Reconsidering the Cultural Geographies of State and non State Spaces

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Abstract

In Indonesia, the societies have a long history as a runaway society and fugitive from the state-making projects. Many historical accounts prove that people escape from the state projects, such as corvee labor, wars, diseases and epidemics, conscriptions, slavery, taxes, violence, warfare, diseases, and poverty. In general, this paper describes the state-society relations and examines the meaning of the non-governed society. This paper questions what distinguishes between govern and non-governed society, what kind of social economy and cultural life of non-governed society that distinguishes from a governed state? To answer these questions, this paper explores the distinction of the governed and the non-governed society, which live in the different geographical areas. This paper explains the distinctions and frictions between lowland and highland society in Indonesia, in terms of social economy, kinship, political organization, and religion. In the last reflection, the author argues that non governed society is not only people who live in the upland and far from the centralized bureaucracy, rather they also live in the middle of dense population of a town and even under a most centralized and autocratic regime.

1. Frictions of Lowland and Highland

The geographical landscape in Southeast Asia allows cultural differences and frictions between lowland and highland society. Upland society in Southeast Asia has its uniqueness. The ecological contours range from Southern China to North East India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos,

Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia consists of the ranging mountain, marshes, swamps, fens, bogs, moors, deltas, mangrove coasts, hills, valleys, lowlands, coast complex waterways and archipelagoes, and sea. These natural geographical conditionslead to the different structural and cultural compositions.

The areas in the upland and periphery, which are also called "non-state societies" also exist in the entire world, such as Berber and Bedouin Communities in the Middle East, Indian communities in the USA or Bushmen in Africa. However, unlike stateless societies in the Middle East and North Africa that have similar religious background and geographical conditions[2], in Southeast Asia people who live in the upland have not only different geographical places to live but also different religious backgroundsfrom the people in the state areas living in the lowland.People who live in the upland also have different cultural practices with the people in the low land, in terms of dress, languages, dialects, foods, architectures, the patterns of cultivationand religion (Scott, 2010: 18). The culture of lowland society is religiously dominated by Muslims and people in the upland is much influenced by the Indian, pagan model and lately Christian religions. Besides the uneven geographic of Southeast Asia, the difference of culture between lowland and highland is also predominantly determined by modes of productions. The lowland people live in sedentary because they have to cultivate paddy, which needs intensive maintenance. By contrast, people in the highland cultivate crops such as cassava, wild yam and taro, which do not need intensive care.

One of the frictions between highland and lowland in Southeast Asia is because the state imposes their power to the upland society that has different religions and cultures. State, which is mostly located in the lowland; consider themselves the governed, civilized and tame society. On the other hand, the upland communities are wild, uncivilized and ungoverned. This opposition reflects to the idea of raw and cooked opposition as described by Levi Strauss (1983). The raw food is like the ungoverned people who are not touched by civilization, while the governed society is a trope of a cooked meal, which has been touched by modernity and development.

To civilize people in the hill and to bring political aims, the lowland societies spread religion and pieties in order for people in the upland have the same discourse, language, and imagination. In fact, highlanders in Southeast Asia have different religions than people living in lowland areas. Massive state missionaries have converted highlanders to embrace one of the religions that are authorized by state's recognition, such as Buddhism,

Christianity or Islam. In Indonesia for example, the state forces the Tenggerese to embrace Hinduism (Heffner, 1990). Likewise the state also forces Dayak people in remote Kalimantan to convert to Christianity (Tsing, 1985). Anna Tsing (1985) points out that the Banjarese of lowland Southwest Kalimantan try to convert the Meratus, people in the upland. According to the Banjarese, the Meratus are pagan and still uncivilized because they do not embrace Islam as an official religion, which is also recognized by the state.Another ethnographic case is from the study of Patricia Spyer on Aru People in Southeast Moluccas (1987). She shows that the state forces people from upland Bemuneseto embrace Catholics otherwise they are treated as the second-class citizen.

Nevertheless, the frictions of lowland and upland society do not make them live in total dichotomy and separation. Rather the frictions are because they have long historical contact that creates different way of life and mode of productions[3]. The lowland society is also dependent on the products in the highland, because the highland suppliesbamboo, rattan, timbers, fruits, as well as staples such as yam, potatoes, and maize. On the other hand, the highlanders need product from the lowland, such as dried fish, salt, ironware and clothes, thread, blankets, matches and kerosene, porcelain and potter and even weapons.

2. Lowland Agrarian State: Accumulation of Manpower and Grain Productions

In this sub section, my paper argues that the different of geographical landscape leads to the distinction of the cultural way of life. I give broader examples in Southeast Asia to make a sense that people in Indonesia also have the same experience. They live in the rugged landscape as in other Southeast Asian countries. This condition makes obvious cultural differences between people who live in the highland and the lowland. The aim to describe these differences is to show that although a State has an influential power to change the highlanders, the lowland society itself is very vulnerable to many social and political problems,as I will describe below.

James Scott in his work *The Art of Not Being Governed* (2010) tracks the history of sedentary people as the early state in Southeast Asia. He believes that agro-ecology and mode of production determine the forms of social-political structure and religion. The emergence of the state in Southeast Asia was because of two factors. First is the concentration of population and second is the abundance of grain supplies (Scott, 2010: 5-7). Scott also finds that before colonialism brought the idea of the value of land, the most

important commodity in the early Southeast Asian was manpower. The revenue of the early state was based on the ability to mobilize manpower as political capital. The concentration of slaves has to do with the sedentary agriculture because manpower is required to raid "stateless people" and also to plant and maintain grains. At the moment, we can also see, people are concentrated in the area of rice fields, like in Java Island, since the increase of grain production leads to population growth. As a result, dense population requires hierarchy and finally creates the establishment of state. Geertz (1981) and Dwipayana (2001) provides examplesof how the accumulation of people through war and slave trade is one of the origins of social hierarchy and centralization typical of agrarian state in Bali, Indonesia.From the explanation above, we can see that Indonesiaand Southeast Asia, before the colonialism, did not engage in slaughtering people, because the value of people is more important than land.

The lowland towns are located in the central of wet rice areas because they are determined by irrigation systems. The irrigated rice cultivation makes possible a paddy core as the center and creates paddy state as a subject around the court. Yogyakarta, Surakarta and Cirebon courts, for example, are located in the center of huge wet rice areas.Benedict Anderson (2006) uses the concept of *Mandala* as the best example in describing the concept of power in Java. To illustrate his point, Anderson associates Java to the power of light. Java's power fades as one moves away from the city similarly to how light dims. Java is the center that holds the power of a light and the power evades when it goes to the periphery.

Scott(2010: 161)shows his Marxist views by arguing modern civilizationsare built from slavery concentrations. He believes that the heterogeneity of lowland societies is because the town was consisted of slaves, conscriptions and captives of wars that were brought to the center[4]. The heterogeneity of social ranks are resulted from the political coercive such as wars and invasions. He gives examples of the massive deportation of conscriptions from the Shan Hills during the 1760-1780 in Burma, and central Siam in the early nineteenth century, which captured war prisoners from Laos and Mon. The surplus of grains stimulates birth rates and absorbs slave to occupy the agrarian state. On the other hand, the surplus of manpower also stimulates grain productions. The capital in the agrarian state is created through the works of slaves, coolies, and conscriptions. Their power is used to create more grain continuously. Prior to the institution of money, the production of grain and manpower was a sign of wealth. Because of the grain and manpower, the state could create a further development. They are able to develop complex bureaucracy and create

military to invade "stateless people". Scott calls this as "entourage politics" in which manpower is the main capital to develop political economy and technology (Scott, 80-82).

In Southeast Asia, the manpower of slaves is the basis of the establishment and progress of the early state. The production of paddy and its irrigation is a direct result of slave raiding. Without slavery, there would be no concentration of manpower. The ancient agrarian state, the state captures people such as hunter-gatherers and animist swidden cultivators that are weak and not concentrated in one area(Scott, 2010: 85-6). In Mataram Court that is located in Central Java for example, the court captured the Blambangan people, a rebellion community from Eastern Java Island. The people of Blambangan were captured since they failed to appropriate tributeto the court. The Mataram troops burnt the disobedient and deported the people to the center of the court areas and used the captivatedpeople of Blambangan as slavery (Margana, 2012).When the court could captivate many people, the manpower would work well and the dynasty would become cosmopolitan with various languages and cultures.Therefore, the construction of the cultural hybridity is based on the subjugation of the manpower, in which the state employed the conscription as slavery.

People in the lowland area also learn how to build and arrange organizations through irrigation systems. They also learn on how to maintain the surplus food. Agrarian states also create "the middlemen" or "local strongmen" who collecttaxes for the state[5]. However, they usually manipulate or smuggle the taxes that is supposed to a deposit to a state. Henk Schulte Nordholt and Van Till's story on the local strongmen around Kediri, East Java in the mid nineteenth century shows that although the productions of crops are measurable and written down, middlemen intentionally makethese number of productions unreadable in order to keep an amount for themselves. This is the first emergence of thugs and corruptions happen in the rice areas (Nordholt and Van Till, 1999)

Additionally, a lowland society could also create rich material cultures in; diet, cuisine, plow animals, architectures, and transportations and communication. The lowland state also could develop monument and substation[6] due the lowland societiesalready have a writing culture, especially on survey and taxes, they are able toproduce beautiful literature like novels and poems. On the other hand, people in the periphery or upland areas tend to rely on the oral tradition. Therefore, we can see that in Surakarta court, Ranggawarsita, a very well known poet, just emerged in the

nineteenth century. The poems did not emerge in the early period of the paddy state, because most of the writing in the early state was on survey of taxes and land. The literature emerged through a very mature agrarian state (Sears, 1996). Therefore, writing tradition tends to belong to the court and state that is located in the lowland. Unlike lowland society that has a long tradition of writing culture, the highlanders do not rely on the writing tradition. They are a society that mostly uses *orality*as their daily speaking. It does not mean that they are illiterate, but *orality* is another way to keep people's memories in the mind, so that the lowland state could not track their memories, histories and cultures. Thus, non-literate society has many hidden transcripts in their mind. Their oral tradition is like the tradition of cultivating root crops, such as cassava, potatoes and yams. Nobody knows how many crops are under the ground that is planted. Keeping memories in the mind and in the oral is like a *hidden transcript*[7].

Unlike a written tradition, oral stories are easily changed and developed. This strategy is also to avoid the state's goal tracking the highlanders' movement. Hence, in Indonesia and Southeast Asia in general, there are many different versions of folk stories that are transferred through oral traditions[8]. Oral story is a way richer and more various than written tradition. When the oral stories are transferred to the next generation, the stories are usually changed or developed according to the current interpretations and conditions. By contrast, the existence of text creates orthodoxy where people keep maintaining the standard account of the text. Text creates orthodoxy and class hierarchy. The lowland has many clerics, people who master in keeping the standard account of the holy text, such as Qur'an and Bible. To anyone who can read text very well, they will get privileges of class. Therefore, we can see many orthodox and puritan people in the lowland areas, but not in the highland.

For highlanders, a text is associated with state forces. Text is very crucial for technology of administration and statecraft. The lowlanders need text for conducting land survey, accounting population and taxes, recording wage, contracting labor, creating specific agreement of trade and developing literature. Therefore, the highlanders consciously escape from the state because written traditions have enormous instrumental value to the process of permanent political centralization and administration. On the contrary, oral traditions have substantial advantages for free people who are independent from the state.

The density of population and a surplus of grainin the agrarian stateslead to a complicated classstructure and property inequalities. Sedentary agriculture tendsto concentrate peopleand create bureaucracy

and produce "middle class" occupations such as surveyors, architects, playwrights, artisans, dancers, actors, traders, and accountants.The conditions of sedentary life and the emergence of bureaucratic apparatusesmake low land society relatively easy to control and to calculate. They are easy to control through survey such as registration in the form of fiscal taxes, which are either taxes on trade or taxes on landholding. Therefore, people are not allowed to move without explicit permission from the state. In addition, to make legible, survey of population tend to classify and simplify populations into ethnic, religion and race classifications. This simplification aims to make people visible, so that the system of government can run effectively. Scott in his book *Seeing like a State* (1999) believes that the classification of tribes or ethnic groups is a political project. In addition, sedentary societies are easily to control because they are highly concentrated in one place and they never move like upland society. Since sedentary people have more stable settlement, they usually have fix identity than people in the upland who move along the time. This condition also answers the questions why anthropologists have more difficulties in defining the identity of the people who live in the remote or upland areas, such as Dayak or Papuan, than describing people in lowland such as Shan or Javanese.

However, people in sedentary agricultural societies are actually very prone to disease. Once plagues come, they are easily infected. For example, the plagues from the rats can devastate the harvest because the plagues attack all of the grain in the stores. When the harvest fails, people startto run to the highland to avoid the disease and famine. Scott gave the example of Hantawaddy, people who live in the lowland Burma. They moved to the highland because of the long drought that caused crop failure and famine, in between 1803 and 1813 (Scott, 2010: 160).In the Indonesian case, David Henley, shows that people in the lowland towns are also fragile to suffer diseases. Henley, who focused his studies on the Minahasan society in the North Sulawesi, found that epidemic diseases, specifically smallpox, spread very easy in the crowded and sedentary settlement. He also indicates that rat epidemicwas a major obstacle to the population growth in the North Sulawesi(Henley, 2005: 286 Scott, 2010: 159)

Scott provides three answers of why the crown in the traditional lowland society fails to establish modern state? First, he considers that "the crops is legible, but the officials were not", which means that middlemen like officials and the aristocracy, manipulates information to the crown regarding with state revenue and taxes. Second, the fluctuation of weather, pests and crops diseases, and human diseases such as cholera cause harvest failure and famine. These conditionsare worsened by the fact that gangs,

thugs, thieves and bandit dominate certain grains or crops for their own interests.Third, early agrarian stateshave tremendous capriciousness in political economic systems. There is no rational accounting surplus of grains. Thus, although seem steady and strong, agrarian statesare actually fragile to the diseases and the bankruptcy (Scott, 2010: 96).

3. Non-State Spaces in Southeast Asia and Indonesia

This subsection aims to describe the fragile of the State in building their power against corruption, political instability, huge numbers of population and epidemic of diseases. By contrast, I depict the effectiveness of living with small communities in the highland societies. They have more food security as well ass stability in the social and political structure.

Robert Heffner and Edmund Leach weretwo prominent scholars who studied the cultural history of Southeast Asian highlanders. Highland areas are noted as the strategic hiding place for rebels. Heffner showed that Tengger Highland in East Java province has becoming a strategic place for people to run from the state. For more than 250 years, Tengger highland has been a comfortable place to hide from state forces and political violence. Heffner (1990)[9]describes the Tenggerese run along with the collapse of Madjapahit, a Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom in the thirteenth century. People run away from Madjahapit to escape from the courts and aristocracy of a newly established Islamic kingdom. Likewise, during the Dutch colonial period, the Madurese rebels like Untung Surapati, an ex-slave, also hid in Tengger in the 1670[10]. Tengger highland also became a strategic place for communists who runaway from state killing in the 1965.

Edmund Leach studies about the comparative political systems ofShan people living in the lowland and Kachin people in the hill[11]. Leach distinguishes between the two societies, Shan people who live in the lowland and Kachin people who live in the upland. Regardless of the different between Shan and Kachin people, they are connected through a common language, alliances of marriages and political systems. The Shan people embrace Buddhism and work in the rice agriculture. They have a stratified feudal structure (*mong*) with the highest chief called *saohpa*. By contrast, the Kachin people are non-Buddhist. They are not bounded communities, but more heterogeneous and have various languages and dialects.They have blurred territories, and each community has diverse motif of clothes and variety of ecological organizations.

Leach found that it was easy to define Shan people compared to the Kachin people. Shan people have a more homogenous culture, whereas Kachin communities are not easy to put into a simplified category. Kachin

people have two different kinds of political systems called *Gumsa* and *Gumlao*. The *Gumsa* system is a state structure and has feudal hierarchical systems. Leach claims that Gumsa system is relatively unstable because middle class aristocrats constantly try to reach to the top-rank of lineage systems. In addition, the common people also try to transform themselves to a higher rank in the system. On the contrary, *Gumlao* system is anarchistic and egalitarian. This mode of social and political organization is a tribute to the resistance of state control conducted by Shan People. However, as an egalitarian system, *Gumlao* could be effectively strategic as long as the community does not consist of large people, unless the society will be divided into hierarchical systems like in *Gumsa* (Leach, 1954).

Leach also points out that the alliance between Kachin and Shan is established through the matrilineal cross cousin. A man is expected to marry his mother's brother's daughter. Kachin people have relations with Shan people in terms of wife takers and wife givers. In this case, the wife giver (*mayu*) has a higher political rank compared to the wife taker (*dama*). In the gumsa system, the relationship between *mayu* and *dama* is used to legitimate a rank in the political hierarchy (Leach, 1954: 203-204). The wife taker is the follower of the wife giver. The weakness of the asymmetric system of *mayu* and *dama* is the marriage tends not to be reciprocal, rather to create a new subordination and slavery to the wife taker. In the case of Shan and Kachin society we can see that women are the actors who intermediate economic exchanges between highland and lowland.

Shan and Kachin have long deep historical connections in the field of economics and politics. The Shan political system also recruits some figures from Kachin society. In addition, the chiefs from Kachin sometimes adopt a political system from Shan feudalistic system[12]. The feudalistic system of the San society is suitable to implement in the system of *gumsa* in Kachin society. Kachin people who implement the *gumsa* system eventually are also regarded as Shan people because they are more ambitious, individualist, and feudal. Many of Kachin people also convert to be a Buddhist. Thus, for Kachin people who embrace Buddhism are regarded as Shan people.

Leach's research shows that internal mechanism in the hill society changes since the influence of the political and economic transformation coming from outside (Leach, 1954: 212). The external factors are, first, Kachin people found the availability of material resources and production from Shan society. Secondly, the political influences from British colonialism. Lastly are the individual political actions from the *gumlao* system itself, which have ambitions to change the egalitarian system within *gumlao*(Leach: 1954: 227-263).

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Although the highlanders are mobile, they have steady social structure comparably to the lowland political organizations. Lowland political organizations are very prone to the history of rebellions and coups. The lowland structural politics consist of middle class bureaucrats, armies and aristocracies that have strong political desire to over throw the throne and take matters in their own hands. The facts of coup have been proven on Java Island. Javanese history is full of coup narratives such as the story of Ken Arok and the collapse of Madjapahit Kingdom. The collapse of the latter story was because of the rebellion from Demak kingdom, which came from the inner families of Madjapahit court itself. The most popular is the story of Soeharto's coup in 1965 that was followed by the big ideological transformations and the changing of social political organizations. In addition, the colonial regimes also have a strong influence to interfere with the lowland social political organizations. Highlander's social-political organizations are way more stable because they are not consisted of huge and complicated social structure like in the lowland societies. The highlanders have no complicated middle class and they are also almost untouched by modern colonial administrations.

Learning from Robert Heffner and Edmund Leach, James Scott studies the Zomia people who live across modern state boundaries. Zomia live in the upland of Burma, Laos, and North East India. They live in in the zone of refugees and resist state projects. Hills are comfortable space of political resistance to the state. Hill societies produce surplus of production, but they do not send that surplus to support kings and monks in lowlands. Upland society has sovereign space because of the rugged areas. Specifically during the rainy seasons, the state faces difficulties to invade and control the upland area.

People in the highland are not an isolated community. They are connected with other highland communities. The highlanders intentionally make decisions to run away from the state. They have their own choice to be independent from the state. Highlander's systems of livelihood, such as shifting cultivation, slash and burn, hunting and gathering, drive them to be invisible from state's surveillance. Since highlanders have experiences running from the state, they learn how to live in a mobile lifestyle. Using Deleuze and Guattari's theory on "rhizomatic society", James Scott believes that upland communities have local mechanism to build complex independent and horizontal networks without a centralized power and state hierarchy (Scott, 2010: 29). Therefore, the highlanders have freedom of mode of production as long as they keep away from the state. They do not

have to work for the landlord or the employer; instead they work only for their own labor power. This is because the highlanders do not have to pay taxes and do not have to pay rent for the land.

Shifting cultivation methods also lead to the emergent of plural societies. People in the hill or in the remotes areas need more manpower, and they have long experiences of adding strangers as a part of their families. Hill societies incorporate new outsiders, such as runaway slaves, as their kinship. Unlike lowland society, hill societies do not adopt newcomers into a class order; by contrast, they attach new comers to descendent groups or kindred. Because of the kinship flexibility toward immigrants, people in the hills have flux social organizations, which is different from lowland societies that have permanent and immutable identities. Non State-societies in the hill have a continuous process of change. The shifting cultivators and hunter-gatherers are not totally a primitive group living in a bounded society. They are very exclusive in accepting new migrants. They do not live in the bounded areas and bounded total social and political units; instead highlanders are very "cosmopolite" since they do not have single identities like sedentary people in the lowland.

Unlike lowlanders that have firm identity in defining insider and outsider, the highlanders are very mobile and do not belong to one ethnic identity. Furnivall (1948: 311) proves that the emergence of plural societies in the lowland is because of the condition of supply and demand, which creates the system of class. He notices that the conditions of plural society in the lowland tropical areas consisted of the native, the slave, the immigrants and the Europeans, which compete one another. Despite the cleavage in racial lines, each race has different mode of production and place of settlement. Plural society in the lowland areashas no idea of citizenship, because each community is automized into competition. The market drives people to produce and create the logic of profit by disturbing the cohesion of a social organism.

In addition, the highlanders do not need granary givent hat root and tuber crops are naturally kept underground. They can just dig up the piecemeal of tubers anytime when they need it. Given that the crops are concealed underground, the state would not know its numbers and its capacities. Therefore, the state cannot apply taxes to the underground crops ownership. To cultivate tubers is only need moderate labor intensity. Although they have low value in cash economy, underground crops are needed as a staple food for highlanders. Additionally, underground crops are ecologically friendly to environment. Some crops, such as yam and cassava, can be planted in many varietiesof tropical climates (ibid, 203-5).

People in the highlands are usually healthier than people in the lowlands. First is because the shifting cultivation systems drive highlanders to move regularly. As a consequence, the highlanders are in good physics. Sedentary agriculture systems do not require people to move regularly. This is because they have to take care paddy crops that need intense maintenance. Secondly, highlands provide edible plants and fruits that have various nutrition comparably to lowlands that tend to cultivate mono crops. Thirdly, one benefit for highlanders is they avoid plagues, since they moved to anywhere else. On the contrary, lowlanders are at risk to get disease, such as cholera and pestilence, because they are remain in one place.

However, massive modern state projects under the New Order regime in Indonesia considered that shifting cultivations is a backward activity. So that Indonesian state tried to control hunter-gatherers to stay in one place. Many of ethnographic works on Kalimantan peoplehave illustrated on how state apparatus implemented their control to the non-state society to live in accordance with state's point of view. Michael Dove for example, he examines the way State implement their discipline and control to smallholders, in the all stages of production and its marketing, state reordering the landscape, mobilization of land and labor, to the daily household routines. The scheme of surveillance, and various implementations of geometrization, simplification, standardization and discipline, resemble to the structure of *Panopticon* that is popularized by Foucault(Dove, 2011: 30).

4. Non-State Spaces in Moluccas-Eastern Indonesia

Compared to two previous sub sections, in this sub section, I am more narrowing down my description on the people in small communities in the periphery of Indonesia. In Indonesia, non-state spaces are not only found in the upland. The sea is a huge place for people runaway from state control. The topography of Indonesia country ranges from volcano margins, highland to the open sea. A historian, Eric Tagliacozzo describes state presence and control in the Southeast Asian Sea. He explores small-scale insurgencies of Southeast Asian societies living in the seashore and outer islands. There are many variants of local violent reactions to the creation of state borders. People in the peripheries, such as Bangka Belitung, Aceh, Jambi, and Banjarmasin, reacted to the control and state-making projects (Tagliacozzo, 2005: 166). State projects creating sea boundaries lead to the sea traders' insurgencies because borders curtail their economic activities. In other words, many nomadic and semi nomadic people consider sea boundaries are established by coercive actions because the state harms sea

people's livelihood and culture[13]. Tagliacozzo relates his description with Arjun Appadurai's concept, "paths and diversion". A range of commodities has social lives to change according to time and place conditions. If a commodity crosses the border, the meaning of the commodity could change. State defines a legality commodity. Although the commodity is not dangerous, if the society exchanges it without state control, they could be illegal. Clove for example, could be regarded as contraband if they are traded without known by the Colonial state administration[14].

Although New Order regime had a strong control for more than 30 years (1966-1998), people in the periphery could conduct any socioeconomic activities without involving the state interference[15]. Roy Ellen (2003) shows that Southeast Seram islands in Eastern Indonesia are a space where empty from state control and surveillance. Because of the topography and hydrography of the islands, Southeast Seram Islands have a "loose federation". The center and periphery of the Moluccas were unstable and dynamic if compared to the centralized system of politics in the agrarian state of Java. Center areas such as Ternate and Ambon are very fragile because of political, wars and epidemics. In addition, the center system is fragile partly because there is no stable food production and significant local production of cash crops.

The peripheral areas, such as the South East Seram Islands, consist of small state political organizations that shift over time. Radjas, the heads of small numbers of estates, transfer their rule through inter clan marriages. The radja, as the ruler, encourages having alliances and integration with outside polities (Ellen, 2003: 278-79). In other words, the center becomes unstable because of shifts in rule and kinship ties. This leads to shifting relations of tribute, subjugation, and alliance, and in some cases also the physical movement of settlements. The *radja* does not necessarily live on the island that he rules (ibid, 34). The jurisdiction and authority of a *radja* could extend across one island to another. One example is the Raja Kelu who had control over part of Seram Laut, but he preferred to live on Geser Island (ibid, 92-3).

Ellen focuses his research on South East Seram Islands because these islands have two important roles. First, Southeast Seram islands are self-sufficient. Secondly, they supply the dietary necessities for Banda and they channel products from and into Papua Island (Ellen, 64). In the contemporary trading networks, Ellen points out that the most intensive destination for boat movement is from the port of Banda to Geser, an island in Southeast Seram (ibid, 185-7).

Unlike Ternate, Tidore and Banda Island, the Southeast Seram Islands were less integrated into the world economy and less dependent on imports for basic subsistence. Each island reciprocally supplied basic necessities from gardening produce, such as vegetables, fruits, and sago, and fuel wood (ibid, 51). The Kingdom on Tidore, which is located in the North Moluccas, and Serammers had different trade arrangements and modes of political operation. While Tidore trade entailed collection tribute from and politically dominating the Papuans, Southeast Seram islanders had a more equal system of trade. Instead of using symbolic power from the court of a sultanate, Serammers and Papuans conducted egalitarian trade (ibid, 122). The Southeast Serammers did not have "inherited statuses" like in Kingdom of Tidore. Intermarriage with Papuans occurred because of the trade networks rather than because of the raids. In other word, marriage was not aimed to incorporate Papuans as subjects into the wider centralized polity like what operated by the Tidore Kingdom (ibid, 130-1).

Under the Dutch colonialism, small trader's activities in Southeast Seram islands were unforeseen from the monopoly control of VOC. Southeast Seram Islands such as Seram Laut, Geser and Gorom Island were the place for refugees that fled to avoid slavery from Banda Island since the Dutch control in 1621. These islands were reputed as the rebels place. People in Southeast Seram sent *kora-kora* (war canoes) to Bandanese to evacuate them from the Dutch control and slaughtering. Indigenous people who survived in Banda Island were therefore enslaved. By using *kora-kora*, South East Seram also involved in the smuggling of cloves for violation of the VOC prohibition (Ellen, 82-3). In 1633, Seram Laut and Southeast Seram were reported involved in the illegal spice trade that being smuggled by junks to Makassar. They also smuggled shell, pearls, bird of paradise, plumes, damar for exchanged with textiles, iron, and gun power (ibid, 86-7).

Unlike islands in the Southeast Seram, Banda Island is state control area. The Dutch introduced a classic plantation mode of production (*perkenierstelsel*) by intensifying land use and rationalizing agricultural production. By the coming of coolies from Javanese and Chinese, the Dutch also transformed both the pattern of settlement and natural resources management. Since the island was transformed to the plantation, Banda had changed its division of labor and very dependent on rice from Java. By 1637 Banda Island was very dependent on the timber, fruits, vegetables, cattle production, coconut, sago, beans, and peas from Southeast Seram Islands (ibid, 85-86). Along with the growth of Banda Island as the center of spice production, Southeast Seram became the main important

periphery that buffered the necessities of Bandanese. Additionally, Southeast Seram Island are also independent islands, even in the pre early modern era. Ellen points out there was no evidence that people there sent goods and tribute to the Sultan of Tidore on a regular basis and people did not recognize the authority of sultan Tidore either (ibid, 124).

Under the New Order regime, many traders in Southeast Seram Islands did not register their enterprise to the office administration located in central Ambon Island. In fact, the registration is important to collect taxes. Traders were successfully avoiding taxes for the wholesale exported products. In the 1986, Ellen reported that the avoiding of taxes reached to a critical level. The local government complaint that there were too much direct trade from Gorom Island (one of the islands in Southeast Seram) to Surabaya, the second biggest port in Indonesia (ibid, 234-236). This condition inflicted a financial loss to the local government because traders did not pay taxes varying between 5 to 10 percent based on the value of the goods. In conclusion, Southeast Seram traders have more than three hundred years experiences to live avoiding the state authority, despite the presence of VOC state control to customs office (*kantor bea dan cukai)* under the New Order regime.

The Dutch also had difficulties in conquering people from Seram Island. The Dutch troops were based on the naval artillery forces. The broken paths and the deep of riverbeds made difficulties for the commanding officers. This condition was compounded by the rugged landscape and unknown terrain of Seram Island. People of Seram, which so called *Alifuru*, could easily hide and prepare for an ambush. Knaap also mentions that another major problem was difficulties in carrying drinking water and supplies to the upland. The big troops, which comprised about 1,000 to 1,500 combatants, of whom some 50to 75 were VOC soldiers, were too complicated to move, to arrange and to communicate in the rugged areas, specifically in providing supplies and drinking water (Knaap 2002: 177-79). Therefore, the reasons why the Dutch could easily occupy Ambon, Lei Timor Peninsula and Banda Island, because geographically speaking these areas were located in the plain lowland.

In contrast to Seram and Southeast Seram Island, Ambon Island became the central power of local government because of its advantageous natural terrain. The plain lowland located in the coastal areas was convenient to build a town, and since Ambon was on the coast, the fort was supported by naval power. On the contrary, mountains and hills in Seram Island and Hitu Peninsula were not suitable to be a center of political control not only because of their disadvantage in terrain, but these two rugged areas had

only small quantities of sulfur earth to produce gunpowder for war (Knaap, 2003: 175). There were also not many forts to block intruders attacking from the mountains and hillside. Too add, the heavy artillery stored in the coastal areas was not easy to haul up the narrow and steep paths of the hills and mountains. (Knaap, 2003: 175-76)

5. Conclusion: Rethinking the Connections

This paper challenges the existence of the modern State whether they can be an institution that promotes welfare, fairness, and peace to their citizens. Across the history, State that coerces their power to their people has not only leads to a total subjugation, but rather an avoiding. As a fledging States, Indonesia and any other States in Southeast Asia are still under arrangement. The high taxes followed by corruption and violence promoted by State apparatuses has shown that State can emerge only by forcing the people to follow their rules. The history of the safeguarding of a kingdom and the emergence of a modern State in the 19th century has followed by stories of wars and avoidance.

State has a long record of raiding the highlanders and other non-State societies living in many various landscapes. This paper notes that the lowland societies have spread their power to the peripheries since the modern State is not established yet.From the kingdom era to the Dutch period, their power had organized the people in the periphery. The aim is not only to get the supply commodities, but also to use the human power from the periphery as a modality to accumulate State building projects.In ddition, the reason to invade the periphery areas is to occupy the territory, that later would be secure the State taxes.

What I describe in this paper is not merely historical facts back in the past. But the reactions of the people in the Non State toward the Centric State are still occurring. In the post Reformasi era in Indonesia, the emergence of cultural revivalism have given a new warning to the State. The government is forced to deal fairly to the non-State societies who are also usually called "indigenous society". The "barbaric" New Order State that sent the military to discipline and to punish the people in the Non State space only get the backlash and resistance from the people. Thus, the State that forces their power only buries themselves into their graveyard. In the end of the New Order for example, the periphery people raid to the forests and land that used to be claimed and owned by the State. Learning form the backlash, the post reformasi governance starts to think how treats the people in the non-State space in a more democratic way. Instead of pushing their power, the State gives the non-State society and people live in the

periphery areas to have more space in determining their life. In the euphoria of "revivalism of tradition" after the reformasi era, the Indonesian government takes into account on how to provide the freedom of indigenous people claiming their territory and land.

The people in the periphery also becomemore globally connected because of the global demand of commodities. The highland forests and the small isolated islands in the Eastern Indonesia for example, provide commercial goods such as,copper, wood, resins, nutmeg,to sea cucumberthat are needed by people all over the world. Therefore, we can no longer consider that the non-State spaces are isolated from the commercial world. Far before the existence of the modern State, people in the periphery even have built their global connection through commodity supplies.

I should admit that in this paper, there are more many scholars who conduct their research from the State centric narration. But I think it is extremely important to perceive the responses of the people residing in the peripheries or those who are living in the non-State spaces. Therefore, the discipline of anthropology, geography and history should give more a complementary understanding of studying people in the periphery and their responses to the current IndonesiaState projects.

In the current phenomena, I conclude that people are no longer trying to take over the government immediately, but they trying to create a space outside of the State instead. The State avoidance nowadays is no longer occurred in the highland as I describe in this paper, but they emerge in the center of the towns, riverbanks, slums, and urban communities. People create their own sovereignty without trying to topple down the government. The autonomous spaces are a current trend nowadays; specifically when the State is ineffectively meet their citizen basic needs, such as water and electricity.

Human beings have multiplicity of social relations that can work even without the states help. Through a multiplicity of persons, political institutions and the landscape of geography people can operate their networks of social economy. Therefore in the high modern State and society relations, the binary opposition between state and non-state society is challenged since several causes. First, although people in the upland areas are geographically and culturally different from the lowland, they have necessity to contact one another. The necessity of supply chain commodities between these two communities makes them to be connected. Secondly, individuals in the non-state society start to have ambitions to adopt the state system, because from doing that, they can absorb the power of state and re-

create its power to their non-state society. To some degrees, non-state societies adopt the pattern of lowland cultures and State power because they see that State and lowland society are the source of the value, wealth, prestige and authority. In other words, people have ambivalent views towards the state. On one hand, people are very cynical of the government because the State often promotes brutality, corruption, and oppression. However, the modern state creates many development plans, which lure society into involvement in State policies. Thirdly, we still should take into account that non-state societies still have an ambiguous combination of complicity and resistance to the lowland society. In other words, many non-state societies the do not really support the ideology of the State; they rather combine State ideology with their traditional customs. This third thesis could be correct given that most of the state of Southeast Asia is fledgling state, in which the national government still does not have maximum power over periphery areas, such as South Seram and Seram Island.

Endnotes:

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[2] See example about Berber society in Morocco, in Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969) 1-2. Clifford Geertz. 1971. *Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*. University of Chicago Press.

[3] The differences of landscape of geography also influence the mode of livelihood distinction. Eric Wolf's classic paper (1955) "Types of Latin American Peasantry: A Preliminary Discussion". Wolf divides two types of Latin American Peasantry, which is based on their locations. The lowland peasants are characterized as open type peasant to the world market. They cultivate cash crops, such as coffee, bananas, and sugarcane for the world market. The system of land ownership is private and the sense of community solidarity is weak. On the contrary, the highland smallholders are characterized as marginal society with limited technology, but they have strong sense of community rather than individual maximization of profit. Likewise, Robert Redfield's study on Yucatan, Mexico (1941) shows that highland people has strong community solidarity against the outside world but they life in subsistence. On the contrary, lowland community relies on the cash crop such as vanilla and they live in a more individual competition.

[4] James Scott's argument is different from Gerrit J Knaap who conducts research on the history of Ambon town in the seventeenth century. Scott asserts that an emphasis in the early period of war was to catch people for slave labor rather than raiding the land. While Knaap indicates that to establish Ambon as a center of power, the VOC raided

periphery areas. Many villages were depopulated because of the massacre (Knaap, 2003, Collins, 2003). To establish Ambon as a center of power, the VOC raided periphery areas. The Dutch recruited mercenaries from the indigenous people because the colonizers lacked the manpower for conquest and also they did not know the landscape in the periphery areas as well as the indigenous. Following the conclusion of the wars in 1657, the Dutch started to develop Ambon to become a city of migrants. The companies and commerce sectors that served the VOC increased steadily from a few hundred to almost one thousand at the end of seventeenth century. The massive immigration of slave and prosperous Chinese communities to Ambon in 1650 contributed to huge economic growth (Knaap, 1991: 110-111). Knaap also shows surprising data that slaves made up a larger portion of Ambon in the seventeenth century than any other demographic: 52.3 percent of the total population were male slaves who were sent from Buton, Makassar and Bali (Knaap, 1991: 123-24).

[5]Likewise, compared to upland societies, people in the lowland have a long history of being connected with the wider world. One example is a study from Fernand Braudel (1966) on the coastal communities that have conducted overseas trade since the pre-modern world. Coastal traders in the Mediterranean have been connected to the exchange and commercial activities with traders from Philippines and Moluccas. Another study is from Anthony Reid (1993), which shows that people in Southeast Asia have been integrated through commercial activities and migration to the Venice and Istanbul.

[6] Unlike highland people who are mobile, the lowland state needs boundary to firm the insider and outsider. James Siegel (1993) and Abidin Kusno(2006), for example, have very well described the boundary of *kampong* territory to mark the outsider. The urban society living in the kampong creates *gardu* (guardhouse) to strengthen their identity and memory about the border. On the contrary, people in the highland do not construct gate as their mark of space boundary. They instead tattooed their body to show the identity and to mark clan and kinship affiliation.

[7] I borrow this concept from *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. Yale University Press, 1990. Root crops or escape crops are like "hidden texts", in which the state could not account their numbers of production because of its illegibility. Therefore, roots can become one of the tools for highlander's resistance. Tubers, such as sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, manioc, and yucca can be safely kept underground for two years (Scott: 2010: 195-6). The durability of their food supplies make highlanders secure for long time. This condition allows highlanders to survive if they are under attack by a state in the lowlands. Crops, which are planted in the high rugged mountains require little care and easily adapt to the swiddening routines.

[8]Even in the contemporary Indonesian society, some communities still have traumatic experiences with writing traditions. The communities who live in the Code riverbank of Jogjakarta Town, still feel worried every time when they see outsiders bringing books, pens and jotting notes. They think that those people must be on behalf of the state. They certainly will take land survey; given Code communities in the riverbank do not have land certificates. They only have rights to use the land along the riverbank, but not to own it. The Code people have traumatic experiences with the scripts. They associate texts and scripts with the state forces and land grabbing. Therefore, Code people keeping their memories through verbal performances, such as utterances songs, verses, and poems. This is a very telling strategy to claim that they have a right to the land and to keep memorizing about their ancestor who had given shelter along the riverbank. However, it does not mean

that people in the Code are illiterate. They can read and write. To them, verbal culture is much more expressive than writing. There are a lot of words that cannot be expressed the script. They also do not have to be worried about grammatical errors, which is in the script is very easy to track.

[9] Surapati not only became a symbol of anti Dutch, but also a symbol of anti Mataram Court. He built alliances with Balinese and Blambangan, from Eastern Java, to oppose Mataram court, which is located in the lowland central Java. After the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) crushed his alliances, Surapati fled to the mountain area in Tengger. When the Dutch seized him, his descendants and entourages still continued to put up resistance from Tengger Mountains. See also the story of Surapati in Kumar (1976) and Ricklefs (1981).

[10] The novel of <u>Abdul Muis</u>. 1999. *Surapati, published* by Balai Pustaka also well describes the struggle of Surapati against the Dutch and his fled to the highland until his death.

[11]In making comparatives studies, Leach argues that instead of merely indexing a particular correlation of cultural traits of *p,q,r* that is repeated in the cultural context of A, B, C...,He offers that we need to see the functional-structural logic behind the *p,q,r...*of different cultural contexts of A, B, C. What brings *p,q,r* into connection in the context A?. What brings *p,q,r* into connection to the culture B? And so on. Secondly, is to compare and contrast the possible concepts of variations of the concatenation of *p, q, r* ...Third is to see in what circumstances the variables of *p,q,r...*is actually comparable. The outcome of these procedures is to see the contrast among cultures rather than its similarities (Leach, 1968: 341).

[12]Leach also argues that even though the lowland and upland society are culturally different, they are still connected into one another. This connection is not only in the terms social alliances, such as marriage, but also in terms of supply commodities. Edmund Leach gives examples in his study on Kachin Society. He points out that the way anthropologist works has much in common with an engineer. Leach considers that society is similarly to a variable of assemblages. Like a machine, each of the component parts in the society should interconnect with one another to balance the stability of a social system. Leach uses this definition of culture in studying structure of society in Burma. He believes that social structure is stable and balanced because the members of society are connected with one another although they are in a binary opposition, between highland and lowland society (Leach, 1961).

[13] In another place in Indonesia, sea tribe (*orang suku laut*) around Sumatera Island, also lives in the non-state areas. The sea gypsies (*orang laut*) live in their boats and across the waterways of archipelagoes and they do not have contact with the government. The sea gypsies have a long history run away from slavery, taxes, debt and any other governmental projects. They are boat dwellers and fish foragers who do not live in a sedentary mode. Like people in the upland, sea tribes do not have huge and complex mode of political organizations. Rather, they are more egalitarian since the chief lead each small community. See further Marsanto, Khidir, "Orang Suku Laut dan Orang Melayu di Kepulauan Riau: Sebuah Tafsir Deskriptif-Etnografis "Vol 31, No 3 (2010): Jurnal Antropologi Indonesia

[14] See further my discussion on this in "History of the Moluccan's Cloves as a Global Commodity". *Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture* Vol 1, No. 2 (July-December), 2014

[15]In the modern era, one example of Non-sphere activities is on clove transactions. Under the New Order regime (1970s-1990s), the Ambonese were able to avoid the

dependency that was created by the KUD, Village Cooperative Unit (Koperasi Unit Desa). Instead of selling cloves to the KUD, producers tend to sell the cloves directly to the Chinese Merchants. Given that the KUD only receives production in limited scale, many producers are at a business disadvantage. Moreover, KUD only received clove with a certain degree of quality, while the Chinese accepted poor quality cloves and did not limit the amount of sold clove. Trade is about trustworthiness and producers have a relationship with the Chinese Merchants in conducting business, while the KUD, who represent the state's hands, do not offer a good price and do not have a long history of economic transactions with the Moluccan traders (Beckmann, 2007: 201). The producers and the Chinese middlemen complement one another, especially during the clove harvest. Beckmann points out that although the State control under the New Order regime was omnipotent, people still have autonomic ways of running their business without state interventions. Autonomic transactions aren't limited people who run and live in the upland or any other isolated areas as James Scott describes in *The Art of not Being Governed* (2010).

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