traditional/shamanic healing, uneducated, local faiths (not considered as religion), nomadic life and subsistent economy). Descriptions made by
the Meratus people about themselves were mostly negative, such as the lack of formal education, inadequate health services, low income and poor infrastructure. Marginalisation had deeply shaped the way the Meratus people represent themselves.

This fits with what Bhabha (1994) called ‘hegemonic normality’ by which the nation-wide imposition of the state’s development values and standards had generated subjectifications for both the mainstream society and the marginalised. Those who do not meet the development’s values and standards are seen as inferior, as inequality is created by the development process itself. The Meratus people seemed to be incarcerated within a hegemonic discourse of state development. This is a situation not dissimilar to Fanon’s description of the colonised Algerian Black people, “The black man wants to be like the white man. For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white” (2008, p. 178). In other words, the colonising impact of the state’s marginalisation of the Meratus people led them to aspire to be normatively Indonesian, that is, modernised and developed.

‘Marginalisation’, therefore, is the keyword in understanding how local minorities, such as the Meratus people can be represented. However, it is important to note that representation is not a neutral concept or act, but constructed through and/or within a dominant discourse that is immersed in its process of discursive formation. Within the discourse of state development agenda, the marginalisation of the Meratus people was evident, not only in how the state has positioned and treated them, but also in the way they represented themselves. The narrative of modernity was apparent in the binary perspective of development versus underdevelopment. Understanding how local communities such as the Meratus people have been represented needs to identify the dominant discourses that surround it, as well as aspects of marginalisation behind the representation. An analysis using the theory of representation is discussed in the following section.

**From state hegemony to an indigenous activism narrative**

How Balai communities became intensely involved, in and identify themselves with, the nationwide adat movement led by AMAN is a fundamental concern of this study, as examined in previous studies conducted at different sites (Grumblies, 2013; Li, 2007a). Attention was paid to how local communities living in the Meratus Mountains became connected with a nationwide movement that was linked to global movements of indigenous peoples. In the past, local marginalised communities had no interest in their self-identity. They used the vernacular term bubuhan to name their counterparts from different Balai communities, such as Bubuhan Kiyu,
Bubuhan Ajab or Bubuhan Batu Kambar. Their representation of themselves was to be part of the national and global indigenous peoples under the name of *masyarakat adat*.

It is interesting to question whether such a globalising phenomenon of indigenousness can be simply explained with the involvement of indigenous movement organisations: *Do the Meratus people become – or at least called – ‘indigenous’ or masyarakat adat just because they joined AMAN and/or worked with NGOs concerned with issues of indigenous peoples?* This is not only a question about identity formation; it is about the critical concern addressed in this study about how it was possible for Meratus people to be identified with indigeneity. Using Foucauldian concept of discourse, another question that can be asked is: *What ‘statements’ appeared in the construction of the Meratus people’s indigeneity?* Or two further questions can be asked: (i) *In what situation can indigenous identity be attached to the Meratus people?* and (ii) *If connected with ethnicity, why did the Meratus people deserve indigeneity while their Banjar ethnic counterpart did not?* What needs to be acknowledged is that these questions are not about ‘what made indigeneity’ but relates to ‘how the construction of indigeneity was possible’, which leads to a discussion about representation. The word ‘possible’ applied here is embedded with a Foucauldian understanding of ‘power’ by which the emphasis is not on ‘who exercises power’ but on ‘how power is possible to be exercised’.

Therefore, while this study recognises that NGOs have taken on the important role of bringing indigeneity to the Meratus people and leading the local *Balai* communities to recognise their *adat* identity, a critical inquiry needs to determine how this *adat* movement became possible. Hence, NGO indigenous activism that emerged as a resistance against state policies needs to be located within a broader concept of discursive formation of indigeneity in Indonesia. This also suggests that the state, despite its denial of indigenous issues, should be viewed as an important actor that made the emergence of indigeneity discourses possible. The state has played fundamental roles in putting local communities such as the Meratus people within the ‘tribal slot’ or ‘indigenous space’ through years of marginalising and stigmatising policies. The local communities that had been dispossessed from their ancestral lands or labelled ‘isolated’ were among those involved in the then emerging indigenous movements.

The long-established state-constructed term ‘isolated community’ was then changed into KAT (estranged *adat* community) to accommodate the emerging indigenous movement that called for the use of term *masyarakat adat*. The wave of *reformasi* had provided a large space for such a change as, along with a strengthened democratisation stream, a decentralisation regime replaced the previous centralistic one. The state’s hegemonic, stigmatising construction of local
communities was being transformed by the narrative of indigeneity that had been initiated and prepared by NGO activists since the early 1990s. The state’s paternalistic approaches to the stereotyped isolated communities were being reformulated and represented using jargonistic human rights-based approaches.

Meanwhile, the Meratus people realised that their self-identification and use of the term *masyarakat adat* was not derived from their native concepts and language. The identity of *masyarakat adat* was adopted by the Meratus people as both a concept and language from NGO activists who spread global ideas of indigenous peoples. Nonetheless, the term also echoes the state’s hegemonic concepts of citizenry adopted by NGOs as a form of compromise by local framing when beginning the movement under an autocratic regime. In other words, the use of term *masyarakat adat* as an identity reflects a complex nexus between a progressive indigenous rights movement and a conventional state’s long-established concept of local ethnic communities inherited from the previous colonial Netherland-Indies government.

Thus, the identity *masyarakat adat* attached to the Meratus people by NGO activists as part of the national indigenous movement did not simply reflect an advocacy strategy, but further implied deployment of the state’s hegemonic identification of local communities. In other words, *masyarakat adat* as an indigenous identity tolerates, not only issues of competing meanings between the state and NGOs/indigenous movement organisations, but also issues of power relations between activists and the local people associated with indigeneity. While it can be argued that the Meratus people, as they expressed, benefited from being positioned and represented within a dominant discourse, this may also be inferred as the people’s powerlessness in dealing with their subalternity.

**Imagined indigeneity**

From within their voiceless localities, the inclusion of the Meratus people into the bandwagon of national and/or global indigeneity was an attempt for them to imagine their authenticity and differences from the mainstream to a united and larger national or global identity. The researcher uses the word ‘imagine’ here by referring to Anderson’s (1987) ‘imagined communities’. Anderson observed that “all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps are even these) are imagined” (1987, p. 6). The Meratus people were ‘imagined’ or led to ‘imagine themselves’ as part of the larger community of indigenous peoples despite having never met or heard from anyone categorised as *masyarakat adat*. Interestingly, they also imagined themselves with a definitive tribal identification as part of the larger Dayak ethnic life across Kalimantan and smaller *Balai* communities within the Meratus...
Mountains locale in spite of their dynamic inter- and intra-sociocultural relationships. It is how the Meratus people have been identified or ‘imagined’ with indigeneity. In other words, it is how ‘indigeneity’ or ‘indigenous identity’ has been made possible for the Meratus people.

Additionally, such an analysis needs to refer to how highly diverse Indonesian ethnic groups living across dispersed islands had been constructed and united as part of a nation-state since Dutch colonial governance. Under a politically territorialised state, it is the individual status of citizenship that is constitutionally recognised, instead of communal belongingness to a certain ethnicity. However, at the same time, ethnic diversity is undeniably a part of Indonesia’s sociocultural environment. The imposed political territories followed, becoming arenas for existential contestations among ethnic groups looking for state recognition.

The transformation of local Balian communities in Meratus into a territorialised local identities of the Meratus Dayak and masyarakat adat needs to be located within such a context. Complexities and/or paradoxes of claims of authenticity, sovereignty and the needs of legal-formal recognition seemed to be unavoidable. Borrowing Anderson’s words, indigenous identity can be described as something “imagined” but not “fabricated” since “communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (1987, p. 6). In other words, based on this study of the adat movement in Meratus, indigeneity is neither about recovering authentic identity nor constructing a new identity, but it is about how the representation of a subaltern local ethnic community is possible to be made in the circuit of Indonesian – and even within a global-dominant discourse of indigeneity.

**Indigenous activism as practices of representation**

This study recognises indigenous activism as a form of representation. More specifically, it is about ‘practices of representation’. This view was derived from Hall’s (1997b) theorisation of representation based on a Foucauldian discursive approach. Based on a constructionist point of view, this concept of representation was used to determine that indigeneity does not exist without being constructed by its subjects. However, at the same time, the theory of representation is rigorously framed with poststructuralism that refuses any simplification of power relations. Therefore, indigeneity cannot be disconnected from the existing dominant discursive processes that encircle and subjectify the subjects of indigenous activism. Based on this perspective, this study recognises indigenous activism as practices of representation, as it includes activities of representing long-sedimented local identities and practices in broader and current dominant socio-political settings, instead of constructing new identities. Furthermore, indigenous activism is a practice of representation because it deals with how regimes of
representation, resulting from a power-knowledge nexus, play roles in determining how and what representations are to be made for marginalised local communities such as the Meratus people.

The *masyarakat adat* movement conducted in Meratus needs to be contextualised within dialectical processes between long-established state’s integrationist policies and continuously strengthening indigenous movements that emerged in the early 1990s globally and at the end of the 1990s nationally. Indigenous activism in the Meratus Mountains represented the local *Bubuhan* or *Balai* communities of Meratus, followers and practitioners of a local faith, *Balian*, in a national and global indigenous identity using the term *masyarakat adat*. This representation worked on framing traditional local communities with a nationally modified term representing localities (names, symbols, practices, faiths) differently from mainstream society so that the indigenous identity becomes possible for the people and places them in the circuit of dominant discourse. Borrowing Said’s words, it was required to make “enough noise that” the subaltern “were paid attention to, and asked in so to speak” and that “to convert them into topics of discussion … is necessarily to change them into something fundamentally and constitutively different” (1989, p. 210). However, more than just ‘noise’ and ‘being different’, Hall’s (1997b) concept of representation asserts that something can be accepted in a regime of representation.

It is under this concept of representation that two issues were raised to explain the meaning of indigenous activism as a practice of representation and how it works. The first issue questions the claim of Meratus people identifying themselves (NGO activists often used the term ‘self-identification’) as indigenous or *adat* community. Using Hall’s (1997b) concept of a regime of representation, this becomes the theoretical basis resulting from this study that explains how a ‘representation of indigeneity’ is applied to the Meratus people. The second issue explains how indigenous activism became the main narrative through which practices of representation were applied, by ‘organisationalising’ local communities and constituting an indigenous-environmental movement.

**Self-representation under regimes of representation**

It is perhaps an oversimplification to say that the state’s imposition of hegemonic development values has led to the Meratus people’s self-representation of inferiority. Moreover, positioning the Meratus people as being incarcerated within discourses of development without indicating the possibility of resisting or, at least, getting out of the ‘trap’ might risk this study to fall into absolutism and ignore the agency of the Meratus people. The emphasis in the previous sub-
section relates to the analysis of how marginalisation has affected the representation of the Meratus people by the state rather than the process of representation itself.

However, this issue of agency raises interesting questions about whether there is really such a thing as ‘self-representation’, such as Is it possible for people who have been strongly affected by the hegemonic normality to express or speak about their own voices? and To what extent are their voices their own? In a broader spectrum, how can the very local voices represent themselves within the surrounding narrative of hegemonic normality? Answers to these questions later in the chapter explain the fundamental basis of analysis using theories of representation applied in this study.

Holding onto a theory of ‘othering’ led this study to an analysis of power relations in understanding issues of representation. The theory of ‘othering’ embedded in Spivak’s (1985) ‘Rani of Sirmur’ which, as summarised by Jensen (2011), consists of three dimensions of consciousness: (i) power holder; (ii) inferiority; and (iii) master of knowledge (Chapter 1) that fit the themes that emerged in Chapter 5 about how the Meratus people internalised mainstream society’s values into their lives: (i) positioning themselves as ‘development actors/participants’; (ii) doing ‘self-othering’ as an inferior group; and (iii) constructing binary self identification that followed a progress narrative of the mainstream group as a source of knowledge.

The three forms of ‘othering’ mentioned above generally show how the Meratus people have negotiated their localities with the dominant system and its values imposed upon them. While the impositions were inevitable, the Meratus people were not totally passive receivers. Despite their preservation of hereditary traditions, the Meratus people have been familiar with changes within their communities, even when related to essential issues, such as faith and rules. They have a space for anticipating or negotiating unexpected changes without causing meaningful sociocultural shocks within their communities. This can be seen as a manifestation of the Meratus people’s agency in responding to the imposition of dominant values. Using Hall’s (1990) term, it is a form of ‘positioning’, which was also used by Li (2000a) to theorise her concept of a tribal slot.

Therefore, the representation of the Meratus people incorporating Bhabha’s (1994) concept of hegemonic normality when imposed by a state’s narrative of development does not deny their agency. Rather, it reflects the complexity of the concept of representation, as applied in this study. There was an overlapping perception between ‘being represented’ and ‘self-representation’. When describing themselves as marginalised or backward, a question is raised:
Were the Meratus people making a self-representation or following certain (dominant) narratives of representation?

In reference to Foucault, Hall suggested that a representation can only be made within a discourse, not outside it, because subjects “are operating within the limits of the episteme, the discursive formation, the regime of truth, of a particular period and culture” (1997b, p. 55). Based on this view, the dominant discourse of state development was inevitable, even when the Meratus people made descriptions or representations about themselves. The mainstream narrative of progress and development in the Meratus people’s imagination about ‘quality human resources’ has been internalised for generations, and was manifested in their own self-othering. Even when showing expressions of resistance or anger toward their marginalisation or oppression by the state or companies, they still could not stop viewing themselves as ‘uneducated’ or ‘backward’.

It is the ‘regimes of representation’, a concept derived by Hall (1990, 1997b) from Foucault’s concept of ‘regime of truth’, that defines how self-representation is made. Formed through the power-knowledge nexus, regimes of representation operate not simply by imposing domination but “by the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to the norm” (Hall, 1990, p. 226). It is important to note that regimes of representation operate only within specific, not across, periods and cultures. Therefore, it concerns regimes of representation that exist surrounding the subjects. Also, it is possible that more than one regime of representation exist or there are contestations among the exiting regimes.

The theorisation of regimes of representation is evident in the following sections that explain how the Meratus people were brought into indigeneity representations, including how past dominant developmental discourses had put the local peoples such as the Meratus under representation of marginalised, isolated communities. The next section also shows how the emerging regime of indigeneity or adat representation treated the people.

**Representation of indigeneity through the narrative of activism**

**Governmentalised indigeneity and NGOisation of local ethnic communities**

This research concludes that, in many aspects, indigeneity is about activism instead of indigenousness itself. Some of the local community members concerned with the adat movement have blended their roles as a part of NGO activism. It is how subjectification of local communities as indigenous communities was constructed, that is, not through forced imposition but by bringing them into lengthy direct engagement in activism. The Meratus people’s
subjectivity and identity as an adat community were constructed through intense processes and experiences of resistance. The imagination about indigeneity then became identified with daily practices. This occurred as people were directed towards an organised, structured and formalised structure through becoming a member of AMAN. It was how adat or indigenous identity became more governmentalised as they were being ‘organisationalised’.

It is important to raise questions about the power relations built between the Meratus people and NGO activists (as bearers of indigeneity issues): Did NGO activists impose and construct the indigenous or adat identity of the Meratus people? Did understanding the ideas of masyarakat adat bear global concepts of indigeneity amongst the local people? How were negotiations about identity positioning made during the process? These questions were raised when the researcher found indications of dominant roles played by NGO activists in constructing and strengthening indigenous identity among the Meratus people (Chapter 6). Also raised was an issue about how activism incorporates ideas of social justice, such as an adat movement dealing with issues of power relations among constituents attempting to be represented.

As reported by participants who were actively involved in the movement, the adat movement led by NGOs in Meratus brought about two important changes for the local people: (i) the way they viewed and coped with past marginalisation; and (ii) how to deal with state officials whom they afraid of in the past. Importantly, the local people become more politically empowered. However, the suggestion to create a adat movement did not spread to all community members, or Balai communities. Differentiation was found that led to the emergence of unequal power relations between activists and local community members.

On the one hand, some of the local people became deeply and intensely involved in the movement activism and therefore represented themselves more as ‘activists’ than as local community members. They spent more time on organisational matters in AMAN regional offices located in city areas than in the Meratus area. The local indigenous activism represented inter-generational differentiation among the Meratus people because it involved mainly the local youth. Drawing on Tyson’s (2010) analysis, segregation is possibly because young people who are highly exposed to the politics of indigeneity become ‘political entrepreneurs’ connected to the broader national and global scheme.

On the other hand, not all Meratus people agreed to participate or support the adat movement. A number of Balais registered as AMAN members did not receive confirmation from community members because they were not well informed about the adat movement or AMAN. Some of them were not aware of their attachment to an adat identity or the inclusion or membership of
their balai community in AMAN. Improper processes of recruiting members or registration were among the factors blamed for this situation. Hence, claims about the Meratus people’s involvement in AMAN movements should be acknowledged as still having issues of over-representation and organisational imposition by activists.

It is this unevenly spread of adat movement ideas that, to some extent, led to extended impulses of activism. While the earlier report was about local people asking for help from a student outdoor club to deal with local issues, the transformation to engage with NGO activism asserted more than straightforward and pragmatic responses. It was where the narratives of NGOisation was introduced, reflecting what Choudry and Kapoor (2013) call ‘institutionalisation’ and ‘professionalisation’. Building a recognised indigenous identity by joining a larger organisational network was seen as a solution. At the same time, local communities and their traditional localities were considered by NGO activists as inadequate to manage the ‘modern’ indigenous organisation built for them. In dealing with state apparatus/officials, organisational management and administration, registration of customary institutions and territories and processes in legal aspects were among the issues that NGOs engaged in to assist the Meratus people in building indigenous identity.

What needs to be noted here is that the issue of power relations does not always mean an intended domination of the privileged group toward the disadvantaged group. The unequal relations of power in the engagement process between the local community and NGO activists were, to certain extent, inevitable as they had existed before the encounter, derived from and embedded within long established marginalisation by the state and surrounding mainstream society where NGO activists came from. This may explain how NGO activists have a tendency to be ‘helpers’. While this may not imply a direct or forced imposition of identity or ideas, it is always crucial to question how the production of knowledge was made in defining the processes and objectives required. Choudry and Kapoor have observed that many NGOs bear frameworks of practices derived from Western liberal scholarship in which there is a “textual orientation [that] insists that practice is not real unless it can be documented in writing; oral traditions then lose their legitimacy” (Choudry & Kapoor, 2013, p. 16).

Regarding this issue, what might need to be taken into account is potential local segregation raised by formal knowledge-based claims of identity (as masyarakat adat) that leads to conflicts among communities and/or individual members. The strong image of AMAN as a national adat organisation might imply the exclusion of local communities from the (formal) category of adat, let alone issues of ancestral territories for which AMAN and its NGO network have been
working towards identification, registration and legal recognition. In the end, legal and formal categorisations of the adat identity and territory would lead to issues of inclusion and exclusion of local communities. For the Balai communities that approved membership, legal recognition would mean legal consequences for their localities. While customary law has been part of their lives, its formalisation within the legal-formal sphere might lead further to unwanted psychological and sociological implications for community members. This was implied by several reported incidents in which some Balai communities refused the NGO mapping of their ancestral domains for fear of being restricted in their daily interactions or leading to conflicts among them.

*Practices of representation through the narrative of environmentalism*

From the beginning of the formation or production of recent indigenous identities, issues of local community resistance and environmental conservation had been likened as two sides of the same coin. Although reported and discussed in Chapter 6, re-examination of this issue in this chapter is to reformulate it as part of significant ‘statements’ within the discursive formation of indigeneity in Meratus. More specifically, this research recognises the narrative of environmentalism as the most robust manifestation of an activism impulse in the construction of indigeneity in Meratus. Along with issues of land grabbing, which is the most common concern of indigeneity, there were others, such as deforestation or forest conversion into monoculture plantation or mining areas.

Nevertheless, this led this research to raise two questions: (i) How is it possible to construct indigeneity discourses in Indonesia, specifically in Meratus, without involving environmental issues and/or activism? and (ii) Would the masyarakat adat movement have been established if the land swap plan and other environment-related cases did not exist? This was part of this research’s poststructural, or specifically, Foucauldian framework that consistently questions why something is possible for certain things while not for others. Instead of simply grappling with the discussion about the possibility, such a question was meant as a query about how environmental activism has contributed to the construction of indigeneity. This includes issues of power relations explored formerly.

This research supports an argument that suggests that the presence of environmental issues is a prerequisite for the emergence of indigenous issues or movements in Meratus. What occurred at the local scale, such as in Meratus, cannot be disconnected from the historical context of the emergence of indigenous movements across Indonesia, which from its inception, had been supported by national and global environmental activism (Li, 2000a; Tsing, 2005). A question
then needs to be asked is: *How can the global idea of environmentalism be directed to reach a local context of community?*

Several local conditions can be presented and constructed to show how ‘impulses’ of environmental activism have worked in building indigeneity discourses in Meratus. Internally, the Meratus people already have built-in conditions that support the representation of local issues as simultaneously indigenous and environmental. The fact that the Meratus people live in the Meratus Mountains, which is the only forest area left in South Kalimantan, is the most feasible issue that can be raised in environmental campaigns. Along with this, an exploration of local traditions and values that represent how the whole system of the Meratus people’s ways of life (the interconnection of local faith/rituals, livelihood and resource management) are in line with natural conservation concepts that have strengthened the embodiment of environmentalism within the local indigenous movement. This was affirmed by external aspects that were seen as affecting what was believed to be an internal hereditary system and values. Threats of land grabbing and forest conversion inevitably led the advocacy process to voice, not only issues of indigenous people’s rights violation, but also an environmental crisis. Meanwhile, NGOs that had been working with local communities even before the Meratus Alliance Movement were mostly those with environmental issues as their main concern, such as WALHI, YCHI and Sumpit Community (Table 7.1). The extension of these NGO concerns to cover indigenous issues began after their involvement in Meratus Alliance advocacy processes.

The intersection of local social, economic and political conditions with environmental NGOs has led to the process of, as argued by Li (2000a) and Tsing (2007), global environmentalism playing key roles in constructing and, hence, representing the indigenousness of the Meratus people. In other words, the worldwide idea of environmentalism has been a medium of representation for the Meratus communities as indigenous peoples. This depicts how a practice of representation – instead of an imposition or construction – operated under a regime of representation, parallelising local, traditional practices of a local community with existing dominant discourse of environmental conservation, represented with so-called ‘indigenous knowledge’. This needs to be connected the long established discourse of environmental conservation in the national context that had been present within privileged sectors of the wider Indonesian context since the New Order regime (Chapter 3).

It is interesting to observe that the local communities’ commitment to environmental preservation became a requirement without although local NGOs tended to be reluctant to work with them. A local senior activist stated that the struggle for state recognition of *adat* territories
in Meratus would be useless if local communities were not committed to preserving their forest. Also, some reports implied that NGOs tended to work only with certain Meratus Balai communities, that is, those regarded as fitting environmentalism missions. This placed the concentration of activism in the Western parts of the Meratus Mountains while the Eastern parts were often shown as an example of degraded adat communities. Impulses of environmentalism were apparent in the representation of indigeneity in Meratus. Indeed, these portraits also reflected that environmentalism was not simply natural within traditional practices but, to some extent, was imposed through activism. The environmental activists were aware of the local dynamics that had occurred amongst the Meratus people and that their ideal imagined construction of a harmonious couplet of indigeneity-environmentalism was not always the case on the ground. It is within such a gap between activism and dynamic local practices that power relations were constituted, following the narrative of environmentalism.

**Representing indigeneity and building hybridity**

The masyarakat adat movement that has spread and been accepted by the Meratus people is a manifestation of how a globally mobilised concept of indigenous peoples has been transformed into an identity of a local community living with hereditary traditions. This resulted from years of consolidated nationwide activism in which prominent NGOs with global networks, such as WALHI, have taken part. This affirmed Piper and Uhlin’s (2004) claim that transnational activism could only be effectively spread through mediation made by national and local activists. However, apart from the issue of spreading a global concept to a local context, how global indigeneity reaches a local community depicts what Bhabha (1994) terms ‘transnational’ and ‘translational’ dimensions of culture. Spreading the concept of indigenous peoples to the Meratus people means that ‘transnational’-isation of local community localities is comparable with diverse worldwide localities. At the same time, this was a form of ‘translational’-isation of Meratus people localities into dominant discourses through the representation of indigeneity led by NGOs. It is within this ‘translational’ dimension that the concept of representation needs to be expanded to identify the construction of indigeneity in the Meratus.

Referring to other researchers (Henley & Davidson, 2007; Li, 2001; Tsing, 2005), it can be said that masyarakat adat contextualises and frames global indigeneity on a national scale by assembling related international and domestic aspects. This research has expanded on current research by exploring its translational dimension. Looking beyond issues of what aspects were involved and how the process of modifying global indigeneity merged into national and local contexts, this section focuses on how hybridity has been built through the processes of
representing the Meratus people in the discourse of indigeneity. The concept of hybridity, mostly derived from Bhabha’s (1994) conceptualisation, informed this analysis about how the Meratus people negotiated their localities, especially their identity, when dealing with dominant discourses.

This exploration of hybridity is about “in between spaces” or “interstices” that emerge in the process of negotiation (Bhabha, 1994, pp. 1-2). In their involvement in AMAN to contest the state’s imposition of national identity through its development policies, the Meratus people had to compromise their localities with the narrative of masyarakat adat movement. Masyarakat adat is not a native concept to the Meratus people, although it bears the state’s hegemonic normality conception about local ethnic minorities living with their hereditary traditions. Under the identity of masyarakat adat and representation of indigeneity, the Meratus people were exposed to hybrid identities.

It is important to understand that the concept of hybridity is not merely a form of mixed identities and, therefore, assumed that a fixed authentic identity exists. Its emphasis is on the negotiation process in which issues of power relations emerge, resulting in Bhabha’s terminology, “forces of normalisation” (1994, p. 197). Within this hybridity, the Meratus people were engaged in ongoing tensions of negotiating their localities within the unavoidable mainstream system and values of modernity. Borrowing Young’s words, the Meratus people were living in “a nervous condition of ambivalence”, trying to challenge their subalternity through representation in the dominant discourse while keeping their “otherness within” (2003, p. 23). Borrowing Bhabha’s term, it is a “colonial mimicry” by the Meratus people who need to be involved in the masyarakat adat movement in order to be recognised by the state and to be equal with the mainstream society, but still showing their differences to be “almost the same but not quite” (1994, p. 86).

It is worth noting from this theorisation that the representation of the Meratus people as masyarakat adat is a form of compromise or negotiation of their localities, which previously were the object of their marginalisation. Under the narrative of the state, localities were seen as otherness that needs to be kept, and to be surveyed under what Bhabha calls “panoptical vision of domination” (1994, p. 7). Meanwhile, the NGO-led narrative of activism represented the localities as differences (from mainstream society) that need to be voiced to the state to gain recognition. This depicts the power relations that emerged through the conception of masyarakat adat by NGOs to the Meratus people. While being masyarakat adat may represent the Meratus people in a dominant discourse, the translationalisation of their localities occurred
under a state narrative. Although domination by the state might be inevitable, what needs to be critically taken into account is NGOs working on affirming the state’s narrative of indigenous activism in supporting the Meratus people’s rights.

Formalisation or registration of Balai communities of Meratus as part of a nationwide identity of *masyarakat adat*, more specifically under AMAN membership, was the main manifestation of the translationalisation of localities into national representation. This was continued through the narrative of developmentalism and modernity apparent in the processes of building indigeneity in Meratus. The establishment of a credit union provided the community with up-to-date (modern) ways of managing their money to improve their lives financially. Ambiguity emerged through tension between ideas of strengthening indigenous identity and improving the quality of life (based on mainstream standards). Meanwhile, participatory mapping gave an insight for local communities about the need for having definitive borders (based on the modern concept of territories) for their territories to be legally acknowledged by the state. Customary rules that had been hereditarily maintained through long sociocultural processes and dynamics were seen as insufficient to meet legal requirements and, therefore, needed to be adjusted to fit the dominant modern legal system. Engaging and following the long process of legalisation and legislation seemed to be unavoidable. This depicts how, under a NGO narrative, representation of indigeneity in Meratus has been made into a construction of hybridity, containing transformational processes from resisting to compromising dominant values under unequal power relations.

**Current context, questions and implications**

Indigenous identity is a manifestation of hybridity resulting from a representation of localities as differences to affirm existence as part of, rather than a counter to, the dominant discourse to be represented under regimes of representation. Being marginalised and subaltern, the Meratus people, along with their engagement in NGO-led activism, have managed to represent themselves as different from mainstream society to gain recognition from the state.

It is critical to reconnect this discussion to how the Indonesian government became open to ideas and movements that adopted the global concept of indigeneity since the *reformasi* era (Chapters 2 and 3). Progressive changes, mainly in legal aspects, became more apparent. The ancestral domain recognised by the state has become better accommodated under the current (2017) government’s land administration, although further studies need to be conducted to analyse its implementation and impact. What can be observed of the current development is that the representation of local communities, such as the Meratus people as *masyarakat adat*, has
really put the previously subaltern people into “topics of discussion” (Said, 1989, p. 289). In the last political contestation for the Indonesian presidency in 2014, AMAN openly showed its political support for a candidate with a central promise of issuance of the long-neglected legal draft on masyarakat adat; he is currently the president. AMAN also changed its movement strategy from confrontational to a dialogical one. The previous social movement organisation that had adopted global indigenous concepts had now transformed its ideas of ‘resistance to’ into ‘co-existence with’ the state.

As indigenous activism is seen as a practice of representation in this research, it is interesting to question if current progressive changes shown by the state in responding to the movement deploy similar meanings or conception about adat communities represented by activists. Ongoing different preferences about terminology, such as masyarakat adat for activist and masyarakat hukum adat for the state, may signify that conceptual discrepancies still exist. However, it seems that activists no longer place emphasis on issues of naming but tend to ‘tolerate’ the state’s terminology while they focus more on issues of adat territories recognition. Does this mean that AMAN and its NGO network changed or transformed its global concept of indigeneity manifested in masyarakat adat? While the masyarakat adat movement initially found its discursive representation of indigeneity through ideas of global and local resistance, what form of transformational conception of indigeneity would it take within the current volatile political situation when issues of masyarakat adat gain more attention from the government? Similar questions also need to be asked of the state: Has the state changed its standpoint on issues of masyarakat adat? What concept is being built regarding issues of masyarakat adat under the strengthening of global issues of indigeneity?

All the questions mentioned above are critical to further studies in this area. However, they may become less meaningful if the main concern is not given to the people subjectified as indigenous or masyarakat adat, who should be at the heart of thought and research on the subject. While it can be argued that current progressive changes have provided a ‘space for transaction’ between masyarakat adat and the state, critical thought is always needed to see whether the local entities such as Bubuhan Balai in Meratus also have a place in that ‘space of transaction’. Since masyarakat adat resulted from practices of representation that contained negotiations of power relations under regimes of representation and forces of hegemonic normality, how the subaltern’s localities might be effectively represented is essential to further exploration or research. The above questions about concepts being shaped by NGOs through transnationalisation and translationalisation of marginalised local communities into national and
even global scales are important, however, it is also crucial to ask: *Do indigenous activisms practise a form of neo-colonialisation (instead of decolonialisation) of local identities?*

In addition, it is acknowledged that, while bringing Spivak’s ideas of ‘the subaltern’, which is deeply illuminated from feminist theory, this research does not include concerns about gender issues. More emphasis was placed on revealing the construction of indigeneity discourses in national and local contexts without examining how gender plays a role that may have highlighted indigenous activism from a postcolonial perspective. However, there is potential for future studies on this aspect, that is, to examine the gender relations among the locals and their development through indigenous activism representation. In particular, the connected roles of AMAN’s organisational wing named PEREMPUAN AMAN (*Persekutuan Perempuan Adat Nusantara* AMAN or Indigenous Women’s Alliance of the Archipelago), which began in 2012 ([http://perempuan.aman.or.id/](http://perempuan.aman.or.id/)) can be researched to reveal issues of gender relations among the mostly patriarchal Indonesian people. However, it is important to note that more advanced methodological or analytical strategies maybe needed.

In conclusion, the aim of this academic work is to reveal issues of power relations surrounding people with no access to dominant discourses. Under a globalising world system, people are living within marginalised localities, to be left unseen and unheard; they are unable to speak in their own language, being forced to use languages of the dominant society, having no choice but to leave their localities and submerge themselves into mainstream society. Hybridity is unavoidable, but constructed unequal power relations within it should be the arena for promoting more equal social relations. It is important for NGO activists to be self-reflexive about their roles, to be providing support between giving a voice and giving a space, instead of engaging in paternalistic activism that risks people’s dynamic localities for the sake of indigeneity representation at the national or global level. In line with this, the inevitable state’s forces of normalisation should be transformed to be more inclusive and more able to listen to diverse minority localities through its policies and provision of public services. Regarding this, it is worth pointing out that during the final phase of this thesis, the Indonesian Constitutional Court cancelled previous regulations on population administration regarding the section on religious affiliation that only recognised six official religions to be mentioned in the national identity card. The cancellation would mean that it is possible, in the future, for the adherents of local religions (*penghayat kepercayaan*) to have their religious identities stated. This is an important move forward that should be monitored and researched, although it could involve long and complex processes before implementation becomes a reality.
REFERENCES


References

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References


Resosudarmo, I. A. P. (2003). Shifting power to the periphery: The impact of decentralisation on forests and forest people. In E. Aspinall & G. Fealy (Eds.), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and democratisation* (pp. 230-244). Singapore: ISEAS.


Appendix A: Ethics Approval - University of Sydney

Research Integrity
Human Research Ethics Committee

Thursday, 28 May 2015

Assoc Prof Ruth Phillips
Social Work & Policy Studies; Faculty of Education & Social Work
Email: ruth.phillips@sydney.edu.au

Dear Ruth,

I am pleased to inform you that the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved your project entitled “Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia: a postcolonial analysis of discourses of indigeneity in state policy and social movements”.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Project No.: 2015/241
Approval Date: 27 May 2015
First Annual Report Due: 27 May 2016

Authorised Personnel: Phillips Ruth; Hidayat Jazak Akbar;

Documents Approved:

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HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the approval date stated in this letter and is granted pending the following conditions being met:
Special Condition/s of Approval

1. Please upload the below documents via a "compliance with special conditions of approval" form in IRMA.
   a. Email correspondence of organisational approvals to be forwarded once obtained.
   b. Translations of other amended documents (amended PIS, PCF, Interview questions which were submitted with your previous response and certified by Prof Vickers on 28/4/15)

Condition/s of Approval

- Continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans.
- Provision of an annual report on this research to the Human Research Ethics Committee from the approval date and at the completion of the study. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of ethics approval for the project.
- All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC within 72 hours.
- All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.
- Any changes to the project including changes to research personnel must be approved by the HREC before the research project can proceed.
- Note that for student research projects, a copy of this letter must be included in the candidate’s thesis.

Chief Investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities:

1. You must retain copies of all signed Consent Forms (if applicable) and provide these to the HREC on request.
2. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact Research Integrity (Human Ethics) should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Associate Professor Rita Shackel
Chair
Human Research Ethics Committee

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), NHMRC and Universities Australia Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.
Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia:
A postcolonial analysis of discourses of indigeneity in state policy and social movements

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, ..........................................................[PRINT NAME], agree to take part in this research study.

In giving my consent I state that:

✓ I understand the purpose of the study, what I will be asked to do, and any risks/benefits involved.

✓ I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been able to discuss my involvement in the study with the researcher if I wished to do so.

✓ The researcher has answered any questions that I had about the study and I am happy with the answers.

✓ I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary and I do not have to take part. My decision whether to be in the study will not affect my relationship with the researcher or anyone else at the University of Sydney central/local government institutions, NGOs and any other individuals or organizations related to this study now or in the future.

✓ I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time before the publication of the study results.

✓ I understand that I may stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, and that unless I indicate otherwise any recordings will then be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study. I also understand that I may refuse to answer any questions I don’t wish to answer.

✓ I understand that personal information about me that is collected over the course of this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that I have agreed to. I understand that information about me will only be told to others with my permission, except as required by law.

✓ I understand that the results of this study may be published. Although every effort will be made to protect my identity, I may be identifiable in these publications due to the nature of the study or results.
I consent to:

- Audio-recording       YES ☐ NO ☐
- Field notes           YES ☐ NO ☐
- Photographs           YES ☐ NO ☐
- Reviewing transcripts YES ☐ NO ☐
- Being contacted about future studies YES ☐ NO ☐

Would you like to receive feedback about the overall results of this study?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES, please indicate your preferred form of feedback and address:

☐ Postal: ___________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

☐ Email: ____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

...................................................
Signature

...................................................
PRINT name

...................................................
Date
Appendix B (2): Participant Consent Form - Indonesian version

Social Work and Policy Studies Program
Faculty of Education and Social Work

ABN 15 211 513 464

Ruth Phillips
Associate Professor

Room 741
Education Building A35
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 9351 6899
Facsimile: +61 2 9351 3783
Email: ruth.phillips@sydney.edu.au
Web: http://www.sydney.edu.au/

Representasi Masyarakat Adat di Indonesia:
Analisis poskolonial terhadap wacana tentang konsep masyarakat adat
dalam kebijakan negara dan gerakan sosial

LEMBAR PERSETUJUAN PEERTA

Saya, ................................................................................... [Nama Terang], menyatakan setuju untuk berperan serta dalam penelitian ini.

Dalam memberikan persetujuan ini saya menyatakan bahwasanya:

✓ Saya memahami maksud dari penelitian ini, hal apa saja yang harus saya lakukan, serta berbagai risiko/keuntungan yang tercakup di dalamnya.

✓ Saya telah membaca Lembar Informasi Peserta dan telah diberi kesempatan untuk membicarakan lebih lanjut mengenai keikutsertaan saya dalam penelitian ini dengan pihak peneliti.

✓ Peneliti telah menjawab berbagai pertanyaan yang saya ajukan terkait dengan penelitian ini dan saya puas dengan jawaban-jawaban tersebut.

✓ Saya memahami bahwa keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini sepenuhnya bersifat sukarela dan tidak ada keharusan bagi saya untuk berperan serta. Keputusan saya untuk berperan serta dalam penelitian ini tidak akan mempengaruhi hubungan saya dengan peneliti atau siapa pun dari pihak University of Sydney, institusi pemerintah pusat dan daerah, kalangan LSM beserta pihak-pihak lainnya baik individu maupun organisasi yang terkait dengan penelitian ini di masa sekarang maupun mendatang.

✓ Saya memahami bahwa saya bisa memutuskan untuk menarik diri dari penelitian ini sewaktu-waktu.

✓ Saya memahami bahwa saya bisa sewaktu-waktu memutuskan untuk berhenti melanjutkan proses wawancara, dan kecuali jika saya menginginkan sebaliknya semua bentuk rekaman akan dihapus dan informasi yang telah diberikan tidak akan dimasukkan dalam penelitian. Saya juga memahami bahwa saya boleh menolak untuk menjawab pertanyaan yang saya tidak ingin menjawabnya.

✓ Saya memahami bahwa informasi tentang diri saya yang dikumpulkan selama kurun waktu penelitian ini akan disimpan dengan aman dan hanya akan dipergunakan untuk tujuan yang saya setujui. Saya memahami bahwa informasi tentang diri saya hanya akan disampaikan kepada pihak-pihak lain atas seizin saya, kecuali jika diperlukan untuk kepentingan hukum.

Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia
Versi bahasa Indonesia [2015/241, 28/05/15]
Saya memahami bahwa hasil dari penelitian ini bisa dipublikasikan. Meskipun berbagai usaha akan dilakukan untuk merahasiakan identitas saya, ada kemungkinan identitas tersebut dapat terungkap melalui publikasi tersebut disebabkan oleh sifat dari proses maupun hasil penelitian ini.

Saya menyetujui untuk:

- Perekaman suara
  - YA □  TIDAK □
- Pencatatan lapangan
  - YA □  TIDAK □
- Pengambilan foto
  - YA □  TIDAK □
- Pemeriksaan ulang transkrip rekaman
  - YA □  TIDAK □
- Dihubungi lagi untuk studi lanjutan
  - YA □  TIDAK □

Apakah anda menginginkan untuk mendapatkan ringkasan hasil penelitian ini secara keseluruhan?

- YA □  TIDAK □

Jika anda menjawab YA, mohon saran mengenai bentuk masukan yang diinginkan beserta alamat:

- Pos: ........................................................................................................
  ........................................................................................................

- Email: ....................................................................................................

..........................................................................................
Tanda tangan

..........................................................................................
Nama Terang

..........................................................................................
Tanggal
Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia:
A postcolonial analysis of discourses of indigeneity in state policy and social movements

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia. This study is aimed at exploring how both the government and social movement actors play roles in constructing discourses of indigeneity or in what ways that indigenous Indonesians identify themselves, are identified and perceived and are written about in government and NGO documents, laws, regulations and projects. The research will take place as part of a focused study in an indigenous community in South Kalimantan. This exploration is expected to enrich and strengthen the existing studies on indigenous issues within the current progressive discourses of indigenous peoples recognition by the state.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are recognised as member of an indigenous community or as having been intensely involved in dealing with issues of indigeneity in Indonesia. This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don’t understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

✓ Understand what you have read (have had read to you).
✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described below.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researcher:

• Jazak Akbar Hidayat, PhD student at the University of Sydney
Jazak Akbar Hidayat is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of PhD at The University of Sydney. This will take place under the supervision of Associate Professor Ruth Phillips.

This study is being funded by the Australia Awards Scholarship (AAS) program.

(3) **What will the study involve for me?**

- You will be invited to be part of a face-to-face conversation by answering or responding to open-ended questions provided by the researcher.
- The interview might take place in either private or public space where you feel safe and comfortable.
- With your permission, your activities may be observed by the researcher, and some of your activities might be recorded through field notes or photographs.
- Your involvement in interviews and activities will be recorded by using a recording device, field notes or photographs.
- Considering possible changes in your future condition that may affect your mind in the usage of your photograph in the study, you may request for it to be returned (without justification of the reason for) and your request will supersede any permission or consent to the usage of the image.
- Your statements using a local dialect may be interpreted into Indonesian language through the assistance of an interpreter.
- You will be offered the opportunity to check and recheck your statements transcribed from the interviews.

(4) **How much of my time will the study take?**

You will be attending only one interview session that will take no longer than 45 minutes. However, there may be a possibility that the researcher will get back to you to reconfirm or collect more information.

(5) **Who can take part in the study?**

**Indigenous community members:**
- Those above 18 years old.
- Those who have been living in the community for more than 5 years.
- Both male and female are equally encouraged to participate.
- Priority is given to senior members and those with special roles in the community (community leader, religious leader, etc.).

**NGOs members:**
- Those above 18 years old.
- Those with special roles in organization (leader, coordinator, manager, etc.).
- Those who have been concerned and involved in dealing with indigenous issues in Indonesia for more than 2 years.
- Priority is given to senior members.

**Government officials:**
- Those with special roles in organization (leader, coordinator, manager, etc.).
- Those working under the relevant department/division (dealing with indigenous issues in Indonesia).
- Those who have been concerned and involved in dealing with indigenous issues in Indonesia for more than 2 years.

(6) **Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I’ve started?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney, central/local government institutions, NGOs and any other individuals or organizations related to this study.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw at any time before the publication of the study results. You can do this by contacting me either via direct oral statements (face-to-face or by phone) or written statements (email, letter, sms, etc.).

You are free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to keep them, any recordings will be erased and the information you have provided will not be included in the study results. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, we will not collect any more information from you. Unless you say that you want us to keep them, any recording will be erased and the information you have provided will not be included in the study results.

(7) **Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?**

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

(8) **Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?**

By participating in the study, you will be offered direct benefits in the form of stipend that amount IDR 100.000 (to cover the time that you give up) and a small gift/souvenir. These direct benefits will be provided only if you completely participate in the study (until the researcher decides that you have completely provided information needed). In case you stop at the interview session and decide to withdraw from the study so that all the information you have provided will be erased, you will not get the above direct benefits.

Aside the direct benefits, the result of this study might not be directly felt and tangible but may contribute to the mainstreaming of social justice issue in dealing with the existence of indigenous communities in Indonesia. This study will also become a reflection for various relevant actors, mainly the government and NGOs, concerning the issue of building more equal relations with indigenous communities by mainstreaming the concept of ‘clearing the space’ for the communities to express their own voice instead of ‘giving the voice’.

(9) **What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?**

☑ The information collected from your participation will be verbal data resulted from your answers to the questions asked by the researcher.
✓ All your answers in interview sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysis and, where needed, publications.

✓ There will be only restricted authorized personnel can access the participants’ information during and after the study: the researcher, the supervisor and the auxiliary supervisor.

✓ All personal information will be strictly kept confidential.

✓ Participants may access their personal information from the study by directly contacting the researcher (orally or through written messages). After completing the fieldwork (prior to publication), there will be an opportunity offered by researcher to participants rechecking their recorded or transcribed information.

✓ The results of the study will be used in scholarly conferences, journal publications and the PhD thesis.

✓ During and after the study, all electronic and hardcopy data will be placed in a secure storage that no one can access except the researcher, the supervisor and the auxiliary supervisor. The electronic data will be saved in password-protected files and USB sticks while the hardcopy data will be placed in a locked cabinet that can be only accessed by authorised personnel.

✓ The data will be possibly retained for no longer than 5 years. However, where considered that there is no need to retain the data for any longer, after the thesis submission is approved by the thesis committee, all the electronic and hardcopy files that contain participants’ information will be deleted and shredded.

✓ The data collected in this project will not be used for any other purpose other than those outlined above.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise.

Your information will be stored securely and your identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

(10) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

(11) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Jazak Akbar Hidayat will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact: Associate Professor Ruth Phillips | position: Supervisor | email: ruth.phillips@sydney.edu.au | telephone: +61 2 9351 6899 or Jazak Akbar Hidayat | position: Student researcher | email: jhid5757@uni.sydney.edu.au | telephone: +62 8565 1113 015, +61 449 285 868. For local contact: Juliade | Telephone: +62 8531 0770 993 | Email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id.
(12) **Will I be told the results of the study?**

You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by ticking the relevant box on the consent form. This feedback will be in the form of a one page lay summary. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

(13) **What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?**

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney [INSERT protocol number once approval is obtained]. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007). This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

Local complaint contact:

- Juliade, Coordinator of LPMA
- Telephone: +62 8531 0770 993
- Email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id

*This information sheet is for you to keep*
Representasi Masyarakat Adat di Indonesia: Analisis poskolonial terhadap wacana tentang konsep masyarakat adat dalam kebijakan negara dan gerakan sosial

LEMBAR INFORMASI PESERTA

(1) Penelitian tentang apa ini?

Anda diundang untuk berperan serta dalam sebuah penelitian tentang representasi masyarakat adat di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan menggali tentang bagaimana pemerintah maupun para aktor gerakan sosial memainkan peran mereka dalam membangun wacana tentang konsep masyarakat adat atau bagaimana masyarakat adat di Indonesia diidentifikasikan, dipереsepsikan dan dituliskan baik oleh pemerintah maupun kalangan LSM dalam berbagai dokumen, undang-undang, peraturan serta program yang ada. Penelitian ini akan melakukan kajian terhadap sebuah komunitas adat di provinsi Kalimantan Selatan. Diharapkan kajian ini nanti bisa memperkaya dan memperkuat berbagai kajian tentang isu-isu masyarakat adat yang telah ada dalam konteks wacana terkini mengenai pengakuan keberadaan masyarakat adat oleh negara.

Anda diundang untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini karena anda adalah anggota masyarakat adat atau karena anda telah secara intensif terlibat dalam penanganan berbagai isu masyarakat adat di Indonesia. Lembar Informasi Peserta ini memberikan penjelasan kepada anda mengenai berbagai hal terkait penelitian ini. Pemahaman tersebut bisa membantu anda untuk memutuskan apakah setuju untuk berperan serta dalam penelitian ini. Silahkan anda baca lembar ini dengan cermat dan ajukan pertanyaan tentang berbagai hal yang belum anda pahami atau ingin ketahui lebih jauh.

Keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini bersifat sukarela.

Dengan menyatakan persetujuan anda untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini berarti anda menyatakan:

- Telah memahami apa yang telah anda baca (dibacakan kepada anda).
- Setuju untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini sesuai ketentuan yang tertera di bawah.
- Setuju atas penggunaan informasi mengenai diri anda sebagaimana ketentuan yang tertera di bawah.

Anda akan diberikan salinan Lembar Informasi Peserta ini untuk disimpan.

(2) Siapakah yang melakukan penelitian ini?

Penelitian ini dilakukan oleh:

- Jazak Akbar Hidayat, mahasiswa doktoral pada University of Sydney
Jazak Akbar Hidayat melakukan penelitian ini sebagai dasar untuk meraih gelar doktoral (PhD) dari University of Sydney. Penelitian ini dilakukan di bawah bimbingan Associate Professor Ruth Phillips.

Penelitian ini didanai oleh program Australia Awards Scholarship (AAS).

(3) Apa saja bentuk keterlibatan saya dalam penelitian ini?

✓ Anda akan diundang untuk melakukan wawancara tatap muka di mana anda akan menjawab atau merespon pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang diajukan oleh peneliti.

✓ Wawancara akan dilakukan di ruang tertutup atau pun ruang terbuka di mana peserta bisa mendapatkan rasa aman dan nyaman.

✓ Dengan izin dari anda, aktivitas anda akan diamati oleh peneliti dan sebagainya akan dicatat atau diambil gambar.

✓ Keterlibatan anda dalam wawancara atau aktivitas lainnya akan direkam dengan menggunakan alat perekam, catatan lapangan atau kamera foto.

✓ Mempertimbangkan kemungkinan perubahan kondisi pada diri anda di masa mendatang yang mungkin mempengaruhi sikap anda dalam penggunaan foto anda untuk penelitian ini, anda bisa meminta foto tersebut untuk ditarik kembali (tanpa harus ada alasan pembenar) dan permintaan tersebut bisa membentuk izin yang telah anda berikan dalam penggunaan foto tersebut.

✓ Pernyataan yang anda sampaikan dengan menggunakan bahasa daerah akan diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia oleh seorang penerjemah.

✓ Kesempatan akan ditawarkan kepada anda untuk memeriksa ulang pernyataan-pernyataan anda yang telah ditranskrip dari hasil wawancara.

(4) Berapa lama waktu keterlibatan saya dalam penelitian ini?

Anda akan mengikuti hanya satu sesi wawancara yang memakan waktu tidak lebih dari 45 menit. Tetapi ada kemungkinan peneliti akan kembali kepada anda untuk meminta konfirmasi ulang atau mendapatkan informasi lebih lanjut.

(5) Siapa saja yang bisa berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini?

Anggota masyarakat adat:
- Berusia di atas 18 tahun.
- Telah dan sedang tinggal bersama komunitas (masyarakat adat) selama lebih dari 5 tahun.
- Baik laki-laki maupun perempuan mendapatkan kesempatan yang sama untuk berpartisipasi.
- Diutamakan anggota masyarakat adat yang senior atau memiliki peran/ kedudukan khusus di dalam komunitas (kepala suku, pemuka agama, dan sebagainya).

Anggota LSM:
- Berusia di atas 18 tahun.
- Memiliki peran/ kedudukan khusus dalam organisasi (pimpinan, koordinator, manajer, dan sebagainya).
- Memiliki perhatian khusus mengenai dan telah terlibat dalam penanganan isu-isu masyarakat adat di Indonesia sekurang-kurangnya 2 tahun.
- Diutamakan anggota yang senior.
Pegawai pemerintah:
- Memiliki peran/ kedudukan khusus dalam organisasi (pimpinan, koordinator, manajer, dan sebagainya).
- Bekerja dalam lingkup bidang/ seksi yang relevan (dengan penanganan isu-isu masyarakat adat di Indonesia).
- Memiliki perhatian khusus mengenai dan telah terlibat dalam penanganan isu-isu masyarakat adat di Indonesia sekurang-kurangnya 2 tahun.

(6) Apakah saya harus berperan serta dalam penelitian ini? Bolehkah saya menarik diri ketika sudah mulai terlibat dalam penelitian ini?

Keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini sepenuhnya bersifat sukarela dan tidak ada keharusan bagi anda untuk berperan serta. Keputusan anda untuk berperan serta dalam penelitian ini tidak akan mempengaruhi hubungan anda dengan peneliti atau siapa pun dari pihak University of Sydney, institusi pemerintah pusat dan daerah, LSM beserta pihak-pihak lainnya baik individu maupun organisasi yang terkait dengan penelitian ini di masa sekarang maupun mendatang.

Jika anda memutuskan untuk berperan serta dalam penelitian ini dan kemudian berubah pikiran, anda bebas untuk menarik diri setiap waktu sebelum hasil penelitian ini dipublikasikan. Anda bisa melakukan itu dengan cara menghubungi saya baik secara langsung (tatap muka atau telepon) atau secara tertulis (email, surat, sms, dan sebagainya).

Anda bebas setiap waktu untuk memutuskan berhenti dari wawancara. Kecuali jika anda menginginkan agar informasi yang telah diberikan tetap disimpan, semua bentuk rekaman akan dihapus dan informasi yang telah diberikan tidak akan dimasukkan dalam penelitian. Anda juga boleh menolak untuk menjawab setiap pertanyaan yang anda tidak ingin menjawabnya.

Jika anda memutuskan untuk menarik diri dari penelitian ini, kami tidak akan mengumpulkan informasi lebih lanjut dari anda. Kecuali jika anda menginginkan agar informasi yang telah diberikan tetap disimpan, semua bentuk rekaman akan dihapus dan informasi yang telah diberikan tidak akan dimasukkan dalam penelitian.

(7) Adakah resiko atau biaya yang mungkin ditanggung dengan ikut serta dalam penelitian ini?

Selain dari waktu yang perlu anda luangkan, kami harap tidak akan ada resiko atau biaya apapun yang akan anda tanggung yang disebabkan oleh keikutsertaan anda dalam penelitian ini.

(8) Apakah ada keuntungan yang didapat dengan ikut serta dalam penelitian ini?

Dengan keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini, anda akan mendapatkan keuntungan langsung berupa uang sejumlah Rp. 100.000 (untuk mengganti waktu yang telah anda luangkan) dan sebuah hadiah kecil/ souvenir. Keuntungan langsung ini akan diberikan hanya jika anda berpartisipasi secara penuh dalam penelitian ini (yaitu sampai peneliti memutuskan bahwa anda telah memberikan seluruh informasi yang diperlukan). Jika anda memutuskan untuk berhenti pada sesi wawancara dan menarik diri dari penelitian sehingga semua informasi yang telah anda berikan akan dihapus, anda tidak akan mendapatkan keuntungan langsung tersebut.

Di samping dari keuntungan langsung tersebut, hasil penelitian ini mungkin tidak akan bisa langsung dirasakan atau bersifat nyata tetapi diharapkan mampu memberikan kontribusi dalam mengarusutamakan isu keadilan sosial terkait dengan keberadaan masyarakat adat di Indonesia. Penelitian ini juga akan bisa menjadi bahan refleksi bagi berbagai pihak yang terkait, terutama pemerintah dan kalangan aktivis LSM, untuk membangun sebuah hubungan yang lebih setara dengan komunitas-komunitas adat dengan mengedepankan konsep ‘membersihkan ruang’ (clearing
the space), lebih dari sekedar ‘menyuarkan’ (giving the voice), sehingga masyarakat adat sendiri akan dapat betul-betul menyuarakan diri mereka sendiri.

(9) Apa yang akan dilakukan pada informasi tentang diri saya yang dikumpulkan selama masa penelitian?

☑ Informasi yang dikumpulkan dari keikutsertaan anda akan berupa data verbal yang dihasilkan dari jawaban-jawaban anda terhadap pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang diajukan peneliti.

☑ Semua jawaban anda akan direkam menggunakan alat perekam suara dan kemudian ditranskrip untuk keperluan analisis dan, jika diperlukan, untuk dipublikasikan.

☑ Hanya kalangan terbatas yang akan bisa mengakses informasi dari peserta selama dan setelah masa penelitian, yaitu: peneliti, pembimbing pertama dan pembimbing kedua.

☑ Semua informasi tentang peserta akan dijaga secara ketat kerahasiaannya.

☑ Peserta bisa mengakses informasi tentang diri mereka yang didapat dari penelitian ini dengan secara langsung menghubungi peneliti (secara lisan atau tertulis). Setelah menyelesaikan pengumpulan data lapangan (sebelum publikasi), akan ditawarkan kesempatan bagi para peserta untuk memeriksa ulang rekaman atau transkrip informasi yang telah mereka berikan.

☑ Hasil penelitian ini akan digunakan dalam berbagai konferensi akademis, publikasi jurnal dan tesis doktoral.

☑ Selama dan setelah masa penelitian, semua data elektronik dan fisik akan disimpan di tempat penyimpanan dimana tidak ada seorang pun yang bisa mengakses selain peneliti, pembimbing pertama dan pembimbing kedua. Data elektronik akan disimpan dalam file dan perangkat USB yang dipasangi password sementara data fisik akan disimpan di dalam kabinet yang terkunci yang hanya bisa diakses oleh orang-orang yang diberi kewenangan.

☑ Data tersebut akan disimpan hingga tidak lebih dari jangka waktu 5 tahun. Tetapi, jika dianggap tidak ada keperluan lagi untuk menyimpan data tersebut, setelah tesis hasil penelitian ini disetujui oleh komite, semua data elektronik maupun fisik yang berisi informasi mengenai diri peserta akan dihapus dan dimusnahkan.

☑ Semua data yang dikumpulkan dalam penelitian ini tidak akan digunakan selain untuk tujuan sebagaimana telah disebutkan di atas.

Dengan memberikan persetujuan anda, berarti anda mengizinkan kami untuk mengumpulkan informasi tentang diri anda untuk tujuan penelitian ini. Informasi yang anda berikan hanya akan digunakan untuk tujuan sebagaimana yang disebut dalam Lembar Informasi Peserta ini, kecuali jika anda memberikan izin untuk hal yang lain.

Informasi yang anda berikan akan disimpan dengan aman dan identitas/ informasi tentang diri anda akan dijaga dengan ketat kerahasiaannya, kecuali jika diperlukan untuk kepentingan hukum. Hasil penelitian ini bisa dipublikasikan tetapi informasi mengenai diri anda tidak akan terlihat dalam publikasi tersebut.

(10) Bisakah saya memberi tahu orang lain mengenai penelitian ini?

Ya, anda diperbolehkan untuk memberi tahu orang lain mengenai penelitian ini.
(11) Bagaimana jika saya ingin mengetahu informasi lebih lanjut mengenai penelitian ini?


(12) Apakah saya akan diberitahu hasil dari penelitian ini?

Anda berhak untuk mengetahui hasil dari penelitian ini. Anda bisa memberitahu kami bahwa anda menginginkan untuk menerima hasil dari penelitian ini dengan membuahkan tanda centang pada kotak yang tersedia pada Lembar Persetujuan Peserta. Hasil penelitian yang disampaikan nanti akan berupa satu halaman ringkasan. Anda akan menerima ringkasan tersebut setelah penelitian ini selesai dilakukan.

(13) Bagaimana jika saya mau menyampaikan pengaduan atau suatu masalah terkait dengan penelitian ini?

Di Australia, penelitian yang melibatkan manusia dikaji oleh sebuah badan independen yang dinamakan Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) atau Komite Etika Penelitian (tentang) Manusia. Aspek-aspek etika dalam penelitian ini telah mendapatkan persetujuan dari HERC University of Sydney [INSERT protocol number once approval is obtained]. Sebagai bagian dari proses penelitian ini, kami telah menyatakan setuju untuk melakukan penelitian sesuai dengan National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) atau Deklarasi Nasional tentang Perilaku Etis dalam Penelitian tentang Manusia. Deklarasi ini disusun untuk melindungi orang-orang yang menyatakan persetujuan untuk berperan serta dalam penelitian.

Jika anda mendapati hal-hal yang perlu dipertanyakan dalam pelaksanaan penelitian ini atau mengajukan pengaduan kepada pihak yang independen dari penelitian ini, silahkan menghubungi pihak universitas melalui kontak yang tertulis di bawah ini. Lampirkan judul penelitian dan nomor protokolnya.

Manajer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telepon:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Faksimili)

Kontak pengaduan lokal:

- Juliade, Direktur Eksekutif LPMA
- Telepon: +62 8531 0770 993
- Email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id

*Silahkan anda simpan lembar informasi ini*
Opportunity to participate in a research project titled:

Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia:
A postcolonial analysis in discourses of indigeneity in state policy and social movements

This research aims at exploring how both the government and social movement actors have defined Indonesian “indigenous peoples” through different, competing conceptions. This will be a focused study in an indigenous community in South Kalimantan.

What kind of participation?
- Being participant in interviews: providing information by answering or responding to questions asked by the researcher.
- The interview will be audio-recorded or written in field notes (according to consent given by the participant on a consent form) before being transcribed for the purpose of analysis and, where relevant, publications.

Who can participate?
- Anyone 18 years old or above.
- Anyone who has been living in the community for more than 5 years.
- Both males and females are equally encouraged to participate.
- Senior members and those with special roles in the community (community leader, religious leader, etc.) are strongly encouraged to be involved in this research.

What benefits can be gained from the participation?
The results of this study might not be directly felt or tangible. This study is concerned with broader and further interests regarding social justice issues for the existence of indigenous communities in Indonesia. However, for those who are active participants in the interviews, a stipend to cover the time they give up and small gift will be provided.

If you are interested in being part of this study, please contact:
Juliade (Director of LPMA) | mobile: +62 8531 0770 993 | email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id
Jazak Akbar Hidayat | mobile: +62 8565 3311 015 | email: jazakbar@yahoo.com
Pembimbing: Ruth Phillips
Associate Professor

Mahasiswa peneliti: Jazak Akbar Hidayat
PhD Student

INFO PENELITIAN

Tawaran untuk berperan serta dalam sebuah penelitian berjudul:

Representasi Masyarakat Adat di Indonesia:
Analisis poskolonial terhadap wacana tentang konsep masyarakat adat dalam kebijakan negara dan gerakan sosial

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali bagaimana pemerintah maupun para aktor gerakan sosial mendefinisikan “masyarakat adat” di Indonesia melalui berbagai konsep yang berbeda-beda. Penelitian ini akan difokuskan pada sebuah komunitas adat di Kalimantan Selatan.

Seperti apa bentuk partisipasinya?
- Menjadi peserta dalam sesi wawancara: memberikan informasi dengan menjawab atau merespon pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang diajukan peneliti.
- Proses wawancara akan direkam-suara atau ditulis dalam catatan lapangan (sesuai persetujuan yang diberikan peserta dalam Lembar Persetujuan Peserta) untuk kemudian ditranskrip guna keperluan analisis dan, jika sesuai, publikasi.

Siapa saja yang bisa menjadi peserta?
- Setiap orang yang berusia 18 tahun ke atas.
- Setiap orang yang telah dan sedang tinggal bersama (menjadi bagian) masyarakat adat selama lebih dari 5 tahun.
- Baik laki-laki maupun perempuan sama-sama diharapkan untuk berpartisipasi.
- Warga yang senior atau memiliki peran khusus dalam komunitas (kepala suku, pemuka agama dan sebagainya) sangat diharapkan keikutsertaannya dalam penelitian ini.

Keuntungan apa yang bisa didapatkan dari keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini?

Jika anda berminat untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, silahkan hubungi:
Juliade (Direktur LPMA) | hp: +62 8531 0770 993 | email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id atau
Jazak Akbar Hidayat | hp: +62 8565 3311 015 | email: jazakbar@yahoo.com
Opportunity to participate in a research project entitled:

Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia:  
A postcolonial analysis in discourses of indigeneity in state policy and social movements

This research aims at exploring how both the government and social movement actors have defined Indonesian “indigenous peoples” through different, competing conceptions. This will be a focused study in an indigenous community in South Kalimantan.

What kind of participation?
- Being a participant in interviews: providing information by answering or responding to questions asked by the researcher.
- The interview will be audio-recorded or written in field notes (according to consent given by the participant on a consent form) before being transcribed for the purpose of analysis and, where relevant, publications.

Who do we want to participate?
- Workers or volunteers 18 years old or above.
- Those with special roles in your organization (leader, coordinator, manager, etc.).
- Any workers or volunteers who have been concerned with and involved in working with indigenous issues in Indonesia for more than 2 years.
- Senior workers in the organization are particularly encouraged to participate in this study.

What benefits can be gained from participating in the study?
The results of this study might not be directly felt or tangible. This study is concerned with broader and further interests regarding social justice issues for the existence of indigenous communities in Indonesia. However, for those who are active participants in the interviews, a stipend to cover the time they give up and small gift will be provided.

If you are interested in being part of this study, please contact:
Juliaide | mobile: +62 8531 0770 993 | email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id
Jazak Akbar Hidayat | mobile: +62 8565 3311 015 | email: jazakbar@yahoo.com
Tawaran untuk berperan serta dalam sebuah penelitian berjudul:

Representasi Masyarakat Adat di Indonesia:
Analisis poskolonial terhadap wacana tentang konsep masyarakat adat dalam kebijakan negara dan gerakan sosial

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Seperti apa bentuk peran sertanya?
- Menjadi peserta dalam sesi wawancara: memberikan informasi dengan menjawab atau merespon pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang diajukan peneliti.
- Proses wawancara akan direkam-suara atau ditulis dalam catatan lapangan (sesuai persetujuan yang diberikan peserta dalam Lembar Persetujuan Peserta) untuk kemudian ditranskrip guna keperluan analisis dan, jika sesuai, publikasi.

Siapa saja yang bisa menjadi peserta?
- Pegawai atau relawan LSM yang berusia 18 tahun ke atas.
- Mereka yang memiliki peran khusus dalam organisasi (ketua, koordinator, manajer, dan sebagainya).
- Pegawai atau relawan yang memiliki konsen/ perhatian khusus mengenai dan telah terlibat dalam penanganan isu-isu masyarakat adat di Indonesia sekurang-kurangnya 2 tahun.
- Diutamakan anggota yang senior.

Keuntungan apa yang bisa didapatkan dari keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini?

Jika anda berminat untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, silahkan hubungi:
Juliade (Direktur LPMA) | hp: +62 8531 0770 993 | email: lewu_tatas@yahoo.co.id atau
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Opportunity to participate in a research project entitled:

Representations of indigenous peoples in Indonesia:
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This research aims at exploring how both the government and social movement actors have defined Indonesian “indigenous peoples” through different, competing conceptions. This will be a focused study in an indigenous community in South Kalimantan.

What kind of participation?
- Being a participant in interviews: providing information by answering or responding to questions asked by the researcher.
- The interview will be audio-recorded or written in field notes (according to consent given by the participant on a consent form) before being transcribed for the purpose of analysis and, where relevant, publications.

Who do we want to participate?
- Those with special roles in the department (leader, coordinator, manager, etc.).
- Those working for the relevant department/division (dealing with indigenous issues in Indonesia).
- Those who have been concerned and involved in dealing with indigenous issues in Indonesia for more than 2 years.

What benefits can be gained from the participation?
The results of this study might not be directly felt or tangible. This study is concerned with broader and further interests regarding social justice issues for the existence of indigenous communities in Indonesia. However, for those who are active participants in the interviews, a stipend to cover the time they give up and small gift will be provided.

If you are interested in being part of this study, please contact:
Bahri (Provincial Office of Social Affair) | Hp: +62 821 5054 7979 | email: muhammad.bahri88@yahoo.co.id
Jazak Akbar Hidayat | mobile: +62 8565 3311 015 | email: jazakbar@yahoo.com
UNTUK PEGAWAI Pemerintah

INFO PENELITIAN

Tawaran untuk berperan serta dalam sebuah penelitian berjudul:

Representasi Masyarakat Adat di Indonesia:
Analisis poskolonial terhadap wacana tentang masyarakat adat
dalam kebijakan negara dan gerakan sosial

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali bagaimana pemerintah maupun para aktor gerakan sosial mendefinisikan “masyarakat adat” di Indonesia melalui berbagai konsep yang berbeda-beda. Penelitian ini akan difokuskan pada sebuah komunitas adat di Kalimantan Selatan.

Seperti apa bentuk peran sertanya?
- Menjadi peserta dalam sesi wawancara: memberikan informasi dengan menjawab atau merespon pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang diajukan peneliti.
- Proses wawancara akan direkam-suara atau ditulis dalam catatan lapangan (sesuai persetujuan yang diberikan peserta dalam Lembar Persetujuan Peserta) untuk kemudian ditranskrip guna keperluan analisis dan, jika sesuai, publikasi.

Siapa saja yang bisa menjadi peserta?
- Pegawai dengan peran/jabatan strategis dalam divisi/bidangnya (pimpinan, kepala bidang, kepala seksi, dan sebagainya).
- Pegawai yang berada di lingkungan departemen yang relevan dengan penanganan isu masyarakat hukum adat di Indonesia.
- Mereka yang memiliki perhatian khusus mengenai dan telah terlibat dalam penanganan isu-isu masyarakat adat di Indonesia kurangnya 2 tahun.

Keuntungan apa yang bisa didapatkan dari keikutsertaan dalam penelitian ini?

Jika anda berminat untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, silahkan hubungi:
Bahri (Dinsos Prov. Kalsel) | Hp: +62 821 5054 7979 | email: muhammad.bahri88@yahoo.co.id
Jazak Akbar Hidayat | Hp: +62 8565 3311 015 | email: jazakbar@yahoo.com
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1. What do you think about your community?
2. What makes your community different from other communities? How do you see other neighbouring communities?
3. How do you define your community as part of Indonesia?
4. How do you feel as a part of your community?
5. Are you happy with being called indigenous people? Why or why not?
6. What do you think about the NGO your community works with? What about their programs or activities?
7. What do you think about the government department your community works with? What about their programs or activities?
8. Is the NGO valuable to your community? What do you think your community would be without their support?
9. Is the government department valuable to your community? What do you think your community would be without their support?
10. How does your community decide who speaks for the community?
11. How do you think your community’s voice has been responded by the NGO?
12. How do you think your community’s voice has been responded by the government?
13. What do you think about being indigenous people in Indonesia as a country?
14. Does being part of an indigenous people mean for you or your community?
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NGOs MEMBERS/ ACTIVISTS

1. What do you think about masyarakat adat (indigenous peoples) in Indonesia?

2. How does your organization respond to the issue of indigeneity in Indonesia?

3. How does your organization define the communities your organization is working with?

4. What is the term or label you prefer to use when referring to indigenous groups?

5. How does your organization work with the communities?

6. Can you describe the programs/ activities?

7. What do you do to ensure that you hear what the communities want?

8. What strategies do you employ as advocates for the communities?

9. What is your view of the future role of your organization in supporting indigenous communities?

10. How does your organization view the Indonesian government’s policies toward indigeneity in Indonesia?

11. How do you respond to the government policies on indigeneity?
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

1. What do you think about Masyarakat Adat (customary communities)/ Masyarakat Hukum Adat (customary law communities)/ Komunitas Adat Terpencil (remote customary communities) in Indonesia?

2. How does your institution respond to the issue of indigeneity in Indonesia?

3. What is your view of indigeneity in Indonesia as a social and political issue?

4. What is the term or label you prefer to use when referring to indigenous groups?

5. What categories do you use to define indigeneity?

6. How does your institution work with the communities? (What are the policies/ programs? Why?)

7. How do you hear what the communities want?

8. What does your institution expect from the communities regarding their long-term future?

9. How does your institution view emerging indigenous social movements? (How does your institution respond to them?)